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Martin Bruns, *baritone*  
Christoph Hammer, *fortepiano*

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The Franz Liszt Bicentenary Project

*Saturday, October 22, 2011*

*Coolidge Auditorium*

*Library of Congress, Thomas Jefferson Building*

The Library of Congress

Coolidge Auditorium

Saturday, October 22, 2011 – 8:00 pm

MARTIN BRUNS, *baritone* • CHRISTOPH HAMMER, *piano*

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PROGRAM

Freudvoll und leidvoll, op. 84; *transcribed for solo piano by Franz Liszt*, S. 468

Ludwig van BEETHOVEN

Freudvoll und leidvoll, op. 84 (Goethe)

(1770-1827)

Wonne der Wehmut, op. 83, no. 1

Neue Liebe, neues Leben, op. 75, no. 2 (Goethe)

Freudvoll und leidvoll, S. 280 (Goethe)

Franz LISZT

O lieb, so lang du lieben kannst (*Liebesträume*), S. 541/3 (Freiligrath)

(1811-1886)

Seliger Tod, S. 541/2, *transcribed for solo piano by Liszt from his own Liebestäume*, S. 307

Tout n'est qu'images fugitives, WWV 58 (Reboul)

Richard WAGNER

Der Tannenbaum, WWV 50 (Scheuerlin)

(1813-1883)

Ein Fichtenbaum steht einsam, S. 309 (Heine)

Franz LISZT

Vergiftet, sind meine Lieder, S. 289 (Heine)

Oh ! Quand je dors, S. 282 (Hugo)

*Intermission*

Tre Sonetti del Petrarca, S. 270

Franz LISZT

1. *Benedetto sia 'l giorno e 'l mese e l'anno...*

2. *Pace no trovo...*

3. *I' vidi in terra angelici costume...*

Mädchens Wunsch, op. 74, *transcribed for solo piano by Liszt*, S. 480

Frédéric CHOPIN

(1810-1849)

Petrarca-Chopin: Tre Madrigali, op. 74

Mario CASTELNUOVO-TEDESCO

1. *Non al suo amante più Diana piacque*

(1895-1968)

2. *Perch'al viso d'Amor portava insegna*

3. *Nova angetta sovra l'ale accorta*

Des Tages laute Stimmen schweigen, S. 337 (von Saar)

Franz LISZT

“O du mein holder Abendstern” (*Tannhäuser*)

Richard WAGNER

“O du mein holder Abendstern” (*Tannhäuser*),

*transcribed for solo piano by Liszt*, S. 444

Es muss ein Wunderbares sein, S. 314 (von Redwitz)

Franz LISZT

**Freudvoll und leidvoll**

Franz Liszt, S. 280 (1844/c1848); Ludwig van Beethoven, op. 84 (1810) /  
 (Johann Wolfgang von Goethe (1749-1832), *Egmont*: "Clärchens Lied" (Act III; 1788))

Freudvoll  
 Und leidvoll,  
 Gedankenvoll sein;  
 Langen  
 Und bangen  
 In schwebender Pein;  
 Himmelhoch jauchzend  
 Zum Tode betrübt;  
 Glücklich allein  
 Ist die Seele, die liebt.

**Joyful and sorrowful**

Joyful  
 And sorrowful,  
 Thoughtful;  
 Longing  
 And anxious  
 In constant anguish;  
 Skyhigh rejoicing  
 Despairing to death;  
 Happy alone  
 Ist die Seele, die liebt.

*(Translated by Richard Morris)*

**Wonne der Wehmut**

Ludwig van Beethoven, op. 83, no. 1 (1810) / (Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, 1775)

Trocknet nicht, trocknet nicht,  
 Tränen der ewigen Liebe !  
 Ach, nur dem halbgetrockneten Auge  
 Wie öde, wie tot die Welt ihm  
 erscheint !  
 Trocknet nicht, trocknet nicht,  
 Tränen unglücklicher Liebe !

**The Joy of sadness**

Do not run dry, do not run dry,  
 Tears of eternal love!  
 Even to the half-dry eye  
 How desolate and dead the world  
 appears!  
 Do not run dry, do not run dry,  
 Tears of unhappy love!

*(Translated by Emily Ezust)*

**Neue Liebe, neues Leben**

Ludwig van Beethoven, op. 75, no. 2 (1809) / (Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, 1775)

Herz, mein Herz, was soll das geben ?  
 Was bedrängt dich so sehr ?  
 Welch ein fremdes neues Leben !  
 Ich erkenne dich nicht mehr !  
 Weg ist alles, was du liebtest,  
 Weg, warum du dich betrübtest,  
 Weg dein Fleiß und deine Ruh',  
 Ach, wie kamst du nur dazu !

