

The Persistence of Memory

Music by Debussy, Ravel, Chris Pratorius-Gomez, Reynaldo Hahn,
and Enriquez Valderrabano

Chris Pratorius-Gomez, Concert director, piano, and percussion
C.A. Jordan, soprano; **Andrew Scott Carter**, tenor
Lars Johannesson, flute, alto flute and piccolo
Kristin Garbeff, cello; **David Long**, piano

A Chloris
Offrande
L'Heure Exquise

Reynaldo Hahn (1874-1947)

Variations on Valderrábano's "Soneto"
from *Claroscuro en flor*

Chris Pratorius Gómez (1974-)

Ariettes oubliées
C'est l'extase langoureuse
Il pleure dans mon coeur
L'ombre des arbres
Paysages belges. Chevaux de bois
Aquarelles I. Green
Aquarelles II. Spleen

Claude Debussy (1862-1918)

Intermission

Ma mere l'Oye
(1875-1937)

Maurice Ravel

La pavane de la Belle au bois dormant
Petit Poucet
Laideronnette, Impératrice des Pagodes
Les Entretiens de la Belle et de la Bête
Le jardin féerique

Pavane
from *Silva de sirenas*

Enriquez de Valderrábano (1500-1557)

La muerta
poetry by Pablo Neruda

Chris Pratorius Gómez

Notes and Translations

Our selections by **Reynaldo Hahn** (1874-1947) reflect the characteristics that endear his songs to listeners: exquisitely set text, tasteful but surprising twists of melody and harmony, all against a backdrop of piano writing born of Parisian salons. The last two poems are by Paul Verlaine, who is said to have wept when hearing Hahn's settings, some of which were begun when the composer was only twelve years old.

A Chloris

If it's true, Chloris, that you love me
(and I have heard you love me well)
I do not believe that even a king
Enjoys a happiness to equal mine.

Even death
Would not really alter
My happiness.
Nothing anyone says of ambrosia
Affects my imagination to the same extent
As the favour bestowed by your eyes.

-Théophile de Viau

Offrande

Here are fruits, flowers,
Leaves and branches:
And afterwards my heart
Which beats only for you.
Do not rend it
With your two white hands:
And may this humble gift be sweet
To your eyes that are so beautiful.

I am returning, covered in dew
That the morning frost has frozen
On my brow.
Let me dream in my tiredness,

Resting at your feet,
Of beautiful moments to refresh me.

On your young breast
Let me cradle my head,
Still filled with music
From your last kisses;
Let it find peace
After the passionate tempest,
And let me sleep a little
While you are resting.

L'Heure Exquise

The white moon
shines in the woods.
From each branch
springs a voice
beneath the arbor.

Oh my beloved...

Like a deep mirror
the pond reflects
the silhouette
of the black willow
where the wind weeps.

Let us dream! It is the hour...

A vast and tender
calm
seems to descend
from a sky
made iridescent by the moon.

It is the exquisite hour!

-Paul Verlaine

Enríquez de Valderrábano, a Spanish composer and player of the vihuela, lived in the early 16th century. The vihuela, a plucked string instrument contemporaneous with the lute and tuned similarly, flourished in the late renaissance in Spain but was soon supplanted by the rising popularity of the guitar.

In 1547 Valderrábano published *Silva de sirenas*, a 7-volume collection of vihuela music which featured sets of variations, transcriptions of vocal music, fantasias and short, lyrical pieces he called Sonetos. The collection was diverse and the name, *Silva de sirenas*, reflects this: it translates as *Forest of Mermaids*.

One Soneto became an obsession for me, after I learned it on guitar and fell in love. In 2011 I was commissioned to write a Harp Concerto for San José Chamber Orchestra, and decided to use Valderrábano's Soneto as the theme for the 2nd movement, a set of variations. The theme is in Ionian mode, according to today's music theory, and each variation is in a "flatter" mode, progressing through Mixolydian, Dorian and finally Aeolian. The Dorian variation is in the style of Lou Harrison and is dedicated to the memory of Leslie Swaha.

