

Graduating Recital Program Notes (2024)

Title: "Love, Prayer and Adoration"

Vexilla Regis Prodeunt – Gregorian Chant (14 Century)

This is an old Gregorian chant dated back in the 14 century. This sacred piece, speaks a lot about the sacrifice of Christ for mankind and his triumphant glory. This piece is so dear to me as Christ follower and believer in God's Holy Scripture. It tells me what it means for someone to sacrifice his life for others. It is also a piece of music that reminds about God's love for his beloved creatures and how much more he deserves to be praised.

The text of this music is as follows:

Vexilla Regis Prodeunt
Fulget Crucis mysterium
Quaevita mortem pertulit,
Et mortem vitam protulit

The flag of our King comes forth:
the mystery of the Cross shines upon us,
that Cross on which Life suffered death,
and by his Death gave life.

Quae vulnerata lanceae
Mucrone dirigitur
Ut nos lavaret sordibus
Manavit unda et sanguine

He was pierced with the cruel Spear,
that, by the water and the Blood,
which flowed from the wound,
he might cleanse us from sin.

Impleta sunt quae concinit
David fideli carmine,
Dicendo nationi bus
Regna vit a lingo Deus

Here, on the Cross was fulfilled the prophecy
foretold in David's truthful words:
God hath reigned from the Tree.

Arbor decora et fulgida,
Ornata Regis purpura
Electa digno stipites
Tam sancta membra tangere

O fair and shining Tree!
beautified by the scarlet of the King,
and chosen as the noble trunk
that was to touch such sacred limbs.

Beata, cujus brachiis

O blessed Tree!

Pretium pependit saeculi
Statera facta corporis
Tu lit que praedam tartari.

on whose arms hung the ransom of the world
It was the balance, wherein was placed
the Body of Jesus, and thereby hell lost its prey.

O CRUX AVE, SPESUNICA,
Hoc Passionis tempore
Piis adauge gratiam,
Reis que dele criminal.

Hail, O Cross! Our only hope!
During these days of the Passion,
increase to the good their grace,
and cleanse sinners from their guilt.

Te fons salutis Trinitas,
Collaudet omnis spiritus:
Qui bus Crucis victoriam Largiris,
Adde praemium. Amen.

May every spirit praise thee,
O Holy Trinity, thou Fount of Salvation!
and by the Cross whereby thou gave us victory
Give us, too, our recompense. Amen.

Douce dame jolie –Guillaume de Machaut (1300 – 1377)

This piece was one of the earliest love songs written during the medieval period. It is a love poem that shows how important one takes whoever they are in love with. I so much cherished this music because each time I look at the text it reminds me of my days when I was in a relationship with my ex- Girl Friend and the way I show her how much love I had for her regardless of the long distance between both of us. It is a poem that made still made me believe there is true love, and the texts of this the poem are the reflection of the actions one get back from a trustworthy lover .
The text of this poem is as follows:

Douce dame jolie,
Pour Dieu ne pensés mie
Que nulle ait signorie
Seur moy fors vous seulement.

Sweet, beautiful lady
For God's sake, do not think
That anyone rules over me
But you alone

Qu'adès sans tricherie
Chierie
Vous ay et humblement
Tous les jours de ma vie
Servie
Sans villain pensement

For endlessly and without falsehood
I have cherished you
And humbly
All the days of my life
I have served you
With no unworthy thought.

Helas! et je mendie
D'esperance et d'aïe;

Alas! and I beg
For hope and aid

Dont ma joie est fenie,
Se pité ne vous en prent.

For my joy is ended
If you do not take pity

Mais vo douce maistrie
Maistrie
Mon cuer si durement
Qu'elle le contralie
Et lie
En amour tellement

But your sweet mastery
Masters
My heart so harshly
That it torments
And binds it
So much in love

Qu'il n'a de riens envie
Fors d'estre en vo baillie;
Et se ne li ottrie
Vos cuers nul aligement.

That it desires nothing
But to be in your service
And yet your heart
Grants it no relief

Et quant ma maladie
Garie
Ne sera nullement
Sans vous, douce anemie,
Qui lie
Estes de mon tourment,

And since my sickness
Will never be healed
Without you, sweet enemy
Who is glad
At my torment

A jointes mains deprie
Vo cuer, puis qu'il m'oublie,
Que temprement m'ocie,
Car trop languit longuement.