**New love, new life**

Heart, my heart, what does this mean?  
 What is besieging you so?  
 What a strange new life!  
 I do not know you any longer.  
 Gone is all that you loved,  
 Gone is what troubled you,  
 Gone is your industry and peace,  
 Alas! -- how did you come to this?

Fesselt dich die Jugendblüte,  
 Diese liebliche Gestalt,  
 Dieser Blick voll Treu  
 und Güte  
 Mit unendlicher Gewalt ?  
 Will ich rasch mich ihr entziehen,  
 Mich ermannen, ihr entfliehen,

Does youthful bloom shackle you,  
 This lovely figure  
 Whose gaze is full of fidelity  
 and goodness,  
 With endless power?  
 If I rush to escape her,  
 To take heart and flee her,

Führet mich im Augenblick  
Ach, mein Weg zu ihr zurück.

I am led in a moment,  
Alas, back to her.

Und an diesem Zauberfädchen,  
Das sich nicht zerreißen läßt,  
Hält das liebe, lose Mädchen  
Mich so wider Willen fest,  
Muß in ihrem Zauberkreise  
Leben nun auf ihre Weise.  
Die Veränderung, ach wie groß!  
Liebe, Liebe, laß mich los!

And with this magic thread  
That cannot be ripped,  
The dear, mischievous maiden  
Holds me fast against my will;  
In her magic circle I must  
Live now in her way.  
The change, alas - how great!  
Love, Love, let me free!

*(Translated by Emily Ezust)*

**O lieb, so lang du lieben kannst!**

Franz Liszt, S. 541/3 (1843-50) / (Ferdinand Freiligrath (1810-1876))

**O love, so long as you can!**

O lieb, so lang du lieben kannst!  
O lieb, so lang du lieben magst!  
Die Stunde kommt, die Stunde kommt,  
Wo du an Gräbern stehst und klagst!

O love, so long as you can!  
O love, so long as you may!  
The hour comes, the hour comes,  
When you will stand by graves  
and weep!

Und Sorge, daß dein Herz glüht  
Und Liebe hegt und Liebe trägt,  
So lang ihm noch ein ander Herz  
In Liebe warm entgegenschlägt.

And let it be that your heart glows  
And nurtures and carries love,  
As long as another heart is still  
Warmly bestruck by love for you!

Und wer dir seine Brust erschließt,  
O tu ihm, was du kannst, zulieb!  
Und mach ihm jede Stunde froh,  
Und mach ihm keine Stunde trüb.

And to one who spills his breast to you,  
O, to him, do what you can, in Love!  
And make him happy for each moment,  
And never let him be sad for one.

Und hüte deine Zunge wohl,  
Bald ist ein böses Wort gesagt!  
O Gott, es war nicht böse gemeint, --  
Der andre aber geht und klagt.

And guard your tongue tightly,  
In case any slight escapes your mouth!  
O God, it was not meant that way, --  
But the other recoils, hurt and sighing.

*(Translator unidentified)*

**Tout n'est qu'images fugitives**

Richard Wagner, WWV 58 (1839) / (Jean Reboul, 1796-1864)

**All is but fugitive images**

Tout n'est qu'images fugitives,  
coupe d'amertume ou de miel,  
chansons joyeuses ou plaintives  
abusent des lèvres fictives;  
il n'est rien de vrai, que le ciel!

All is but fugitive images,  
a cup of bitterness or of honey,  
joyous or plaintive songs  
exploiting imaginary lips;  
nothing is real, save heaven!

Tout soleil naît, s'élève et tombe ;  
tout trône est artificiel,  
la plus haute gloire succombe,  
tout s'épanouit pour la tombe,  
et rien n'est brillant que le ciel !

Navigateur d'un jour d'orage,  
jouet des vagues, le mortel,  
repoussé de chaque rivage,  
ne voit qu'écueils sur son passage,  
et rien n'est calme que le ciel !

All sunlight is born, rises and falls;  
all thrones are illusory,  
the greatest glory succumbs,  
all blossoms are destined for the tomb,  
and nothing shines, save heaven!

A navigator on a stormy day  
is but the plaything of the waves,  
a mortal, driven from every shore,  
sees on his way only threatening reefs,  
and nothing is calm, save heaven!

