



Arizona State University

School of Music

STUDENT RECITAL SERIES

Humor US Songs

A Recital of Giggles and Guffaws by the Comedians of
Studio E225

Singers:

Danielle Bond, soprano	Marisa Brown, soprano
Joy Crown, mezzo-soprano	Aimee Davis, soprano
Jared Edwards, baritone	Aniuska Garcia, soprano
Amy Heldman, soprano	Deborah LaMee, soprano
Tiffany Miller, soprano	Lura Penland, soprano
Christyn Schroeder, soprano	David Sparks, baritone
Laura Targosz, soprano	

Pianists:

Te-Hui Lin	Ralph Lockwood
Marina Pintos	Tatiana Roitman
Rubia Santos	Deanna Shipley

RECITAL HALL

Monday, November 29, 1999 • 7:30 p.m.



PROGRAM

- What Can We Poor Females Do** Henry Purcell
Take Not A Woman's Anger Ill 1659-95
Vocal Ensemble, Deanna Shipley, piano

- Warnung** Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart
 1756-91
Tiffany Miller, soprano, Deanna Shipley, piano
- Der Kuss** Ludwig Van Beethoven
 1770-1827
Jared Edwards, baritone, Tatiana Roitman, piano
- From Italienisches Liederbuch** Hugo Wolf
Schweig' einmal still 1860-1903
*Christyn Schroeder, soprano, Deanna Shipley,
 piano*
- From Das Knaben Wunderhorn** Gustav Mahler
Lob des hohen Verstands 1860-1911
Aimee Davis, soprano, Ralph Lockwood, piano
- Du bist wie eine Blume** Lord Berners
 1883-1950
Deborah LaMee, soprano, Ralph Lockwood, piano
- Vergebliches Ständchen** Johannes Brahms
 1833-97
*Joy Crown, mezzo soprano, David Sparks, baritone
 Ralph Lockwood, piano*

- Ballade des Gros Dindons** Emmanuel Chabrier
 1841-94
Danielle Bond, soprano, Rubia Santos, piano
- Daphénéo** Erik Satie
 1866-1925
Laura Targosz, Deanna Shipley, piano
- Je n'ai pas la Plume de ma Tante** Anna Russell
 1911
Amy Heldman, soprano, Te-Hui Lin, piano
- Chanson de Bébé** Gioacchino Rossini
 1792-1868
Marisa Brown, soprano, Ralph Lockwood, piano

- Duetto Buffo di Due Gatti** Gioacchino Rossini
*Aniuska Garcia, soprano, Lura Penland, soprano,
 Rubia Santos, piano*

There will be a 10-minute intermission

- Nonsense Rhymes by Edward Lear** Karel Dřofnatzki
Gongdichtung 1852-1924
Aniuska Garcia, Rubia Santos
- The Absent Barber**
Jared Edwards, Tatiana Roitman
- The Aquiline Snub**
Christyn Schroeder, Deanna Shipley
- Tone Poem**
Deborah LaMee, Ralph Lockwood
- The Cow and the Coward**
Aimee Davis, Ralph Lockwood
- A Visit of Elizabeth**
David Sparks, Ralph Lockwood
- There Are Fairies at the Bottom of Our Garden** Liza Lehmann
 1862-1918
Marisa Brown, Ralph Lockwood
- Nobody Loves a Fairy When She's Forty** Arthur Le Clerq
Amy Heldman, Te-Hui Lin

- The 12 Days of Christmas** Frederick Silver
Joy Crown, Tatiana Roitman
- From Childhood Fables** Irving Fine
Tigerroo 1914-62
Tiffany Miller, Deanna Shipley
- Love in the Dictionary** Celius Dougherty
 1902-86
Danielle Bond, Rubia Santos
- Modest Maid** Marc Blitzstein
 1905-64
Lura Penland, Marina Pintos
- Lime Jello Marshmallow** William Bolcom
Cottage Cheese Surprise 1938
Laura Targosz, Deanna Shipley

- I Bought Me a Cat** Aaron Copland
 1900-90
Vocal Ensemble, Deanna Shipley
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Some Inane Comments by Professor Warren Hoffer and Wonderfully Helpful Translations by Lots of Smart People

Humor in Song has a long and distinguished career, in many languages, over many centuries. And why not? The human condition delights in caprice, whimsy, satire, irony, puns, the comic, the absurdly incongruous, the ludicrous, the facetious, etc. etc. Humor dispels sadness and illness, it shows intelligence, it is very social, it pricks the bubble of pretentiousness and conventions. And, for many years, it has delighted us as singers.