I join my hands and pray
To your heart, since it forgets me
That it should kill me quickly
For I languish too long

O rosa bella – John Bedyngham (1422 – 1460)

This Fifteenth – century chanson is a piece that speaks about how one adorns whatever they cherish so much and probably cannot do without. This beautiful chanson for me as a singer, connects with me in the way I adorn my ex- partner whom I so much loved. Whenever I reflect on the text of this music, my thought goes to her and brings back memories of how I tried to convince her not to let me down and still proves how much I do love her through my actions . It is not just a beautiful piece of music for me but a very powerful one that truly recalls my past love life while I was dying for it not to leave me alone. The text is as follows:

O rosa bella o dolce anima mia
Non mi lassar morire in cortesia
A lasso mi dolente dezo finire
Per ben servire e lialment' amare

O beautiful rose, o sweet heart of mine
Do not leave me to die by your pity!
Ah, must I end up weary and grieving
For serving well and faithfully loving

O dio d'amore che pena e quest' amare
Vedi ch'io moro tut' hora per 'sta giudea
Soccore mi ormai del mio languire
Cor del corpo mio non me lassar morire

O god of love, what pain this loving is!
See how I die every moment for that cruel lady
Help me then in my pining,
Heart of my heart, do not leave me to die.

When to her lute Corina sings - Thomas Campion (1567 – 1620)

This renaissance lute song speaks about how Corina's voice brings life to this music right from the beginning. The presence of the voice which gives the entire music a kind of revival means a lot to me as a singer. I see the poem as a tool to project a message of beauty, sorrow and hope. It is a mixture of all these that makes us strong as humans. This poem captures everything we go through in life as human and how we are able to overcome.

When to her lute Corinna sings
*Her voice revives the leaden strings,
And doth in highest notes appear
As any challenged echo clear;
But when she doth of mourning speak
Ev'n with her sighs the strings do break.
And as her lute doth live or die,
Led by her passion, so must I:
For when of pleasure she doth sing,
My thoughts enjoy a sudden spring,
But if she doth of sorrow speak,
Ev'n from my heart the strings do break.*

Now o now I need must part – John Dowland (1563 – 1626)

This is a song by an English renaissance composer who lived around sixteenth to seventeenth century. This song speaks about bittersweet contemplation of love and loss. It is a song that resonates with my past experience in life as a person. It always throws a flashback about my experience with my ex-partner each time I sing this music, the text is so temperamental to me based on the story which similarly connects with mine. The text is as follows:

Now, O now, I need must part,
Parting though I absent mourn.
Absence can no joy impart:
Joy once fled cannot return.
While I live I need must love,
Love lives not when Hope is gone.

Now at last Despair doth prove,
Love divided loveth none.

Sad despair doth drive me hence,
This despair unkindness sends.
If that parting be offence,
It is she which then offends.

Dear, when I am from thee gone,
Gone are all my joys at once.
I loved thee and thee alone,
In whose love I joyed once.
And although your sight I leave,
Sight wherein my joys do lie,
Till that death do sense bereave,
Never shall affection die.

Dear if I do not return
Love and I shall die together,
For my absence never mourn,
Whom you might have joyed ever.
Part we must, though now I die.
Die I do to part with you.
Him despair doth cause to lie,
Who both lived and died true.

Puis que vous estes campieur – Guillaume Dufay (1397 – 1474)

This is a French medieval song written in 1470. It is a drinking song with two texted voices in pure canon at the octave originally accompanied with vielle. It is humorous in nature that it showcases the strength of the two drinkers as well as testing their fate on how strong the both of this drinkers are. I chose this music mainly because of the humorous part of it and also because of the canon arrangement of the both the voice and the instrument. There is some attitude of love which might be genuine or not which I perceive from both drinkers while they drink together. The text is as follows

Puisque vous estes campieur,
Voulientiers a vous campiroye,
A savoir moy, se je pourroye
A vous, pour estre bon pieur.

Since you are a fighter
Willingly would I fight you
To know myself if I could match
You to be a good drinker

Et si vous estes sapieur,
Contre vous aussi sapiroye.
Puisque [vous estes campieur,
Voulientiers a vous campiroye.

Vous me cuidez mauvais pieur,
Mais pour troys pos bien les piroye
Vrayment, ou je me tapiroye
Comme du monde le pieur.

And if you are a sapper
I would dig in competition with you too
Since you are a fighter
Willingly would I fighter

You think I'm a bad drinker
But I can well drink three jars
Truly, or else I'd die
As the worst in the world

Haste, Haste to the cedar grove – (HWV 67-Act 1) George Friderick Handel (1685-1759)

A baroque oratorio aria from the oratorio titled "Solomon"- A biblical drama written in 1748. This aria speaks of greatness, nobility, strength and of love. It shows how deep the character (King Solomon) in this Biblical drama loved his partner (Queen). This also resonates with me as a person who has experienced such deeper love not specifically from a love partner but from people I did not even expected such act of love from. It is a moment of joy that shifts away any sorrowful or hateful thought of what might have happened in the past. A kind of love that made me feels so protected from being harmed from enemies. The text is as follows:

Haste, haste to the cedar grove,
where fragrant spices bloom,
and am'rous turtles love,
beneath the pleasing gloom,

while tinkling down the hill,
avoiding hateful day,
the little murm'ring rill
in whispers glides away.

