Program Notes and Text/Translations

Reynaldo Hahn (1874-1947) was born in Venezuela to a German father and Spanish mother. His family moved to Paris when he was three years old, and he made a career as a composer, singer, director of Paris Opéra, music critic, and conductor in France. Hahn predominantly wrote vocal music—approximately 84 *mélodies* (French art songs) for solo voice and over 25 stage works, including operettas, operas, and musical comedies—and performed his songs throughout Paris salons. Hahn also loved Mozart's music. Not only did Hahn organized a Mozart Festival in Paris and conducted *Don Giovanni* at the Salzburg Festival, but he also composed the musical comedy *Mozart* in 1925. During 1913 and 1914, Hahn gave a series of lectures defining his interpretation of style and taste in singing, which were later compiled into a book titled *Du chant* (*On Singing*). Hahn's *mélodies* require sensitive and delicate singing.

French symbolist poet Paul Verlaine's (1844-1896) *Fêtes galantes* (1869) is a collection of poems inspired by the graceful paintings of Jean-Antoine Watteau (1684-1721) that depict elegant ladies and gallant cavaliers exchanging courtly pleasures. **"Fêtes galantes"** (Gallant Festivities, 1892) has been set to music by numerous composers—including Gabriel Fauré and Claude Debussy under the title "Mandoline." The vocal line in the beginning of Hahn's "Fêtes galantes" resembles Fauré's setting.

Fêtes Galantes
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[1] 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.
(Paul Verlaine)

Gallant Festivities
The givers of serenades
and the lovely listeners
exchange the tasteless words
under the singing branches.

There is Thyrsis and Amyntas,
and there is the eternal Clytander,
and there is Damis who, for many
cruel ones make many tender verses.

Their short silk jackets,
their long dresses with tails,
their elegance, their joy
and their soft blue shadows,

Whirl in the ecstasy
of a rose and grey moon,
and the mandolin chatters
among the shivers of the breeze.
(*Translation by Youngmi Kim)*

"Mai" (May, 1889) is set to a Parnassian poem by François Coppée (1842-1908). The Parnassian poets rejected the emphasis on subjective expression that characterized the Romantic period in support of a strict formal structure. Hahn indicates the detailed musical markings in his songs. The narrator describes the longing for her exiled lover during May, when only lilacs heal her pain. In this piece, Hahn portrays the vocal lines with a speech-like rhythm in a modest vocal range.

Mai
Depuis un mois, chère exilée,
Loin de mes yeux tu t'en allas,
Et j'ai vu fleurir des lilas
Avec ma peine inconsolée.

Seul, je fuis ce ciel clair et beau
Dont l'ardent effluve me trouble,
Car l'horreur de l'exil se double
De la splendeur du renouveau.

En vain le soleil a souri,
Au printemps je ferme ma porte,
Et veux seulement qu'on m'apporte
Un rameau de lilas fleuri!

Car l'amour dont mon âme est pleine
Y trouve, parmi ses douleurs
Ton regard dans ces chères fleurs
Et dans leur parfum ton haleine.
(François Coppée)

May
It has been a month, dear exiled one,
since you went away from my gaze,
and I have seen the lilacs blooming
with my disconsolate pain.

Alone, I flee this clear and lovely sky
whose burning ray troubles me,
for the horror of the exile doubles
with the splendor of renewal (spring).

In vain, the sun has smiled,
To spring I close my door
and I wish only that one brings me
a branch of lilacs in bloom!

For the love with which my soul is filled
it finds among its sorrow
your look in those dear flowers
and in their fragrance-your breath.
(*Translation by Youngmi Kim)*

"L'heure exquise" (The Exquisite Hour) is from Hahn's song cycle *Chansons grises* (Gray Songs, 1887-90) to poems by Verlaine. This particular poem is taken from Verlaine's *La bonne chanson* (The Beautiful Song, 1870), which includes 21 poems. This song is one of Hahn's most well-known songs due to its delicacy and intimacy. The loudest dynamic marking in this piece never exceeds *piano*. The vocal lines are speech-like, with stepwise motion and narrow intervals; however, there are buoyant leaps that create magical moment such as "O bien aimé" (O my beloved), "Rêvons" (Dream), "C'est l'heure exquise" (It is the Exquisite Hour). At both "O bien aimé" and "C'est l'heure exquise," the twirling arpeggios stops, creating a beautiful moment. This piece describes secret lovers in the woods on a moonlit night. Fauré also set this poem in his song cycle, *La bonne chanson* (1892-94).