Tonight's program covers a lot of humorous ground, from that smile at the corner of the lip to the guffaw. We hope that you enjoy the songs as much as we enjoyed preparing them.

I have included some comments, both personal and by the composers themselves. Do giggle sotto voce...

What Can We Poor Females Do

The eternal activity of young men chasing young women was alive and well in the late 1700s, and much of the music of the time enjoyed that fact. Although one might take this song seriously, we like to think that possibly these young ladies did enjoy the attention anyway.

Take Not a Woman's Anger III

These young studs seem not at all thwarted by the young ladies of the first song. With bravado they believe that "if one won't, another will," providing they chase long and hard. Some things haven't changed over the centuries.

Warnung (A Warning)

Anyone miss the moral of the poem? Or maybe this song relates to "Lime Jello Marshmallow Cottage Cheese Surprise" later in the recital...I get confused...

Translation: Men look ever for sly morsels, if left to themselves,
catching girls is easy if you know how to surprise.
Is that any wonder? Girls are full-blooded, sly morsels are so sweet.
But sly morsels before the meal ruin the appetite.
Many a girl who's forgotten that has lost her most precious possession, and with it, her beloved.
Fathers, let it be a warning, lock your sugar-drops away, lock your young girls in.

Der Kuss (The Kiss)

It distresses me, as a tenor, to hear a baritone sing this song, as we tenors know that we are truly the great and successful lovers...

Trans.: I was with Chloe all alone, and I wished to kiss her: but she said she would scream, vain effort would it be.
But I dared and kissed her, although she did resist.
And did she not scream? Oh yes, she screamed, but not until long after!

Schweig einmal still, du garstger Schwätzer dort!

I'm pleased to announce that the singer she abhors is actually that baritone!

Trans.: Do be quiet, you beastly ranter! I find your cursed singing revolting.
Even if you kept it up till morning, you'd still not manage a decent song.
Do be quiet and get to bed! I'd rather hear a donkey's serenade.

Lob des hohen Verstands (Praise of High Intellect)

What pleasure Mahler, the master musician, must have had in setting this poem about The Critic.

Trans.: Once in a deep vale cuckoo and nightingale decided to make a bet: to sing for the masterpiece, either won by art or by luck: the victor would get the palm.
The cuckoo said: "if it pleases you, I have chosen the judge," and named the donkey right away. "Because he has two ears so big, he can hear so much better and will know what is right!" They quickly flew before the judge.
When the case was laid before him, he decreed they should sing.
The nightingale sang forth so sweetly! The donkey said: "You bewilder me! Ee-yah! I can't get it into my head!"
The cuckoo quickly started then, his song through Third and Fourth and Fifth. The donkey liked it, he only said: "Wait! Wait! I will pass judgement now. Well have you sung, Nightingale, but Cuckoo, you sing a fine anthem and you stick to the rhythm full well! This I say from my sublime mind! And though it may cost an entire land, by you I let it be won!" Cuckoo! Ee-yah!

Du bist wie eine Blume

This love poem is best known in the beautiful setting by Robert Schumann. But Lord Berners, composer and English eccentric, wrote: "According to one of Heine's biographers, this poem was inspired by a white pig that the poet had met with in the course of a walk in the country. He was, it appears, for some time afterwards, haunted by the thought of the melancholy fate in store for it and the note of foreboding that runs through the poem is thus explained. This fact does not seem to have been sufficiently appreciated by those who have hitherto set the poem to music and the present version is an attempt to restore to the words their rightful significance, while at the same time preserving the sentimental character of the German Lied."

Trans.: You are like a flower, so sweet and fair and chaste;
I look upon you, and melancholy creeps into my heart.
It seems to me as if I must lay my hands upon your head,
praying that God will keep you so chaste and fair and sweet.

Vergebliches Ständchen (Vain Serenade)

Our young romantically inclined baritone could use some help here. Feel free to offer advice after the recital.

Trans.: Good evening, sweetheart, good evening my dear! My love has brought me here: open your door to me!
"My door is locked and will stay locked to you. Mother warned me that if I let you in, it would be the end of me!"
The night is so cold, the wind so icy, my heart will freeze, my love die; open up for me, child!
"Let it die then, let it die forever! Go home to bed! Good night to you, my lad!"