*(Translated by Kevin LaVine)*

### **Der Tannenbaum**

Richard Wagner, WWV 50 (1839) / (Georg Scheurlin (1802-1872))

Der Tannenbaum steht schweigend,  
Einsam auf grauer Höh';  
Der Knabe schaukelt im Nachen  
Entlang dem blauen See.

Tief in sich selbst versunken  
Die Tanne steht und sinnt,  
Der Knabe kos't der Welle,  
Die schäumend vorüberrinnt.

"Du Tannenbaum dort oben,  
Du alter finstrer Gesell,  
Was schaust du stets so trübe  
Auf mich zu dieser Stell' ?"

Da rühret er mit Trauern  
Der dunklen Zweige Saum,  
Und spricht in leisen Schauern,  
Der alte Tannenbaum :

"Daß schon die Axt mich  
suchet  
Zu deinem Todenschrein,  
Das macht mich stets so trübe,  
Gedenk' ich Knabe, dein."

### **The Fir-tree**

The fir-tree stands silent,  
Alone on a grey eminence;  
The boy sails in a boat  
Across the blue lake.

Deeply absorbed in itself  
The fir-tree stands and thinks,  
The boy caresses the waves  
As they foam past.

"You fir-tree up there,  
You dark old lad,  
Why do you always look so bitterly  
Upon me down here?"

Mournfully it moves  
The edge of its dark branches  
And with a quiet shudder  
The old fir-tree says,

"Because soon the axe will be looking  
for me  
To make your coffin,  
That's what always makes me so bitter,  
Lad, when I think of you."

*(Translated by Malcolm Wren)*

### **Ein Fichtenbaum steht einsam**

Franz Liszt, S. 309 (c1845/1854) /  
(Heinrich Heine (1797-1856), *Buch der Lieder. Lyrisches Intermezzo* (1823))

### **A Spruce tree stands alone**

Ein Fichtenbaum steht einsam  
Im Norden auf kahler Höh' ;  
Ihn schläfert; mit weißer Decke  
Umhüllen ihn Eis und Schnee.

A spruce tree stands alone  
In the north, on the bare heights;  
It slumbers; in a white blanket  
It is surrounded by ice and snow.

Er träumt von einer Palme,  
Die, fern im Morgenland,  
Einsam und schweigend trauert  
Auf brennender Felsenwand.

It dreams of a palm tree,  
Which, far-off in the land of the morning,  
Grieves, alone and mute,  
On a burning, rocky wall.

*(Translated by Emily Ezust)*

**Vergiftet sind meine Lieder**

Franz Liszt, S. 289 (1844/1849-60) / (Heinrich Heine (1797-1856))

Vergiftet sind meine Lieder --  
Wie könnt es anders sein ?  
Du hast mir ja Gift gegossen  
Ins blühende Leben hinein.

**Poisoned are my songs**

Poisoned are my songs --  
How could it be otherwise?  
You have poured poison  
Into my blossoming life.

Vergiftet sind meine Lieder --  
Wie könnt es anders sein ?  
Ich trag' im Herzen viel Schlangen,  
Und dich, Geliebte mein !

Poisoned are my songs --  
How could it be otherwise?  
I bear in my heart many snakes,  
And you, my beloved!

*(Translated by Emily Ezust)*

**Oh ! Quand je dors**

Franz Liszt, S. 282 (1842-49) / (Victor Hugo (1802-1885), *Les Rayons et les ombres* (1840))

Oh ! Quand je dors, viens auprès  
de ma couche,  
Comme à Petrarque apparaissait Laura,  
Et qu'en passant ton haleine  
me touche...  
Soudain ma bouche  
S'entr'ouvrira !

**Oh! As I sleep**

Oh! As I sleep, approach  
my bed,  
As Laura appeared to Petrarch;  
And as you pass, touch me  
with your breath...  
At once my lips  
Will part!

Sur mon front morme où peut-être s'achève  
Un songe noir qui trop longtemps dura,  
Que ton regard comme un astre se lève...  
Et soudain mon rêve  
Rayonnera !

On my sullen face where perhaps  
A dark dream has rested for too long,  
Let your gaze lift it like a star...  
And at once my dream  
Will be radiant!

Puis sur ma lèvre où voltige une flamme,  
Éclair d'amour que Dieu même  
épura,  
Pose un baiser, et d'ange  
deviens femme...

Then on my lips where flutters a flame,  
A flash of love that God himself  
has kept pure,  
Rests a kiss, and from an angel  
become woman...

Soudain mon âme  
S'éveillera !

At once my soul  
Will awaken!

