

Golda Schultz, *soprano* & Jonathan Ware, *piano*

January 18, 2022 @ 7:30pm

Perelman Theater • Kimmel Center

Program includes:

Liebst du um Schönheit • *Warum willst du and're fragen* • *Am Strande Lorelei*

Clara Schumann

Born: September 13, 1819 in Leipzig, Germany

Died: May 20, 1896 in Frankfurt, Germany

“Liebst du um Schönheit” is an incredibly poignant and lovely piece, rocking us back and forth between tonic and dominant before being interrupted by the declamatory, yet still gentle vocal line. *“Warum willst du and're fragen?”* is a seemingly simple song that contains a great emotional complexity underneath. *“Am Strande”* was part of a three-song set; while Clara considered them feeble attempts at song composition, Robert wrote: “I was delighted by the three songs, in which she gushes like a girl and is much more compositionally precise than before.” Scores of composers set Heine’s *Lorelei*; Clara’s setting was published in Berlin in 1843.

Wenn der Abendstern die Rosen • *Du bist wie eine Blume Erlkönig II*

Emilie Mayer

Born: May 14, 1812 in Friedland, Germany

Died: April 10, 1883 in Berlin, Germany

While many composers have set Chézy’s poetry, Mayer appears to be the only female composer to do so. *“Wenn der Abendstern die Rosen”* is a passionate plea, where the narrator states their desire to “die in pain and pleasure,” in the arms of their lover. The repetition of the texts in *“Du bist wie eine Blume”* as a dramatic element, especially when followed by such large leaps, indicates a level of virtuosity in the voice not intended for amateur singers and creates a “larger than life” feeling. Mayer’s *“Erlkönig II”* was written at the request of a musicologist from Berlin who was collecting different musical settings of the poem. This second version of hers leans into the ominous character of its D minor key with allusions of blustery winds swirling and ripping at the leaves.

Down by the Salley Gardens • *The Tiger* • *Cradle Song* • *The Seal Man*

Rebecca Clarke

Born: August 27, 1886 in London, UK

Died: October 13, 1979 in New York, NY

Clarke’s version of *Down by the Salley Gardens*, an E minor setting coupled with minimal arpeggiated accompaniment, is an excellent example of a woman reclaiming the narrative that a man had projected onto a fictional female character. Clarke wrote *The Tiger* towards the end of her relationship with British baritone John Goss, making it a terrifying breakup song rivaled only by that of Taylor Swift. *Cradle Song* demonstrates Clarke’s impressionist influences, employing a clear rhythmic structure while playing with dissonance and chordal harmony. Following two years of revisions to make it “simpler and better,” Clarke’s *The Seal Man* became an immediate hit; the rocking chords morph from waves into a death knell before sinking into silence.

Cantique • *Prière* • *Elégie* • *La mer*

Nadia Boulanger

Born: September 16, 1887 in Paris, France

Died: October 22, 1979 in Paris, France

“Cantique” evokes a pure inner peace; the accompaniment’s repetitive rhythm establishes that sense of security, while utilizing some unconventional harmonies that highlight the poignancy of the melodic vocal line. *“Prière”* embodies the intensely personal yearning one might experience when actually uttering a prayer, especially when we consider that the narrator is praying specifically to the Virgin Mary. The textual symbolism in *“Elégie”* provides an excellent framework for Boulanger’s deployment of modal inflection and fluid modulation. The initial serenity of the accompaniment in *“La mer”* sustains the melodic line of the voice, until the building waves of chords crash into a rhapsodic declaration of both awe and fear, before returning us to the familiar peace and stillness of the clear water.

This be her verse

Kathleen Tagg

Born: 1977 in South Africa

This be her verse, a new song cycle Ms. Schultz commissioned for this program, by composer Kathleen Tagg and librettist Lila Palmer. On this project, Ms. Schultz said, “the idea was to take these two women, who I love and respect, who are such strong examples of their craft and see what happens when they come together.”