Debussy composed the six songs comprising *Ariettes oubliées* ("Forgotten Ariettes") between 1885, when he was (grudgingly) fulfilling the terms of winning the Prix de Rome at the Villa Medici, near the city's famed Spanish Steps, and 1888, by which time he had returned (early) to Paris. These songs, among the first expressions of Debussy's distinctive creative voice, were published separately under their individual titles in 1888 and revised and reissued as the Ariettes oubliées in 1903. The texts are from Verlaine's *Romances sans paroles* ("Romances Without Words"), written while he was in London with Rimbaud in 1872–1873; they were published in 1874, when Verlaine was in prison for attacking his companion.

Debussy Notes by Dr. Richard E.

Rodda

It is ecstasy

This is languorous ecstasy,
this is the weariness of love,
this is all the shiverings of the woods
amidst the embrace of the breezes,
this is the choir of little voices
among the grey boughs.

Oh, the frail and fresh murmuring!
It chirps and whispers.
It sounds like the gentle cry
that the ruffled grass gives out...
You would say it was, beneath the water which swirls,
the muffled rolling of the pebbles.

This soul which mourns itself
by this slumbering complaint,
it is ours, is it not?

Mine, say, and yours,
from which exhales the humble anthem
in this mild evening, so quietly?

It weeps in my heart...

It weeps in my heart
as it rains on the town.
What is this languor
into which my heart seeps?

Oh, soft sound of the rain
on the ground and on the roofs!
For a heart which is forlorn,
oh, the sound of the rain!

It weeps for no reason
in this sickening heart.
What! No treason?
This mourning is without reason.

It is indeed the worst torment
not to know why,
without love and without hatred,
my heart has so much sadness!

The shadow of the trees...

The shadow of the trees, in the mist-covered river,
dies like smoke,
whereas in the air, among the real branches,
the doves lament.

How much, o traveller, this pale landscape
reflected you, pale yourself...
And how sadly, in the high branches,
your drowned hopes wept!

Merry-go-round

Turn, turn, good wooden horses,
turn one hundred, one thousand turns;
turn often and turn for ever,
turn, turn to the strain of the oboes.

The child all red and the mother white,
the fellow in black and the girl in pink,
one to this thing and the other to posing,
each one treating himself to a Sunday penny.

Turn, turn, horses of their heart
whilst around all your whirlings,
the eye of the crafty pickpocket twinkles,
turn to the sound of the victorious cornet.

It is amazing how it intoxicates you
to go like this in this stupid circus,
nothing in the tummy and aching in the head,
masses of pain and loads of fun.

Turn, geegees, without there ever being
the need to use pointless spurs
to drive you on your circular gallops,
turn, turn, without hope of hay.

And hurry, horses of their soul,
here already is the falling night,
ringing to supper and chasing away the throng
of happy drinkers made hungry by their thirst.

Turn, turn! The sky in velvet
adorns itself slowly in stars of gold.
The church sadly tolls a knell.
Turn to the joyous sound of the drums.

Green

Here are fruits, flowers, leaves and branches,
and here too is my heart, which beats for you alone.
Do not tear it with your two white hands,
and may the humble gift be sweet to your so lovely eyes.

I arrive still all covered in dew
which the morning wind comes to freeze to my brow.
Suffer my weariness, rested at your feet,
to dream of the dear moments which will soothe it.

On your young breast let my head to roll
still echoing with your last kisses;
let it grow calm again from the good storm,
and let me sleep a while, since you are resting.

Spleen

The roses were all red,
and the ivies were all black.

Dearest, however little you move,
all my despair is reborn.

The sky was too blue, too tender,
the sea too green and the air too sweet.

I always fear _ what it is to wait! _
some dreadful flight by you.

I am weary of the holly with its varnished leaf,
and of the gleaming box-wood,

and of the infinite countryside,
and of all, besides you, alas!