*(Translated by Kevin LaVine)*

### **Tre Sonetti del Petrarca**

Franz Liszt, S. 270 (1842-46/1864-82) / (Francesco Petrarca [Petrarch] (1304-1374))

#### **1. Pace non trovo** (Canzone CXXXIV)

Pace non trovo, e non ho da far guerra,  
E temo, e spero, ed ardo, e son un ghiaccio:  
E volo sopra 'l cielo, e giaccio in terra;  
E nulla stringo, e tutto 'l mondo abbraccio.

#### **I find no peace**

I find no peace, but for war  
am not inclined;  
I fear, yet hope; I burn, yet  
am turned to ice;  
I soar in the heavens, but lie upon  
the ground;  
I hold nothing, though I embrace  
the whole world.

Tal m'ha in prigion, che non m'apre,  
né serra,  
Né per suo mi ritien, né scioglie il laccio,

E non m'uccide Amor, e non mi sferra;  
Né mi vuol vivo, né mi trahe d'impaccio.

Love has me in a prison which he neither  
opens nor shuts fast;  
He neither claims me for his own  
nor loosens my halter;  
He neither slays nor unshackles me;  
He would not have me live,  
yet leaves me with my torment.

Veggio senz'occhi; e non ho lingua e grido;  
E bramo di perir, e chieggo aita;  
Ed ho in odio me stesso, ed amo altrui:

Pascomi di dolor; piangendo rido;  
Eguale mi spiace morte e vita.  
In questo stato son, Donna, per Voi.

Eyeless I gaze, and tongueless I cry out;  
I long to perish, yet plead for succour;  
I hate myself, but love another.

I feed on grief, yet weeping, laugh;  
Death and life alike repel me;  
And to this state I am come, my lady,  
because of you.

*(Translated by Lionel Salter)*

#### **2. Benedetto sia 'l giorno**

Benedetto sia 'l giorno, e 'l mese, e l'anno,  
E la stagione, e 'l tempo, e l'ora, e 'l punto

E 'l bel paese e 'l loco, ov'io fui giunto  
Da' duo begli occhi che legato m'anno;

E benedetto il primo dolce affanno  
Ch'i' ebbi ad esser con Amor congiunto,  
E l'arco e la saette ond' i' fui punto,

#### **Blessed be the day**

Blessed be the day, the month, the year,  
The season, the hour, the moment,  
the lovely scene,

The spot when I was put in thrall  
By two lovely eyes which bind me fast.

And blessed be the first sweet pang  
I suffered when love overwhelmed me,  
The bows and arrows which stung me,

E le piaghe, ch'infino al cor mi vanno.

And the wounds which pierce  
to my heart.

Benedette le voci tante, ch'io

Blessed be the many voices which have  
echoed

Chiamando il nome di Laura ho sparte,  
E i sospiri e le lagrime e 'l desio.

When I have called Laura's name,  
The sighs and tears, the longing;

E benedette sian tutte le carte  
Ov'io fama le acquisto, e il pensier mio,

And blessed be all those writings  
In which I have spread her fame, and  
my thoughts,

Ch'è sol di lei, si ch'altra non v'ha parte.

Which stem from her and center  
upon her alone.

*(Translated by Lionel Salter)*

### 3. I' vidi in terra angelici costume

### I beheld on earth angelic grace

I' vidi in terra angelici costumi,  
E celesti bellezze al mondo sole;

I beheld on earth angelic grace,  
And heavenly beauty unmatched  
in this world,

Tal che di rimembrar mi giova, e dole:  
Che quant'io miro, par sogni, ombre, e fumi.

Such as to rejoice and pain my memory,  
So clouded with dreams, shadows, mists.

E vidi lagrimar que' duo bei lumi,

And I beheld tears spring from those  
two bright eyes,

Ch'han fatto mille volte invidia al sole;  
Ed udi' sospirando dir parole  
Che farian gir i monti, e stare i fiumi.

Which many a time have rivaled the sun,  
And heard words uttered with such sighs  
As to move the mountains and  
to still the rivers.

Amor ! senno ! valor, pietate, e doglia  
Facean piangendo un più dolce concerto  
D'ogni altro, che nel mondo udir si soglia.

Love, wisdom, excellence, pity and grief  
Made in that plaint a sweeter concert  
Than any other to be heard on earth.

Ed era 'l cielo all'armonia s'intento

And heaven on that harmony was  
so intent

Che non si vedea in ramo mover foglia.

That not a leaf upon the bough was  
seen to stir,

Tanta dolcezza avea pien l'aer e 'l vento.

Such sweetness had filled the air  
and winds.