L'heure exquise
La lune blanche luit dan les bois
De chaque branche part une voix
Sous la ramée… O bienaimée!

L'étang reflète, profonde miroir,
La silhouette du saule noir
Où le vent pleure… Rêvons! C'est l'heure…

Un vaste et tendre apaisement semble descender
Du firmament que l'astre irise…
C'est l'heure exquise.
(Paul Verlaine)

The Exquisite Hour
The white moon shines in the woods
Each branch shares a voice
Under the arbor… O beloved!

The pond reflects, deep mirror,
The silhouette of the black willow
Where the wind weeps… Dream! It is the hour…

A vast and tender appeasement seems to descend
From the sky where stars gleam…
It is the exquisite hour.
(*Translation by Youngmi Kim)*

Hahn composed one of his early songs, **"Si mes vers avaient des ailes"** (If My Songs Had Wings, 1888), when he was thirteen years old, dedicating this charming song to his sister Maria. Hahn's early songs are influenced by his composition teacher, Jules Massenet (1842-1912), whose *mélodies* feature a delicate sentimentality. This piece uses the poetry of Victor Hugo (1802-1885) and is in strophic form with three verses. The narrator wants to carry her songs to his beloved as if her songs had wings like a bird, spirit, and love.

Si mes vers avaient des ailes
Mes vers fuiraient, doux et frêles,
Vers votre jardin si beau,
Si mes vers avaient des ailes comme l'oiseau!

Ils voleraient, étincelles,
Vers votre foyer qui rit,
Si mes vers avaient des ailes comme l'esprit…

Près de vous, purs et fidèles,
Ils accourraient, nuit et jour,
Si mes vers avaient des ailes comme l'amour!
(Victor Hugo)

If my songs had wings
My songs would flee, sweet and frail,
To your lovely garden,
If my songs had wings like a bird!

They would fly, sparks
To your smiling home,
If my songs had wings like the spirit…

Close to you, pure and faithful,
They would rush night and day,
If my songs had wings like love!
(*Translation by Youngmi Kim)*

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart (1756-1791) composed over thirty concert arias for soprano and orchestra. The concert aria is similar to the massive opera aria: a mixture of recitative, slow-tempo aria, and fast tempo aria. In the eighteenth century, the insertion aria (or suitcase aria) replaced an original aria or was added to an opera. As was common practice at the time, Mozart composed his concert arias for specific singers who occasionally performed these arias. When the existing aria did not fit their vocal range or strengths, singers would substitute the aria to showcase their vocal prowess.

German coloratura soprano Aloysia Weber (1760-1839) was Mozart's sister-in-law. For her debut as Clorinda in Pasquale Anfossi's (1727-1797) *Il curioso indiscreto* (Unwise Curiosity, 1783), Mozart composed two insertion arias, including **"Vorrei spiegarvi, oh Dio!"** (I want to tell you, oh God!) in Act 1, Scene 6. Clorinda's fiancé, Marchese Calandrino, wants to test Clorinda's fidelity and asks Count Ripaverde—who is in love with Calandrino's niece Emilia—to seduce Clorinda. Clorinda and Ripaverde fall in love. In this aria, Clorinda denies to God her feeling about Ripaverde (*adagio* part) and begs Ripaverde to go back to Emilia (*allegro* and *più allegro* parts). This aria has a relatively high tessitura, and the range comprises two and a half octaves.

Vorrei spiegarvi, oh Dio!
Qual è l'affano mio;
Ma mi condanna il fato
a piangere e tacer.

Arder non può il mio core
Per chi vorrebbe amore
E fa che cruda io sembri,
Un barbaro dover.

Ah conte, partite, correte, fuggite
Lontano da me;
La vostra diletta Emillia v'aspetta,
Languir non la fate, è degna d'amor.

