

Paul Appleby, *tenor* & Conor Hanick, *piano*

January 21, 2022 @ 7:30pm
American Philosophical Society

Program includes:

An den Mond, Op. 95, No. 2 (1849)

Aufträge, Op. 77, No. 5 (1850)

Meine Rose, Op. 90, No. 2 (1850)

Loreley, Op. 53, No. 2 (1840)

Einsamkeit, Op. 90, No. 5 (1850)

Geisternähe, Op. 77, No. 3 (1850)

Sängers Trost, Op. 127, No. 1 (1840)

Die Sennin, Op. 90, No. 4 (1850)

Abendlied, Op. 107, No. 6 (1851)

Robert Schumann

Born: June 8, 1810 in Zwickau, Germany

Died: July 29, 1856 in Eendenich, Bonn, Germany

Composed: 1849-1851

Most of the Schumann songs on this program were written in the last six years of his life, including “*An den Mond*,” his setting in German translation of Lord Byron’s “*Sun of the Sleepless*” from the poet’s collection, *Hebrew Melodies*. The cold light of the moon illuminates a landscape of loss as the singer is accompanied by some ancient zither-like instrument. The second Schumann set includes the latest of his works on this program. “*Sängers Trost*.” The poem speaks of the fate of the loner after his death: to go unmourned. It is not hard to attach feelings of despair, resentment, or loneliness to this text, and yet Schumann imbues his setting with transcendent dignity.

An die ferne Geliebte, Op. 98

Ludwig van Beethoven

Born: December 17, 1770 in Bonn, Germany

Died: March 26, 1827 in Vienna, Austria

Composed: 1816

Last PCMS performance: 2012

Duration: 14 minutes

Beethoven’s 1816 *An die ferne Geliebte* marks the institution of the *liederzyklus* in 19th century German art song. The form Beethoven innovated in these six songs inspired the great song cycles of composers such as Schubert and Schumann. Beethoven took the notion of the “cycle” more literally than most of his successors in the form. In the final song of *An die ferne Geliebte*, he recapitulates the melody of the first song bringing the musical and emotional journey full circle. Each song segues into the next, such that the harmonic architecture of the cycle is secured and reinforced by the relationships between keys as well as their poetic through-line.

An den Mond, D. 259 (1815)

An die Entfernte, D. 765 (1822)

Der Zwerg, D. 771 (1822)

Im Frühling, D. 882 (1826)

Alinde, D. 904 (1827)

Abendlied für die Entfernte, D. 856 (1825)

Willkommen und Abschied, D. 767 (1822)

Franz Schubert

Born: January 31, 1797 in Vienna, Austria

Died: November 19, 1828 in Vienna Austria

Composed: 1815-1827

Schubert’s setting of the Gothic ballad “*Der Zwerg*” illustrates his complex relationship with Beethoven. Schubert loved and admired Beethoven, but also felt dwarfed and doomed by the great composer’s stature. Schubert acknowledges a desire to surpass him, to vanquish his idol. In the second Schubert set “*Im Frühling*” can be interpreted as a kind of homage to *An die ferne Geliebte*. “*Abendlied für die Entfernte*” is an expression of acceptance opposite that found in *Der Zwerg*. Schubert winds through the sad, wise words of this poem by passing through at least nine different keys as the steady thrum of his barcarolle marches forward like time itself, “if not in joy, then at least in peace.”

Fünf Orchesterlieder nach Ansichtskarten von Peter Altenberg, Op. 4

Alban Berg

Born: February 9, 1885 in Vienna Austria

Died: December 24, 1935 in Vienna Austria

Composed: 1911

Duration: 9 minutes

Alban Berg was so embarrassed by the audience’s riotously negative reaction to the 1913 premiere of *Fünf Orchesterlieder nach Ansichtskarten von Peter Altenberg*, Op. 4, that he never published the songs or had them performed again during his life. However, Berg’s creative ability and technical skill rendered him able to realize a poetic text in musical form with intellectual and emotional specificity. The opening song, “*Seele wie bist du schöner*” begins with a perfectly described snowstorm that establishes both a literal vision of the text as well as the emotional and spiritual space in which the text resides. After the storm of grief, there arrives a stillness and wonder which invites the existential questioning of these poems.