*(Translated by Lionel Salter)*

**Petrarca-Chopin: Tre Madrigali**, op. 74 (c1934)

Mario Castelnuovo-Tedesco (1895-1968), after Frédéric Chopin's *Préludes*, op. 28 (1839) /  
(Francesco Petrarca [Petrarch] (1304-1374))



### 1. Non al suo amante più Dïana piacque

Non al suo amante più Dïana piacque  
Quando per tal ventura tutta ignuda  
La vide in mezzo de le gelide acque,

Ch'a me la pastorella alpestra e cruda

Posta a bagnar un leggiadretto velo,

Ch'a l'aura il vago e biondo capel chiuda

Tal che mi fece or quand'egli arde 'l cielo

Tutto tremar d'un amoroso gielo.

### 2. Per ch' al viso d'Amore portava insegna

Per ch' al viso d'Amore portava insegna,

Mosse una pellegrina il mio cor vano,  
Ch'ogni altra mi pareva d'onor men degna.

Et lei seguendo su per l'erbe verdi,

Udí' dir alta voce di lontano:  
Ahi, quanti passi per la selva perdi !

Allor mi strinsi a l'ombra d'un bel faggio,

Tutto pensoso; et rimirando intorno,  
Vidi assai periglioso il mio viaggio;

Et tornai indietro quasi a mezzo 'l giorno.

### 3. Nova angetta sopra l'ale accorta

Nova angetta sopra l'ale accorta

Scese dal cielo in su la fresca riva,

Là 'nd'io passava sol per mio destino.

### Diana never pleased her lover more

Diana never pleased her lover more,  
When by chance all of her naked body  
He saw bathing within the chilly waters,

Than did the simple mountain  
shepherdess

Please me, the while she bathed  
the pretty veil

That holds her lovely blond hair  
in the breeze.

So that even now, in hot sunlight,  
she makes me

Tremble all over with the chill of love.

*(Translated by Mark Musa)*

### Because in her face she carried...

Because in her face she carried  
the ensign of Love,  
A foreign beauty moved my vain heart,  
For every other seemed to me less  
worthy of honor.

And as I followed her across  
the green grass,

I heard a loud voice say from afar:  
"Ah, how many steps you are wasting  
through the wood!"

Then I drew myself to the shadow  
of a handsome beech tree,  
All in thought, and looking about me  
I saw my path to be most perilous;

And I turned back almost at midday.

*(Translated by Robert M. Durling)*

### A marvelous little angel

A marvelous little angel  
with quick wings

Descended from the heavens  
to the fresh shore,

Where fate would have it, I walked

all alone.

Poi che senza compagna et senza scorta

Mi vide, un laccio che di seta ordiva  
Tese fra l'erba, ond' è verde il camino.

Allor fui preso, et non mi spiacque poi,  
Sì dolce lume uscia degli occhi suoi.

When she saw me without friend  
nor guide,  
A trap that she had woven out of silk  
She set within the grass that greened my  
path.

Then I was caught, and I not unhappy,  
The sweetest light came spreading  
from her eyes.

*(Translated by Mark Musa)*

**Des Tages laute Stimmen schweigen The loud voices of the day...**

Franz Liszt, S. 337 (1880) / (Ferdinand von Saar (1833-1906))

Des Tages laute Stimmen schweigen,  
  
Und dunkeln will es allgemach,  
Ein letztes Schimmern in den Zweigen,  
Dann zieht auch dies der Sonne nach.

Noch leuchten ihre Purpurgluten  
Um jene Höhen, kahl und fern,  
Doch in des Äthers klaren Fluten  
Erzittert schon ein blasser Stern.

Ihr müden Seelen rings im Kreise,  
So ist euch wieder Ruh gebracht;  
Aufatmen hör ich euch noch leise,  
Dann küßt euch still und mild die Nacht.

The loud voices of the day  
have fallen silent,  
And darkness wishes to fall gradually,  
A last shimmering in the branches,  
Then it too follows the setting sun.

The purple glow still shines  
About yonder heights, barren and distant,  
But in the clear flood of the ether  
Already a pale star tremblingly appears.

Ye tired souls all about in a circle,  
Thus peace is once more brought to you;  
I still hear you breathe a sigh of relief,  
Then the night kisses you  
quietly and mildly.