Ah stelle spietate!
Nemiche mi siete.
Mi perdo, s'ei resta, oh Dio!
Partite, correte, d'mor on parlate,
È vostro il suo cor.
(Anonymous)

I want to tell you, oh God!
What my suffering is;
But the fate condemns me
To weep and keep silent.

My heart cannot burn
For the one whom I want to love
And makes that I may seem cruel
And barbarous.

Ah Count, leave, run, flee
Far from me;
Your beloved Emilia awaits you,
Don't make her languish, she is worthy of love.

Ah, pitiless stars!
You are hostile to me.
I will die if he stays, oh God!
Leave, run, don't speak of love.
Her heart is yours.
(*Translation by Youngmi Kim)*

Amy Beach (1867-1944) was the first female American composer who had a successful career in her lifetime. She received her musical training in the United States and gave public recitals, playing works by Handel, Beethoven, Chopin, and her own piano pieces from the age of seven. After she married physician Harris Aubrey Beach in 1885, she focused on composing rather than performing; however, she established her career as a pianist again in Europe after her husband and mother died in 1910 and 1911, respectively. Beach wrote over 300 pieces in a variety of genres, including a symphony (famous "Gaelic" Symphony), a piano concerto, an opera, numerous pieces of chamber music, choral works, 35 piano pieces, and 117 art songs. She also published 12 articles on writing music. Beach's sensitivity to the relationship between music and text is evident in her art songs in English, German, and French. She chose texts by well-known poets, including Browning, Shakespeare, Victor Hugo, Goethe, Heine, and contemporary poets. Beach often rearranged her solo songs into chamber instruments and voice or choral arrangements.

Three Browning Songs uses lyrics by Romantic poet Robert Browning (1812-1889), published in 1900 for the Browning Society of Boston. Beach took the texts for the song "The Year's at the Spring" from a verse drama *Pippa passes* (1841); "Ah, Love, but a day!" from *James Lee's Wife* (published in 1916), and "I send my heart up to Thee!" from *Bells and Pomegranates* (1841). In **"The Year's at the Spring,"** Pippa strolls through the hillside, reveling in her happiness. Consistent triplet chords appear in the piano accompaniment, resembling Schubert's "Erlkönig" (Erlking), while the vocal line displays sequential phrases in a high tessitura.

Beach demonstrates chromaticism, modulation, and long vocal line in **"Ah, Love, But a Day."** The role of the piano accompaniment is as crucial as a vocal line in Beach's songs. Beach arranged this piece for voice, viola, and piano, where both voice and viola are equally important. This modified strophic song incorporates natural imagery such as losing the affection of one's love as seen in the first verse and the optimism and hope evoked in the second verse.

"I Send my Heart Up To Thee!" is more harmonically complex than the other two pieces. In this piece, Beach frequently modulates, emphasizing each emotional change in the text. The background of this poem takes place in Venice, and the piece sounds like barcarole, the Venetian gondolier's song with sixteenth notes in the piano accompaniment resembling waves. Beach varies the rhythm by placing duple and triplet melodies over 9/8 meter. This piece ends with an echo of the opening melody, marked as *pianissimo*, which unifies the song. Beach indicated frequent tempo changes as Schumann did in his lieder.

The Year's at the Spring
And day's at the morn;
Morning's at seven;
The hill-side's dew-pearled;
The year's at the spring;
And day's at the morn;
The lark's on the wing;
The snail's on the thorn;
God's in his heaven,
All's right with the world!

Ah, Love, but a day!
And the world has changed!
The sun's away, and the bird estranged;
The wind has dropped, and the sky's deranged;
Summer has stopped.

Look in my eyes!
Wilt thou change too?
Should I fear surprise? Shall I find aught new
In the old and dear, in the good and true
With the changing year?