Poetry by Paul Verlaine, translated by Christopher Goldsack

Ravel originally composed *Ma Mère l'oye* (Mother Goose) in 1908 and 1910 as a suite of four-hand piano pieces. The first public performance was given by two children, 6 and 10 years old. *La pavane de la Belle au bois dormant* was written in 1908 as Ravel's father was dying (He passed away a month later). The other four movements were written in April 1910 with the premiere only days later. The movements are as follows:

1. *La pavane de la Belle au bois dormant* (Pavane of the Sleeping Beauty)

2. *Petit Poucet* (Tom Thumb)

The story of Tom Thumb is a story by Charles Perrault. Ravel quotes Perrault in the score: "He believed he would easily find his way back by means of his bread crumbs, which he had scattered as he passed along; but to his surprise he could not find a single crumb, for the birds had come and eaten them up."

3. *Laideronnette, Impératrice des Pagodes* (Little Ugly One, Empress of the Pagodas)

This movement is from Marie-Catherine d'Aulnoy's (1650-1705) story *Le Serpentin vert* (The green serpent). She coined the term *Contees de Fée* (fairy tale). Ravel quotes: "She undressed and entered the bath. Immediately the pagodas, male and female, began to sing and to play on various instruments. Some had theorbos, or lutes, made of walnut shells, others viols made of almond shells. For they were obliged to use instruments proportionate to their shapes and sizes."

4. *Les Entretiens de la Belle et de la Bête* (Conversations of Beauty and the Beast)

"When I think how, kind-hearted you are, you don't seem so ugly."

"Yes, it is true, I have a kind heart. Still, I am a beast."

"Many men are more beastly than you."

"If I were witty I would think up a fine compliment by way of thanks, but I am only a beast."

"Beauty, will you be my wife?"

"No, Beast!"

"I die happy because I have had the pleasure of seeing you again."

"No, my dear Beast, you shall not die. You shall live to be my husband!"

5. *Le jardin féerique* (The Fairy Garden)

In this movement Sleeping Beauty is awakened by Prince Charming. A fanfare announces the end as the Good Fairy gives the couple her blessings.

Notes from genedelisa.com

"La muerta" is a poem by the Chilean poet Pablo Neruda (1904-1973), from an originally anonymous collection of poetry called *Los versos del capitán* (1952) or *The Captain's Verses*. Neruda wrote this poem as a thought experiment, imagining what it would be like if his beloved was dead, if she was only a memory. He decides he must live and fight for social justice. "Where blacks are beaten, I cannot be dead. When my brothers go to prison, I shall go with them." The original Spanish-language poem will be recited over a Valderrábano pavane from *Silva de sirenas*, while the world-premiere setting of the poem will be sung by our tenor in English to maximize the emotional impact of the text.

Musicians

Andrew Carter, tenor, is a native of Newport Beach, CA, and an alumnus of the University of California at Santa Cruz. Prior to his recent return to Santa Cruz,

Andrew sang with the Los Angeles Opera Chorus in their productions of *Eugene Onegin*, *The Flying Dutchman* and alongside Placido Domingo in Verdi's *Simone Boccanegra*. He has performed throughout the United States and Canada in both opera and in concert.

Mr. Carter has sung under the baton of many noted conductors including Marin Alsop, Steven Crawford, Victor Di Renzi and the late Randall Behr. He has worked under the stage direction of Yefim Maizel, Robert Darling, and the late, great soprano, Licia Albanese. Andrew was a soloist with the Chorale Bel Canto for their recent productions of Sir Michael Tippett's "A Child of Our time," as well as Respighi's "Laud to the Nativity." Andrew is Music Director of Foothill Community Presbyterian Church in San José.

Kristin Garbeff, cellist, is a versatile chamber, solo and orchestral musician. She has performed with the Monterey Symphony, Santa Cruz Symphony, West Bay Opera, New Music Works, Cadenza, and Hidden Valley String Orchestra. Kristin is also active in the popular music scene. She has collaborated with various groups including indie band Blue Rabbit, Kenny Shick, Jenn Grinels, and the Thriving Artists organization.

Kristin received her Master of Music degree in 2007 at the Longy School of Music in Cambridge, MA where she studied with Dr. Terry King. She studied chamber music with Kathleen Lenski, Victor Rosenbaum, and Roger Tapping, and jazz improvisation with pianist Peter Cassino. In addition to performing, Kristin maintains a teaching studio at her home in Scotts Valley, CA.