Ballade des Gros Dindons (The Ballad of the Fat Turkeys)

Talk about musical characterization!

Trans.: The big fat turkeys march stupidly in a row across the fields, morning and evening, with a solemn, tranquil tread. They go in a docile procession before the shepherdess who spins and hums old songs. They look like fat merchants, idiotically pompous, or roguish bailiffs regarding one hostilely. Their red pendants oscillate, they seem to be gravely holding council among the thistles. Never having found the nightingale's song touching, they stumble after one of their own, dignified as a town councillor, and when the distant angelus tolls its slow "din, don," they return to their domicile. Pompous and portly, their only penchant is towards the practical and useful. For them love and sweet songs are futile pastimes. The bourgeoisie of the bird world, they fatten their bellies and scorn all romance, the big fat turkeys.

Daphénéo

"This crazy little dialogue" (Pierre Bernac) between the two characters humorously points up a problem sometimes found in French pronunciation: 'un oisetier' and 'noisetier' sound very similar. Poor simple Chrysaline, Daphénéo's attempts to explain the difference completely surprises and mystifies her!

Trans.: Tell me, Daphénéo, what is that tree which has for fruit birds who weep?
That tree, Chrysaline, is a bird-tree.

Ah!...

I thought that hazel trees had hazel nuts, Daphénéo.

Yes, Chrysaline, the hazel trees have hazel nuts, but the bird-trees have birds who weep.

Ah!...

Je n'ai pas la Plume de ma Tante

Comedian Anna Russell writes: "The singer with no voice whatever [not applicable to Ms. Heldman!] is well catered for these days. The French art song is a particularly fertile source of supply. These generally have utterly beautiful words, set to rather intermittent music, and all the singer is really called upon to contribute is SOUL.

By the way, it is helpful if people can catch a word here and there that they have heard before—like amour or something—because then they'll all feel one up on everybody else and applaud like mad at the end. This song has been specially arranged with this point in mind." Berlitz anyone?

Trans.: I don't have my aunt's feather but I have the gardener's umbrella.
Close the door, give me some sugar, open the window, please.
Tonight I ate at my mother's house, filet mignon, and a good salad.
Do you want a cup of coffee? No thank you, that makes me sick.
Good night madam, good night sir, charmed to have made your acquaintance.
Go find the concierge and ask him nicely to give something to drink to the valet.

Chanson de Bébé (The Baby's Song)

Rossini, bon vivant, endowed with a scandalous sense of humor, in his later years was semi-invalided, also a hypochondriac, and was cared for by his long suffering wife. Possibly in this song he is making fun of himself and his situation.

Trans.: Mama, the big baby calls you; he has bobo: you say I'm nice when I want to make dodo.
I want some jam, it's good nanan; the currants are ripe, give me some,
I want some, Mama. I want some good nanan. I have bobo, Mama.
Kertchoo! Papa, Pipi, Mama, caca.
Baby wants the song of the sapper in "Bluebeard," a tune that's very scary.
Mama, your voice is so sweet singing that, it would beat Schneider and Theresa.
Kertchoo! Papa, Pipi, Mama, caca.
My nurse when she rocks me calls me her jewel; a devil, if I'd rather play with toys.
When I am not good, they promise me a whipping. But I just make a row; it works pretty well.
I want some good nanan. I have bobo, Mama.
Kertchoo! Papa, Pipi, Mama, caca.

Duetto Buffo di Due Gatti (Cat Duet)

This is a perfect song for singers who do not want to learn a lot of words, especially in a foreign language.

Trans.: Miaou

-----INTERMISSION (but don't go away, the best? is yet to come)-----

You have probably never heard of Karel Drofatzky, and shouldn't have, as he didn't exist. Change Karel to Charles, read Drofatzky backwards (drop the ky), and you have the real composer, having a bit of fun. Edward Lear, of course, did exist, and his limericks continue to delight us today.

The composer, the "Gospodin," enjoyed the time honored tradition of plagiarizing someone else's music and adapting it to his own needs. At least he filched from great composers. He also added afterthoughts of scholarly profundity to each of the songs, and I have added them below for your amazement.