*(Translated by Sharon Krebs)*

**"O du, mein holder Abendstern"**

Richard Wagner, from *Tannhäuser* (1843-45/1846-47/1860/1861)  
(Richard Wagner (1842-43), after Heinrich Heine)

Wie Todesahnung Dämm rung  
deckt die Lande  
umhüllt das Tal mit schwärzlichem  
Gewande ;  
der Seele, die nach jenen Höhn verlangt,  
vor ihrem Flug durch Nacht  
und Grausen bangt.  
Da scheinst du, o lieblichster der Sterne,  
dein Sanftes Licht entsendest du der Ferne ;

Like a portent of death,  
twilight shrouds the earth  
and envelops the valley in its sable robe;  
  
the soul, yearning for those heights,  
dreads to take its dark and awful flight.  
  
There you shine, o fairest of the stars,  
and shed your gentle light from afar;

die nächt'ge Dämm rung teilt  
dein lieber Strahl,  
und freundlich zeigst du den Weg  
aus dem Tal.  
O du, mein holder Abendstern,  
wohl grüsst' ich immer dich so gern:  
vom Herzen, das sie nie verriet,  
grüsse sie, wenn sie vorbei dir zieht,  
wenn sie entschwebt dem Tal der Erden,  
ein sel'ger Engel dort zu werden !

your friendly beam penetrates  
the twilight gloom  
and points the way out  
from the valley.  
O my fair evening star,  
I always gladly greeted thee:  
from a heart that never betrayed its faith,  
greet her when she passes,  
when she soars above this earthly valley  
to become a blessed angel in Heaven!

*(Translator unidentified)*

**Es muß was Wunderbares sein**

Franz Liszt, S. 314 (1852) / (Oskar von Redwitz (1823-1891), *Amaranth* (1849))

Es muß was Wunderbares sein  
Ums Lieben zweier Seelen,  
Sich schließen ganz einander ein,  
Sich nie ein Wort verhehlen,  
Und Freud und Leid und Glück und Not  
So mit einander tragen;  
Vom ersten Kuß bis in den Tod  
Sich nur von Liebe sagen.

**A Wondrous rapture must it be**

A Wondrous rapture must it be,  
The love of two souls plighted,  
Whose faith, from all concealment free,  
No word or thought has blighted.  
Come joy or pain, come weal or woe,  
Each shares the same emotion,  
From that first kiss e'en unto death  
With love's unchanged devotion.

*(Translated by Charles Armbruster)*

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## ABOUT THE PROGRAM

Although Liszt composed at least 127 songs (at least a quarter of which exist in multiple versions!) throughout his life, this portion of his output is sadly neglected, apparently overshadowed by his reputation as an instrumental composer (which his vast number of piano works and orchestral works would appear to substantiate). Liszt nevertheless possessed an uncommon sensitivity in creating musical settings of works inspired by literary sources (witness his contributions to developing the programmatically-based genre of the symphonic poem alone). Despite their neglect, many of his songs are nevertheless regarded as being among the finest works in the vocal repertoire of the nineteenth century.

As Liszt was fluent in German and French, most of his songs are set in these languages (three-quarters of his songs are in German); a handful of other works are set in other languages with which he was less familiar: Italian (five), Hungarian (three), English (one) and Russian (one). The poetry on which these songs are based generally address the universal (especially in the Romantic era) issues of love, death and longing. But as in his other works, the most immediately notable characteristics of Liszt's solo songs is in their high degree of harmonic experimentation: even in this brief, intimate genre, Liszt seems to be striving towards an innovative means of musical expression.

Despite their brevity and concision, however, performing Liszt's songs convincingly is fraught with difficulties – such difficulties often arising less from virtuosic writing than from the composer's advanced and occasionally dissonant harmonies which place significant technical demands upon the singer. The wide range of dramatic expression demanded by the songs – from the highly emotional to the declamatory – requires a carefully nuanced approach by the singer to render a convincing performance. Adding to these already formidable difficulties, Liszt's songs are often also set in an irregular, non-strophic structure in order to stress the meaning of the words. (It is of little surprise that a work's text, rather than its musical component, would take precedence for a composer whose inspiration was drawn so directly from literary or descriptive sources.) Like his songs' vocal parts, their piano accompaniments range from the simple and understated to the virtuosic, always playing a vital role in evoking an atmosphere or commenting on the psychological elements of the text, and invariably adding a richer dimension to the song as a whole.

The relative neglect of Liszt's songs may also be due in part to their historic reception. Even in the composer's day, critics commented unfavorably on what they perceived to be his careless and heavy-handed approach to expression, and for the second-rate quality of the poems on which he based some songs. In our time, Liszt scholar Martin Cooper acknowledges the "beauty of these settings... in their catching and heightening every shade of the poem's emotion... [but] sometimes [Liszt is] indeed so scrupulous that the wealth of detail obscures the homogeneity of the poem and the song." It must be noted, however, that Liszt did eventually revise some of his songs in order to correct a few instances of misplaced syllabic stress; and that poetry of questionable literary merit may nevertheless serve as the basis for musical settings of extraordinary beauty. But the apparent delight of the composer in creating these songs, the dedication of singers in performing them in spite of (or because of) the interpretive challenges they present, and the rich and relatively undiscovered repertoire they offer to audiences will ensure that they continue to enjoy a devoted following.