Lars Johannesson, flutist, is an active performer and teacher in the San Francisco and Monterey Bay areas. Lars studied modern flute with Lloyd Gowen and Tim Day at the San Francisco Conservatory of Music, where he also began playing Baroque flute. He pursued post-graduate studies in Baroque flute with Wilbert Hazelzet at the Royal Conservatory in The Hague, Holland.

Lars performs with numerous West Coast early music ensembles and orchestras, as well as a variety of 'modern' instrument groups. Lars appears regularly with Santa Cruz Baroque Festival, Ensemble Monterey Chamber Orchestra, New Music Works and Santa Cruz Chamber Players. Other engagements include performances with Carmel Bach Festival, Philharmonia Baroque Orchestra, Musica Angelica, Espresso Orchestra, and California Bach Society and Jubilate.

Having an interest in different musical genres, Lars also performs Celtic, Swedish and other traditional music. As a studio musician, Lars has recorded for numerous CD releases, including many on the local Gourd Music label. Lars lives in Santa Cruz and has a website at www.larsjohannesson.com.

Soprano **Carolynne Anne (C.A.) Jordan** sings in the San Francisco Opera Chorus and is an active performer throughout the Bay Area. Since 2006, C.A. has been singing and covering roles with Berkeley West Edge Opera, Mission City Opera, Livermore Valley Opera, Open Opera, Goat Hall Productions, the educational programs West Coast Opera Workshop, BASOTI, and the Opera Scenes Program at Holy Names College. This will be her third performance with the Santa Cruz Chamber Players.

C.A. holds a Bachelor of Fine Arts degree from the California Institute of the Arts and completed graduate study at the New England Conservatory of Music. She currently studies with Dr. Julia Nielsen in San Francisco.

David Long has been a celebrated accompanist, director, multi-instrumentalist and music educator in the Santa Cruz County and greater Bay Area since 1999. After receiving his Bachelor's degree in Classical Piano studies from the University of California, Santa Cruz in 2003, David quickly established himself as an in-demand instrumentalist and vocal coach in Santa Cruz County. Focusing primarily on choral accompaniment, David has served as both accompanist and music director at St. Joseph's Catholic Church as well as Pacific Voices Community choir for the last 10 years.

Other highlights include serving as accompanist and singer in California Central Coast Chorale during their Summer 2014 tour of Italy which included performances at St. Peter's Basilica in Vatican City, an Easter performance at Carnegie Hall in 2015, and most recently a 2016 tour of Budapest, Vienna and Prague in which the group performed the Mozart Requiem at St. Stephan's Cathedral. With a diverse range of skills, David has served as Bassist, Keyboardist and Guitarist in several local Santa Cruz bands including the Roots-Inspired hip hop group Blyndsite as well progressive rock group The Recognition.

Chris Pratorius Gómez is a composer and pianist based in Santa Cruz, California. He has written pieces for solo voice, choir, chamber ensembles, orchestra and electronic media that have been performed in San Francisco, Istanbul, New York, Guatemala and other spots around the world.

As composer-in-residence for Opera Parallèle, he wrote a trio of children's operas for their Hands-on-Opera educational program. The first opera, *My Head is Full of Colors*, premiered in 2014, the second, *Amazing Grace*, in 2015 and the third opera, *Xochitl and the Flowers*, premiered in 2016. All of these works are based on children's books with librettos developed by the Opera Parallèle team in close partnership with the composer.

A recent highlight on the instrumental front is *Claroscuro en Flor*, a 25 minute concerto for harp and chamber orchestra commissioned by the American Harp Society and San José Chamber Orchestra which saw its premiere in 2013. Another notable instrumental work is his guitar sonata *Ondas do Mar de Vigo*, which can be found on Mesut Özgen's CD Troubadour published by Golden Horn Records.

Chris teaches music theory, history, composition and piano at the University of California, Santa Cruz and at Cal State Monterey Bay. This is his fourth time serving as Concert Director with Santa Cruz Chamber Players.