The Cow and the Coward

"The Gospodin has with unwonted honesty informed us of his indebtedness to another composer for this work. But even in this admission he appears to be disingenuous; for he calls our attention to the striking suitability of the sudden change of harmony on the word 'smile.' This stroke of genius we have ascertained to be the work of the late Monsieur de Paris, the famous Professor of the Motor-Guillotine in the Conservatoire. We offer however that these two distinguished artists are, after all, but partners in iniquity, for even with our slight knowledge of the musical Classics, we seem to trace passages from Beethoven's Symphonies and Fidelio, both in the thematic material and in the method of construction and instrumentation. We are not sure therefore if Monsieur de Paris would not have been better employed in following his own craft, and applying the closure to the musical existence of our gifted contributor."

The Absent Barber

"When Gospodin Drofatzki forwarded to us the manuscript of this song, we felt sure that we traced in it the style and method of a much greater composer than he. As Dr. F. Chrysander had joined the majority, we submitted it to a council of experts, under the Presidency of the Rt. Hon A.J.B-r, M.P., who pronounced it to be undoubtedly a lost song by Handel. A minority report was, however, issued by two members of the Council, Professor Ebenezer Prout and Mr. Sedley Taylor, who, while fully admitting that it was in the accepted style of the great Master, would only allow that it was copied from his manuscript, a fact which did not prove that Handel had not himself copied it from another's. As a proof of this possibility they pointed out the curious fact, that the passage "Have all made their nests" was a plagiarism of a very unusual and outrageous kind; the actual notes of "Home, sweet Home" having been bodily transferred to this aria, before Sir Henry Bishop had even been able to write them down. This however, they admit, is an additional proof that Handel, and not Drofatzki, was at any rate the copyist of the song."

The Aquiline Snub

"A little careful reasoning soon enabled us to identify the real author of this touching Arioso. The owner of the nose (obviously a long one, though not too long) was a remarkable man. The musical style was that of a remarkable man; that remarkable man had a long nose; ergo the remarkable man must be John Sebastian Bach..."

Tone Poem

"From the opening phrase we conjecture that he first intended it as a setting of the well-known poem beginning, 'There was a young lady of Rimini whose conduct was niminy-piminy', but the subsequent treatment obviously suggests the pathetic vocal efforts of some of the compatriot prima-donnas, with whom he had professional dealings during his career. Whether original or not, we cannot but admire the final gasps of the over-strained and over-worked singer, as she sinks from the high C (optional) to the floor."

Gongdichtung

"This olla-podrida fairly puzzled us, but after infinite trouble we arrived at a possible solution of the composer's intentions. He evidently wished to immortalize himself, and in so doing he drew largely, if unconsciously, upon the tone-poems of others. It is interesting to see that he at moments recognised the fact, and attempted to obliterate his plagiarisms by the use of the gong. His free use of the Bavarian language betrays somewhat the source of his ideas. His apotheosis of the murdered Tamtam-player suggests also a Teutonic or Teudominant Walhalla, for which he had difficulty in finding the key."

A Visit of Elizabeth

"In his hurry to assimilate another man's work, the Gospodin seems to have become mixed in his characters. He forgets that it was not Elizabeth, but another more ancient and less respectable lady to whom Wagner assigned the part of the villain in Tristannhäuser. To our gentle remonstrances, the Leary composer would only reply "I sold yer, as 'e sold 'er."

There are Fairies at the Bottom of Our Garden and Nobody Loves a Fairy When She's Forty

Fairy songs were very popular early in the century. These two selections are typical; lyrical, sweet, and to our modern ears hopelessly out of style. Some years ago I sent the latter song, as a joke, to a middle-aged female singer friend. I've never heard from her since...

The 12 Days of Christmas

Surely this could be a favorite of every Christmas curmudgeon!

Tigerrooo

This song is one of many light-hearted pieces in a set titled Childhood Fables. I chose it because my wife and I are owned by three cats. Personally I prefer dogs, but the macho cat, the tiger, seemed a good compromise...or something or other...but I digress...

Love in the Dictionary

It is hard to get students to study and use the library. Looking up key words like this really helps!

Modest Maid

Humor can also be naughty (which to you, sophisticated audience, is like saying the sky is blue).

Lime Jello Marshmallow Cottage Cheese Surprise

Barf bags will be distributed as you leave the theater.

I Bought Me a Cat

This song was chosen to show off the extraordinary gifts for animal sounds in Studio E225, representing the degree of seriousness and attention to the highest attainments of onomatopoeia, characteristic of university vocal study.