Crown the altar (Orpheus Britannicus – Book 1) Z.321 -Henry Purcell (1659 – 1695)

This is a secular art song written for a joyful moment of celebration of an important personnel in the seventeenth century England. This music speaks of serenity in as much it is written for birthday of an English monarch. I perceived serenity in the text and how i visualize in the meditation of the entire message as a singer. There is a sense of a calmness and tranquility which happens in the gathering of the people while celebrating a happy moment. The text is as follows

Crown the altar, deck the shrine.
Behold the bright seraphic throng
prepared our harmony to join,
the sacred choir attend too long.

Quoniam tu solus sanctus (Mass in F BWV 233) Johann Sebastian Bach (1685 – 1750)

This is a sacred aria from a Mass no 5 titled Quoniam tu solu sanctus which means ‘For you alone are Holy’. This music shows an act of worship of a higher being who rules the universe. The tonality in this music brings more of sober attitude in this act of worship. It projects that of a solemn worship as opposed to more of joyful worship. This music resonates with me as an individual whose religious life revolves round this type of solemn worship and is able to connect with God each time I perform such music in this setting regardless of the language. The tonality also helps in being able to visualize and focus in the act of adoration of the creator of the universe. The text is as follows:

Quoniam tu solus sanctus, tu solus Dominus,
Tu solus altissimus, Jesu Christe.

For you alone are holy, you alone are Lord,
You are alone are the most high, Jesus Christ.

He was despised (from Messiah – HWV 56- Part 2) – George Friderick Handel (1685 – 1759)

This oratorio aria speaks about the passion of Christ. It depicts how Christ was terribly humiliated for the sake of mankind. It is an aria that gives me an opportunity as a singer and individual to imagine myself in a position of sacrificing my life for others who needs my help at any point in time. It is an aria that constantly reminds me how painful it is to lay down one’s life for others to live. This piece resonates with me at different stages of my life where I have had to deny myself just for people I love to be able to be able to survive as humans. The second part of this aria shows agitated voice coupled with the pulsating accompaniment which creates intensity and drama within the music. The text is as follows:

He was despised and rejected of men,
a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief.
He gave His back to the smiters,
and His cheeks to them that plucked off the hair,
He hid not His face from shame and spitting.

Quae moerabat (from Stabat Mater) Giovanni Battista Pergolesi (1710 – 1736)

This sacred song from the cantata titled “Stabat Mater” depicts the mourning and grieving moment of a mother over her blessed child, who has just been sacrificed on the cross for the sake of mankind. This piece spring up with a happy movement in tonality of the instrumentation but with a sad message. This piece takes me back to a situation of giving out the most precious thing in my life that can give life to others and I can no longer have to myself alone but still happy I am able to do that for other to be saved. The text is as follows:

Quae moerebat et dolebat,
Pia Mater, dum videbat
Nati poenas incliti.

Who mourned and grieved
Seeing and bearing the torment
Of her glorious child

Thou art gone up on high (from Messiah HWV 56- Part 2) – George Friderick Handel (1685 – 1759)

This is an oratorio aria from Handel's messiah written for the alto voice. It depicts the ascension of Christ after his resurrection. The tonality in this music is more of hope. I see the words of this music as a weapon which strengthens a hopeful person to hold on to been optimistic. The instrumentation brought in some cheerful moment as the tension of being hopeful continues stronger towards the end. The text is as follows:

Thou art gone up on high, Thou hast led captivity captive,
and received gifts for men; yea, even from Thine enemies,
that the Lord God might dwell among them.

Pieta signore -Alessandro Stradella (1639 – 1682)

This is a religious art song which depicts a sober mind pleading to God for mercy. It is a kind of piece I as an individual use as a tool to commune with God. The words are very deep in meditation. The tonality right from the introduction prepares the mind for that moment of deep communion with the creator of the universe. A severity of the tone color also helps in expressing the sentiment of this moment. The text is as follows:

*Pietà, Signore, di me dolente!
Signor, pietà, se a te giunge il mio pregar;
non mi puniscail tuo rigor, meno severi,
clementi ognora, volgi i tuoi sguardisopra di me.*

*Non fia mai che nell'inferno sia dannato,
nel fuoco eterno dal tuo rigor.*

*Gran Dio, giammai sia dannato
nel fuoco eterno dal tuo rigor,
Pietà, Signore,
Signor, pietà di me dolente,
se a te giunge il mio pregare,
Meno severi, clementi ognora,
volgi i tuoi sguardi, deh! volgi sguardi su me, Signor,
Pietà, Signore, di me dolente.*

Have mercy, Lord, on me in my suffering!
Lord, have mercy, if my prayer reaches you;
may your severity not punish me,
always forgiving eyes direct upon me.
Do not allow me in hell,
to be damned in eternal flames by your severity.
Almighty God, never allow me to be damned

in the eternal flames by your severity,
Have mercy, Lord,
Lord, have mercy on me in my suffering,
if my prayer reaches to you,
Less harshly, always forgiving,
eyes upon me, ah! direct your eyes on me, Lord,
Have mercy, Lord, on me in my suffering.

