

Graduating Recital Program Notes

Title: "An Art that softens a troubled mind"

"This recital repertoire's choice is based on love and prayer."

Ore Meta -- Akin Euba (1935 – 2020)

Ore Meta is the second movement from the six Yoruba folk songs. Ore meta, which means "Three friends" narrates the story of three friends. The interpretation goes like this:

Friends come in three
One suggests sharing his sleeping mat,
The other offers the bare floor,
The third friend offers the bosom.
Without batting an eyelid, I took the bosom option.
I know Ogun River, I know the lagoon, I know the king of rivers.
The young palm tree kills off dry twigs,
Ibadan mutiny brings war to town,
Such are friends, eh!

Omo j'owo -- Akin Euba (1935 – 2020)

Omo jowo is the fourth movement from the six Yoruba folk songs arranged for voice and piano. Omo jowo which means "I plead with you my child" narrates the story of a parent who tries to pamper his child with cookies in order to make the child happy. The translation of the text is as follows:

Omo ki oye jowo o, omo jowo
Mo kun le mo be o, omo jowo
Mo f'e ku ru be o, omo jowo
Mo f' akara be o, omo jowo
Ki o ye jo wo, omo jowo

My child, please my child
Please I go on my knees, I beg you.
My child I beg you with the ekuru delicacy.
Please my child, I beg you with bean cakes,
Please my child, I beg of you!

Otito Inu – Juwon Ogungbe (1969)

Otito inu is the second song “Dialogues with the Great Spirit” - in form of a song cycle. The words of this song are taken from the sacred texts in the Yoruba Ifa Oracle. The title “Otito inu” which means “Inner Truth” The translation of the text is as follows:

Kos’ Eniti ile re Ko le e d’oko o e
Kos’ Eniti oko o re ko le di I gboro o
Otito inu, ko ma je ki t’e mi d’oko o
Kos’ Eniti iku ko le pa
Kos’ eniti iki ko le pa omo re
A fi orunmila Oluwa mi
Abi ku ji gbo o o,
A fa’won olotito ninu omo Edumare

There is no one who can escape misfortunes.
It will at some point happen to someone in life.
May the inner truth not allow my fortune to turn to misfortune?
There is no one death cannot take away.
There is no one death cannot take his child away.
Except God the creator, the one that never dies and his true deities.

Ah how sweet, it is to love (Z 613)– Henry Purcell (1659 – 1695)
Librettist: John Dryden (1631 – 1700)

Ah how sweet it is to love is a poem by John Dryden. This poem conflates the themes of love, pain and time and fuses them into a beautiful whole. It speaks of the beautiful pain that comes with love and delineates the innocent love experienced in youth. John Dryden was the dominant literary figure and influence of his time. The music set to this the poem was written by Henry Purcell

Ah! how sweet it is to love;
how gay is young desire!
And what pleasing pains we prove,
When first we feel a lover's fire;
Pains of love are sweeter far,
Than all other pleasures are.

If thou long'st so much to learn – Thomas Campion (1567 – 1620)

This is an English lute song written for a solo voice in the year 1617 by Thomas Campion. It is part of the Third book of Ayres. This music speaks about a fake lover who deceives her lover and at the end leaves him by going back to her old lovers. The text is as follows:

If thou long'st so much to learn, sweet boy, what 'tis to love,
Do but fix thy thought on me, and thou shalt quickly prove.
Little suit at first shall win

Way to thy abashed desire;
But then will I hedge thee in,
Salamander-like, with fire.

With thee dance I will and sing, and thy fond dalliance bear;
We the grovy hills will climb and play the wanton there.
Otherwhiles we'll gather flowers
Lying dallying on the grass,
And thus our delightful hours
Full of waking dreams shall pass.

When thy joys were thus at height my love should turn from thee;
Old acquaintance then should grow as strange as strange might be;
Twenty rivals thou should'st find
Breaking all their hearts for me;
When to all I'll prove more kind
And more forward than to thee.

Thus thy silly youth enraged would soon my love defy.
But alas, poor soul, too late; clipped wings can never fly.
Those sweet hours which we had passed,
Called to mind thy heart would burn;
And could'st thou fly ne'er so fast,
They would make thee straight return.

Ho fuggito amore (HWV 118, 1st movement) – G.F Handel (1685 – 1759)
Librettist: Paolo Rolli (1687 – 1765)

This is a cantata written for an alto voice. The first performance took place in London in 1722. This aria is part of the entire three movements of the cantata. It speaks about how the character tries to dissociate himself away from love but kept bouncing back into it. Love is then portrayed as a bondage which keeps holding his heart back in as much as he forgets his past pains and torment. The original instrumentation of this music is Harpsichord, Viola da Gambe and Voice. The text translation is as follows:

Ho fuggito Amor anch'io
Ho spezzato I lacci suoi: Ma che poi?
San tornato in servitu.
E che peni far, corm io?
I passata tuoi tormenti,
Non rammenti"
No, non li rammenti piu.

I have fled from love
I have broken its bonds: But what then?
I have returned into bondage.
And what do you think you are doing, O my heart?
Do you not remember Your past torment?
No, you remember them no longer.

Lady if you so spite me (Musical banquet) – John Dowland (1562 – 1626)

This is a secular lute song from John Dowland's collection of songs A musical banquet. It was written in the year 1610 and was first performed in London in 1610. This music speaks about a serene love which moves all around the singer. It shows how real love takes on its serene form and flows calmly, peacefully but yet powerfully all around and all through us. The text is as follows:

Lady if you so spite me.
Wherefore do you so oft kiss and delight me?
Sure, that my heart oppressed and overjoyed,
May break thus overjoyed
If you seek to spill mee,
Come kiss me sweet and kill mee,
So shall your heart be eased,
And I shall rest content and dye well pleased.