Like Liszt, the songs of Wagner and of Beethoven have been neglected in favor of the many great and larger works produced by these composers. The intimacy of the genre of the solo song, however, never fails to provide an insight into the creative minds of their composers, and can only serve to enrich our appreciation of their contributions to musical culture.

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Liszt's inspiration in creating his solo songs is directly linked to his encounter with, and experience of the various poets whose works he chose to set. Such poets are of widely divergent eras -- from the fourteenth-century Italian poet Petrarch, to the great eighteenth-century German poet Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, to poets such as Heinrich Heine and Victor Hugo, the composer's contemporaries. Yet each poet expressed ideas and images that compelled Liszt to create his distinguished corpus of works for solo voice and piano.

Francesco Petrarca, known in the English-speaking world as Petrarch, was born in Arezzo, Italy in 1304. Regarded as one of the most original writers of his time, the work of Petrarch, emulated throughout Europe, paved the way for the rise of humanist philosophy that marked the first flourishing of the Renaissance. His lyric poetry, expressed primarily through the form of the sonnet -- which he brought to a state of unprecedented perfection -- influenced the work of his younger countrymen Giovanni Boccaccio and Dante Alighieri;

along with these writers, Petrarch's works served as models in establishing a standardized Italian language in the sixteenth century. But it was Petrarch's unattainable yet enduring love for a woman named Laura -- a woman idolized from afar, if indeed she existed at all -- for which he has remained an iconic figure even in our day, attaining a status approaching myth.

Yet Petrarch's love for Laura was primarily a spiritual one -- the notion of physical love is relegated to an innocuous passing mention of Laura's "pretty little foot." This divide between the spiritual and the physical mirrors the philosophies of the fourth-century theologian St. Augustine, whose ideas on humankind's continual struggle to reconcile good and evil, soul and body, the heavenly and the earthly, so fundamentally shaped the religious doctrine of the medieval era in which Petrarch was born. Perhaps Petrarch's spiritual struggle -- inspired by St. Augustine -- to reconcile the ideal and the impossible, as well as his creative struggle to express such ideas in a new poetic medium, resonated six hundred years later with Liszt, who, drawn as much to the pleasures of women as to the tenets of the Catholic Church, was waging his own personal battle of reconciliation between the flesh and the spirit.

Liszt's engagement with the German-born poet, essayist and erstwhile literary and musical critic Heinrich Heine was quite different than that of Petrarch. Liszt met Heine in 1831 in Paris, and the two developed a mutual admiration. (Heine is actually credited with having coined the term "Lisztomania" to denote the intense, obsessive frenzy of audiences present at Liszt's performances.) Soon, however, Heine came to prefer the pianistic and compositional style of Frédéric Chopin, regarding it as essentially "purer" than that of Liszt, prompting the poet to launch a slanderous attack on the composer through numerous poems. Albeit relying on subtle imagery and couched in witty verse, these poems were nevertheless inflammatory and even malicious, inevitably culminating in a definitive rupture between Heine and Liszt in about 1849.

The beauty and complexity of Heine's verse has nevertheless inspired musical settings by dozens of composers (among them Schubert, Schumann, Mendelssohn, Brahms, Wolf, Tchaikovsky, MacDowell and Orff), but no composer has set Heine's verse more frequently than Liszt. His "Vergiftet sind meine Lieder" ("Poisoned are my songs"), for example (performed on this evening's concert), has been praised for being among the finest song settings both in Liszt's *œuvre* and in the entire repertoire of solo song. It has also been described as "one of the most terrible hate-songs ever written" as well as "one of the finest settings of anger." Personal perspective notwithstanding, the song's range of emotions -- from accusation to vulnerability to regret at innocence lost -- renders the work a drama of extraordinary richness and concision.

Liszt created a version for voice and piano of his three Petrarch songs, originally composed for piano solo, where they form the core of the "second year" of his *Années de pèlerinage*, "Italie" -- the years that marked the happiest years between the composer and Marie d'Agoult. At the other end of their relationship stood the solo song "Vergiftet," an expression of disillusionment and pain, the first version of which dates from 1844, the year that witnessed the end of the composer's relationship with Marie. It is said that all art bears the imprint of the era in which it is created; it might also be argued that the works of a single artist trace the course of his or her inner life. Attention to the musical descriptions created

along the path of a composer's life ultimately provides rich rewards for the listener willing to "hear" the autobiography presented before them through the composer's creative voice.