Nisi Dominus- 1st movement from (Nisi Dominus- RV 608) Antonio Vivaldi (1678 – 1741)

Nisi dominus is a cantata movement written for the alto voice. This first movement springs up with a happy mood from the beginning to the end. I chose this aria as a singer to strengthen my vocal agility. It is a very challenging piece which make the singer to demonstrate his vocal agility through the melisma in the music. This piece speaks about how important it is to commit things under God's guidance and protection. This also showcase the counter communication between the singer the accompaniment part which leads into the melisma section. There is always that happy tonality happening which I think symbolizes joyful mood when one is rest assured that everything he does is under God's control. The texts is as follows:

Nisi Dominus aedificaverit domum,
in vanum laboraverunt, qui aedificant eam.
Nisi Dominus custodierit civitatem
frustra vigilat qui custodiat eam.

If the Lord has not built the house,
in vain will those who build it toil
If the Lord does not protect the city,
those who keep it watch in vain

Bamise – (from collections of Yoruba sacred songs) – Itunu Oyewale (1991- till date)

This sacred art song is a pleading song that speaks about help from above. It is prayerful in nature whereby the singer continuously ask for God's direction in this world of vanity. This piece for me means that there is always a room to ask for God's assistance after I must have done my part in whatever I am working on as an individual. The text is as follows:

Oluorun mo be o o
Ni le ai ye a san yi o
Ba mi se o wa ba mi se o
Ba mi se O lu Orun
Oluwa wa gbemi di de
Lo dun tit un
Jo wo jo wo
Jo wo gbemi di de

The creator of Heaven I cry unto thee
In this vanity world
Help me out, come help me
Help me out, creator of Heaven
Lord empower me
in this year
I beseech thee, I beseech thee.
I beseech thee to empower me

Ayo ni – (from collections of Yoruba sacred songs) – Itunu Oyewale (1991 – till date)

This sacred art song speaks about salvation of a soul, the joy derived from being saved through Christ the son of David. It went further in giving praises, adoration and gratification about the savior. All these

are felt with the drumming effect in the piano accompaniment. There is happiness from the beginning to the end of the music. This is so dare to me as someone who believes in Christ salvation and also who believes in thanksgiving. It is a song of thanksgiving for me and my heart rejoice whenever I sing or read the text. The words is as follows

Jesu Olugbala omo Dafidi	Jesus, son of David, the saviour
Ohun lo gba mi	saved me
Ohun layo mi	He is my joy
Ayo ni, Ayo ni	My joy, my joy
Oba mimo Ologo layo mi	King of glory is my joy
O fun mi layo	He gave me joy
O mu' nu mi dun	He made me happy
Oba mimo ologo layo mi	King of glory is my joy
Gbanigbani ti ngbani	the saviour that saves
Ohun lo pe ye	He is worthy of adoration
Wo ni wo ni ti now ni	The protector that protects
Ohun lo pe ye	He is worthy of adoration
Eledumare to da mi	the almighty that created me
Ohun lo pe ye	He is worthy of adoration
Olorun oba titi lai	God the everlasting King
Ohun lo pe ye	He is worthy of adoration

**Quando corpus morietur and Amen – 12th movement (from – Stabat Mater)
Giovanni Battista Pergolesi (1710 – 1736)**

This is a final movement of the great cantata written as duet for the soprano voice and the alto voice. It is a sacred cantata which speak about a dying soul while transcending into paradise in glory. It is depicts that moment of sadness and then immediately change into another moment of joy in the second part of the duet with the word “Amen” which caps the entire duet to a happy ending. This piece reminds me of eternity and that someday our souls shall go out of my bodies. The soul return to the creator of mankind where it feels safe, regardless of how sad everyone left behind will feel. The text is as follows

Quando corpus morietur,	While my body here decays,
fac, ut animae donetur,	May my soul Thy goodness praise
Quando corpus morietur	While my body here decays,
fac, ut animae donetur	May my soul Thy goodness praise
paradisi gloria,	Safe in Paradise with thee
paradisi gloria.	Safe in Paradise with thee
Amen	Amen