I send my heart up to thee, all my heart in this my singing,
For the stars help me, and the sea, and the sea bears part;
The very night is clinging closer to Venice' streets to leave on space
Above me, whence thy face may light my joyous heart to thee, to thee its dwelling place.
(Robert Browning)

Richard Strauss (1864-1949) is regarded as the most successful German composer with his tone poems and operas. He was one of the few composers who balanced his writing between vocal and instrumental music, including songs, operas, tone poems, symphonies, concertos, chamber pieces, and piano pieces. Strauss was also interested in poetry, art history, philosophy, and aesthetics as was Wagner. Some of Strauss's earliest compositions were German lieder, of which he composed over 200 songs, including Op. 10 (1885). While his early lieder followed the German Romantic tradition, Strauss composed his later lieder for orchestra and voice. In 1894, Strauss married a talented opera singer, Pauline de Ahna (1863-1950), and wrote many of his songs specifically for her until she retired in 1897. As an active conductor, he performed many of his own compositions, arranging various orchestral lieder (*Gesänge*) for many orchestral concerts where he and Pauline were invited to perform.

Strauss's first song collection, *Letzte Blätter*, Op. 10, consists of eight songs set to the Austrian poet Herrmann von Gilm's (1812-1864) *Letzte Blätter* (Last Leaves). Several songs, including "Allerseelen" and "Zueignung," are favorite recital pieces these days. Although Strauss originally composed Op.10 for Heinrich Vogl (1845-1900), German heldentenor, any voice can perform this set. **"Nichts"** (Nothing) is the second piece of Op. 10. The narrator in this light song tells that he knows nothing about the queen, but people keep asking him about her and he can only say, "Nothing." The main melodic theme appears throughout the piece in both the piano accompaniment and the vocal line. Unlike Strauss's other songs, this piece has relatively shorter phrases, with breath marking in the piano part.

The third song of Op. 10, **"Die Nacht"** (The night), shows the intimacy as seen in Hanh's "L'heure exquise." The story follows the dark night as it steps from the wood and steals the light, flowers, colors, sweetness, and even the narrator's beloved. Strauss gives the accompaniment a thinner texture, starting from a single repeated eighth note to thirds and chords in the bass line. Dynamically, this piece stays in *pianissimo* with a *crescendo* marking in words "rücke näher" (come, closer).

Nichts
Nennen soll ich, sagt ihr,
Meine Königin im Liederreich?
Toren, die ihr seid,
ich kenne sie am wenigsten von euch.

Fragt mich nach der Augen Farbe,
Fragt mich nach der Stimme Ton,
Fragt nach Gang und Tanz und Haltung,
Ach, und was weiss ich davon!

Ist die Sonne nicht die Quelle alles Lebens,
alles Lichts?
Und was wissen von derselben
Ich und ihr und alle? Nichts.

(Herrmann von Gilm)

Nothing
You say I should name
My queen in the realm of love?
Fools that you are,
I know her least of all of you.

Ask me about the color of her eyes,
Ask me about the tone of her voice,
Ask me about her walk, her dancing, her
posture, Ah, what do I know about it?

Is not the sun the source of all life,
all light?
And what do we know about it,
I and you and all? Nothing.

(*Translation by Youngmi Kim)*

Die Nacht
Aus dem Walde tritt die Nacht,
Aus den Bäumen schleicht sie leise,
Schaut sich um in weitem Kreise, nun gib acht.

Alle Lichter dieser Welt,
Alle Blumen, alle Farben löscht sie aus
Und stiehlt die Garben weg von Feld.

Alles nimmt sie, was nur hold,
Nimmt das Silber weg des Stroms,
Nimmt von Kupferdach des Doms weg das Gold.

Ausgeplündert steht der Strauch, rükke näher,
Seel' an Seele; O die Nacht, mir bangt,
Sie stehle dich mir auch.
(Herrmann von Gilm)

The Night
The night steps from the woods,
She (night) sneaks quietly out of the trees.
It looks around in a wide circle, now pay attention.

All the lights of this earth,
All flowers, all colors she wipes
And steals the sheaves away from the field.

She takes all, that is sweet,
Takes the silver away from the stream,
Takes the gold from the cathedrals' roof.

The bush stands plundered, come closer,
Soul to soul; I fear, oh the night
Will steal you from me too.
(*Translation by Youngmi Kim)*

Strauss's *Schlichte Weisen* (Simple Tunes), Op. 21 (1887-88) includes five poems from Felix Dahn's (1834-1912) set by the same name. Dahn wrote after visiting a museum that inspired him to make a collection of ancient folk songs. **"All mein Gedanken"** (All my Thoughts) is the first song of Op. 21. This light-hearted piece shows that the person's loving thoughts are traveling to his beloved and knocking on her window to deliver his loving heart. Strauss displays word painting throughout the song. The piano accompaniment—mainly limited to harmonic support—consists of chords with eighth notes, sixteenth notes, or staccato articulation to imitate traveling thoughts. The melismatic passage appearing at "grüssen" (greet) is echoed in the piano accompaniment at the end.