The smiling hours of joyful train (Hercules – HWV 60: Act 1, scene 3) – G.F Handel (1685 – 1759)
Librettist: Rev. Thomas Broughton (1704 – 1774)

This aria is from the opera titled "Hercules" written by George Frideric Handel in 1744. The premiere took place at King's Theatre, London in 1745. It is a musical drama in three acts with a story based on Sophocles's Women of Trachis and the ninth book of Ovid's Metamorphoses. It is also performed at times as an oratorio without being fully staged. The story of this particular aria depicts a joyful moment in the life of the character known as "Lichas". A transition from a sad moment into a happy moment. It shows no matter how long one experiences a grief moment, there is always a blissful time at the end. The text is as follows:

The smiling hours of joyful train
On silken pinions waft again
The moments of delight.
Returning pleasures banish woe,
As ebbing streams recruited flow,
And day succeeds to night.

Jhesu Crist – Guiraut Riquier (1230 – 1291)

This is an old Provençal troubadour song written in 1275 by Guiraut Riquier. It is also known as a medieval spiritual song. It is usually sung without instrumental accompaniment. The instrumentation is voice in any vocal range. The original text and the translation is as follows.

Jhesu Crist Filh de Dieu vieu
Que de la verges na ques,
Senher for faltz e repress, vos prec que'm detz
Tal coselh
Qu'ieu sap cha ben ad amar, E falh I mens
A di rar viven,
Alvos tre pla zer

*Jesus Christ, Son of the living God,
born of the Virgin,
Lord -- Guilty and accused,
I pray to you to give me counsel,
that I may love good
and hate error,
and live according to Your will.*

Jubilate Domino –(BuxWV64) -Dieterich Buxtehude (1637 – 1707)

This cantata is a sacred work written in 1690. It is set to Psalm 98:4-6. It is one of the most frequently performed of Buxtehude's cantatas. The viola da gamba part is every bit as compelling as the alto voice part and is probably more technically challenging. Most notable is the way that Buxtehude exploits the range of da gamba in this sacred work, taking advantage of both the high and low registers of the gamba, often moving rapidly between them evidenced by many clef changes. Each new section of text receives a different musical treatment, and the work consists of a string of contrasting sections. The original text and translation is as follows:

Jubilate Domino omnis terra
cantate et exultate et
exultate et psallite
Psallite Domino chitara et voce psalmi
Psallite Domino in chitara
in buccinis et voce tubae
jubilate in conspectu regis Domini

Sing to the Lord a new-made song,
Who wondrous things has done;
With his right hand and holy arm
The conquest he has won.

The Lord has through the astonished world
Displayed his saving might,
And made his righteous acts appear
In all the heathen's sight.

Of Israel's house his love and truth
Have ever mindful been;
Wide earth's remotest parts the power
Of Israel's God have seen.

Let therefore earth's inhabitants
Their cheerful voices raise,
And all with universal joy
Resound their Maker's praise.

With harp and hymn's soft melody, Into the concert bring
The trumpet and shrill cornet's sound,

Before the Almighty King.

The Evening Hymn (Z.193) "Harmonia Sacra" – Henry Purcell (1659 – 1695)
Librettist: William Fuller (1608 – 1675)

It is one of the sacred solo works written by Henry Purcell in the year 1688. It speaks about the appreciation of God's creation and how marvelous God's work is and its beauty. It also depicts a sense of tranquility necessary for human soul and ended with glorification of God the creator. The text is as follows:

Now, now that the sun hath veil'd his light
And bid the world goodnight;
To the soft bed my body I dispose,
But where shall my soul repose?
Dear, dear God, even in Thy arms,
And can there be any so sweet security!
Then to thy rest, O my soul!
And singing, praise the mercy

That prolongs thy days.
Hallelujah!

Schlage doch, Gewünschte Stunde – (BWV 53) Johann Sebastian Bach (1685 – 1750)

Schlage doch, Gewünschte Stunde BWV 53, is an aria for alto voice, two bells, two violins, one viola and continuo (Cello and Organ). It was likely composed in the early 18th century, although its date of first performance is unknown. From the second half of the 18th century until the early 1950s the aria was attributed to Johann Sebastian Bach. In 1955, it was suggested by the Bach scholar Karl Anton that the composer was more likely to be a member of Melchior Hoffmann's circle. The piece was likely part of an otherwise lost Church cantata for funeral. The aria was first published in 1863, by the Bach Gellsellschaft. It is one of three works to have been attributed to Bach before being attributed to Hoffmann, the others being the German Magnificats BWV 189 and BWV 21. The original text and translation is as follows:

*Schlage doch, gewünschte Stunde
brich doch an, du schöner Tag!
Kommt, ihr Engel, auf mich zu,
öffnet mir die Himmelsauen,
meinen Jesum bald zu schauen
in vergnügter Seelenruh'!
Ich begeh'r von Herzensgrunde,
nur den letzten Stundenschlag.*

Sound your knell, blest hour of parting,
Quickly dawn o happy day!
Angels! haste to my release!
Waft me to the realms supernal,
Where in Jesu's arms eternal
I shall rest in perfect peace.
Let me hear the last hour tolling,
That shall call my soul away.

Amen from (Nisi Dominus -RV608) – Antonio Vivaldi (1678 – 1741)

It is one of the sacred cantatas written by Antonio Vivaldi in the year 1713. This final movement "Amen" shows a joyous exclamation and hope that capped the complete movement. The instrumentation is alto solo voice, two violins with continuo and here this afternoon the continuo will be (Viola da Gamba and Organ). The original text and translation are as follows:

Amen, Et in saecula
Saeculorum Amen.

Amen, Through the centuries!
Everlasting Amen.