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An extraordinary number of composers have created musical settings of the poems of Petrarch ever since (and even during) the poet's lifetime. Among the more unusual of these works are those of the prolific Italian-born émigré composer Mario Castelnuovo-Tedesco (1895-1968), who resided in the United States for the last thirty-five years of his life, and taught at the Los Angeles Conservatory where his students included Henry Mancini, Jerry Goldsmith, André Previn and John Williams. Castelnuovo-Tedesco's work for voice and piano, *Petrarca-Chopin: Tre Madrigali*, op. 74, published in 1934, reflects the work's uncommon origins: its text is based on poems by Petrarch, and its musical content paraphrased from three works for solo piano found in Frédéric Chopin's *Préludes*, op. 28 (1836-39) -- a most original (and efficient) homage to two of the greatest artists of their respective genres.

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The fortepiano used in this evening's performance, built by R. J. Regier of Freeport, Maine in 2004, is typical of those built in Vienna about 1830. Like its five-octave predecessor from the closing decades of the eighteenth century, this instrument is framed entirely with wood, but on a massive scale, in order to support a larger compass (80 notes, 6 1/2 octaves, CC - g''''') and heavier strings (allowing an increased dynamic range). The mechanism remains the light, crisply responsive Viennese action, or *Prellmechanik*, but its components are enlarged in proportion to the bigger instrument. There are four pedals: "una corda," single moderator, double moderator, and damper. This fortepiano is modeled on several by makers Conrad Graf (in business in Vienna, 1811-1841) and Ignaz Bösendorfer (who took over Joseph Brodmann's shop under his own name in 1828).

Kevin LaVine  
Senior Music Specialist

## ABOUT THE ARTISTS

A native of Basel, Switzerland, baritone **Martin Bruns** began his musical career as a violinist, performing as a member of the Berne Symphony Orchestra for a few years before turning his attention to vocal studies at Fribourg, Zürich, and subsequently in New York at the Juilliard School. After winning the New York State Metropolitan Opera Auditions, Bruns's career quickly led to appearances with opera companies throughout Europe and the United States. He has appeared as a soloist with the major orchestras of Europe and beyond, having performed in repertoire ranging from early music to contemporary works of composers such as Wolfgang Rihm and Aribert Riemann. Bruns also devotes his energies to performing as a recitalist, his versatility displayed in a wide-ranging repertoire spanning Monteverdi and Bach to Mozart and Schubert. His particular interest in twentieth-century repertoire, such as that of Mahler, Busoni, Schoenberg, and of American composers David Diamond and John Adams, holds a significant position in his performing career. Bruns's recent scholarly pursuits have produced a study of the musical settings of the fourteenth-century poet Francesco Petrarch, as well as the première performance of the recently rediscovered original voice-and-piano version of Antonín Dvořák's *Cypresses*. Bruns teaches voice at the University of Augsburg (Germany), at the Daniel Ferro Vocal Program in Greve (Italy), at

the Hochschule für Musik in Cologne, and serves as visiting professor at the Hanns Eisler Hochschule für Musik in Berlin.

**Christoph Hammer**, hailed as a “poet of the fortepiano” by the Italian press, was born in Germany, where he began his musical studies on the organ at Munich’s Academy of Music and Theatre, also attending courses on historic keyboard instruments. He subsequently pursued studies of musicology and of German literature at the Ludwig-Maximilian University in Munich, and at the University of California in Los Angeles. Since 1989, Hammer has focused on playing historic keyboards, especially the fortepiano, in which he has earned an international reputation as soloist in recitals or with numerous international period-instrument ensembles, as *Lieder* accompanist, and in historically informed chamber music performances. Hammer has taught master classes in historical keyboard instrument performance throughout the world, and presently serves on the faculty of the School of Music at the University of North Texas (Denton, TX) as an associate professor of harpsichord and fortepiano. Hammer has also been the recipient of several awards from German cultural institutions for his contributions to musicological research (in the rediscovery of works of little-known early music composers of Bavaria); for establishing the Munich-based Baroque orchestra Neue Hofkapelle München; and for founding, directing and performing in festivals of early music throughout Germany. Hammer’s expertise in historic performance practice is increasingly leading to his engagement as conductor of period instrument ensembles worldwide.

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