All mein Gedanken
All mein Gedanken, mein Herz und mein Sinn,
Da, wo die Liebste ist, wander sie hin.
Gehn ihres Weges trotz Mauer und Tor,
Da hält kein Riegel, kein Graben nicht vor,
Gehn wie die Vögelein hoch durch die Luft,
Brauchen kein Brücken über Wasser und Kluft,
Finden das Städtlein und finden das Haus,
Finden ihr Fenster aus allen heraus
Und klopfen und rufen:
"Nach auf, lass un sein,
Wir kommen vom Liebsten und grüssen dich fein." *(Felix Dahn)*

All My Thoughts
All my thoughts, my heart and my feeling,
Wander there, where my loved one is.
They go their way despite wall and gate,
They are held up by no bars and no ditches,
They travel like the little birds high in the air,
They need no bridges over water and chasm,
They find the town and the house,
They find her window out of all the others.
And they knock and call:
"Open, let us in,
We come from the lover and greet you kindly."
(*Translation by Youngmi Kim)*

Between 1905 and 1917, Strauss focused on composing operas, including *Salome*, *Elektra*, *Der Rosenkavalier*, *Ariadne auf Naxos*, and his wife's retirement; thus, he did not write any lieder during this period. He resumed writing lieder in 1918 and composed a collection of *Sechs Lieder*, Op. 68 (or Brentano Lieder, 1918) for the light soprano Elisabeth Schumann (1888-1952). Strauss took the text of **"Amor"** (Cupid), the fifth song of Op. 68, from Clemens Brantano's (1778-1842) play *Aloys und Imelde* (1909). Strauss later orchestrated this piece in 1940. In this song, Strauss also

employs word painting through trills or melismatic coloratura passages in words ‘fächelt’ (fans), ‘flügeln’ (wings), ‘Flammen’ (fire), ‘lächelt’ (laughs), and ‘schlauen’ (naughty) to depict a young shepherdess being tricked by a naughty cupid (or child). The blind cupid sits near the fire while he fans his wings (first stanza); the cupid’s wings are set on fire, and he cries for help (second stanza); a good shepherdess helps the cupid, not knowing that her heart is now on fire and the sly cupid is making fun of her (third stanza). Strauss also shows the word-painting with trills or melismatic coloratura.

Amor

An dem Feuer saß das Kind
Amor, Amor und was blind;
Mit den kleinen Flügeln fächelt
In die Flammen er und lächelt,
Fächelt, lächelt, schalues Kind.

Ach, der Flügel brennt dem Kind!
Amor, Amor läuft geschwind,
“O, wie ihn die Glut durchpeinet!”
Flügelschlagend lauter weinet;
In der Hirtin Schoß entrinnt
Hilfeschreiend, das schlaue Kind.

Und die Hirtin hilft dem Kind,
Amor, Amor bös und blind.
“Hirtin sieh, dein Herz entbrennet,
Hast den Schelmnen nicht gekennet.
Sieh, die Flamme wächst geschwinde.
Hüt dich vor dem schlauen Kind!
Fächle, lächle, schlaues Kind.”

(Clemens Brentano)

Cupid

The child was sitting by the fire
Cupid, Cupid and was blind;
With the little wings he fans
In the flames, and he laughs,
Fanning, laughing, naughty child!

Ah, the child’s wing is burning!
Cupid, Cupid runs quickly,
“O how the fire torments him!”
Beating his wings loudly, he cries;
He escapes into the shepherdess’ lap
Crying for help, the naughty child.

And the shepherdess helped the child,
Cupid, Cupid, bad and blind.
“Shepherdess, look, your heart is burning,
Didn’t you recognize the rascal?
See, the flame grows quickly.
Watch out, from the naughty child!
Fans, laughs, naughty child.”

(*Translation by Youngmi Kim)*