

The Mary Pappert School of Music at Duquesne University presents

# RHIANNON GRIFFITHS

Voice, Soprano

from the studio of:

MEGHAN DEWALD

## Graduate Recital

In partial fulfillment of the requirements for the M.M. Performance

Saturday, March 6, 2021 | 1:30 PM | PNC Recital Hall

Accompanied by: John Moyer

### Program:

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Placido Zeffiretto  
Aure amiche, ah! Non spirate  
Affetti, non turbate

Vincenz Righini  
(1756–1812)

Nacht und Träume           D. 827  
Frühlingsglaube.           D. 686  
Sei mir gergüßt.           D. 741  
Gretchen am Spinnrade. D.118

Franz Schubert  
(1797-1828)

### INTERMISSION

Airs Chantés  
I.     Air Romantique  
II.    Air Champêtre  
III.   Air grave  
IV.    Air vif

Francis Poulenc  
(1899–1963)

Three Poems of Fiona MacLeod. Ops.11  
I.    The lament of Ian the proud.  
II.   Thy Dark Eyes to Mine  
III.  The Rose of the Night.

Charles Griffes  
(1884-1920)

Je veux vivre: From *Roméo et Juliette*

Charles Gounod  
(1818-1893)



Mary Pappert  
School of Music

*As a courtesy to performers and audience members, please  
silence your cell phones and refrain from using flash photography.*

# Program Notes and Translations

**Vincenzo Righini**  
**(1756-1812)**  
**Pietro Metastasio**  
**(1698-1782)**

Most well known for his version of the *Don Giovanni* story line, Vincenzo Righini also composed many light art songs. Because Righini was a singer himself, he understood vocal limits and knew how to showcase the singer. Pietro Metastasio, (a.k.a. Pietro Antonio Domenico Bonaventura Trapassi) was a prominent opera lyricist of his time. His work was known throughout Europe and used by many well-established composers. Metastasio also wrote poetry. The three songs presented today are all poems written by Metastasio.

## Placido zeffiretto

In the opening section, Righini uses eighth notes to evoke a gentle breeze which the singer asks to carry her sighs to her lover. In section B, sixteenth notes suggest the babbling brook to which the singer entrusts her tears. When the A section returns, the singer adds light ornamentations to further emphasize her point.

Placido zeffiretto,  
Se trovi il caro oggetto  
Digli che sei sospiro;  
Ma non gli dir di chi.

Gentle little breeze,  
if you find the beloved one  
tell him that you sigh  
but do not say whose sigh it is.

Limpido ruscelletto,  
Se mai t' incontri in lei,  
Dille che pianto sei  
Ma non le dir qual ciglio  
Crescer ti fè così.

Clear little brook,  
if you find the beloved one  
tell him that you cry  
but do not say whose eyes.  
caused you to swell so much.

### Aure amiche, ah! Non spirate

In this piece of music, Righini uses a 3/8 time signature to create a lilting atmosphere for a sorrowful poem. The singer pleads with Spring to wait, staving off the change of seasons to protect the beloved Irene from something dire. Righini's use of a major key and upbeat tempo contrasts with the sadder content of the lyrics, perhaps emphasizing the inevitability of time's passing.

Aure amiche, ah! non spirate  
Per pietà d'Irene amante;  
Care piante, ah! non tornate  
Così presto a germogliar.  
Ogni fior che si colori,  
Ogni zeffiro che spira,  
Quanti, oh Dio! quanti sospiri  
Al mio core ha da costar!

Friendly Breezes, ah! Don't blow  
Take Pity on my beloved Irene;  
Dear plants, ah! Don't return  
so quickly to germinate.  
Every flower that blooms,  
Every breeze that blows,  
How many, oh God! How many sighs  
Can my heart bear!

## Affetti, non turbate

*Affetti, non turbate* is written in an ABA form common in the Classical period. By repeating section A at the end of the piece, Righini emphasizes that portion of the poem's text, "Feeling, do not disturb the peace of my soul." This repetition implies that the singer has no control over her own sorrow.

Affetti, non turbate  
la pace all'alma mia,  
Sia vostra scelta, o sia  
l'oprar necessità.

Affections, don't disturb  
the peace of my soul,  
It may be your choice, or it may be  
the work of necessity.

Perchè rei vi credete  
se liberi non siete?  
Perchè non vi cangiate  
se avete libertà?

Why believe you're guilty  
if you're not free?  
Why not change  
if you have freedom?

## **Franz Peter Schubert (1797-1828)**

Although Schubert had a relatively short life, he made a major contribution to the Classical and Romantic Eras' music. In his lifetime he composed over 600 art songs, operas, symphonies, and chamber music. Of all the great works Schubert composed, his art songs are the most notable. Schubert not only explored every possibility of the *lieder* form, but also expanded their potential. Before Schubert, most art songs were strophic, with each verse having the same melodic line, as hymns did. Schubert opened up the form, allowing the melodic material to emphasize the emotional content and to vary from one verse to the next.

### Nacht und Träume

Schubert set the poetry of Matthäus von Collin to a striking musical line. Schubert's slow and calm melody line produces imagery of dreams throughout the night. The gentle sway of the piano reminds the singer of her longing love, her emotions sweep her away as the piano dramatically shifts harmonies.

Heil'ge Nacht, du sinkest nieder	Holy night, you sink down;
Nieder wallen auch die Träume	dreams, too, float down
Wie dein Mondlicht durch die	like your moonlight through space
Räume Durch der Menschen stille Brust	through the silent hearts of men.
Die belauschen sie mit Lust	They listen with delight,
Rufen, wenn der Tag erwacht	crying out when days awake
Kehre wieder, heil'ge Nacht!	come back, holy night!
Holde Träume, kehret wieder!	Fair dreams, return!

## Frühlingsglaube

The speaker in the poem by Johann Uhland bears a burden of sorrow. However, spring's awakening excites her and she rejoices in the beauty surrounding her. Schubert chooses to reemphasize the phrase *Nun muss sich Alles, Alles wenden*, (Now all must change) to remind us that as seasons change, so sorrow also changes. The singer reassures her heart that it, too, will bloom again.

Die linden Lüfte sind erwacht,  
Sie säuseln und weben Tag und Nacht,  
Sie schaffen an allen Enden.  
O frischer Duft, o neuer Klang!  
Nun, armes Herze, sei nicht bang!  
Nun muss sich Alles, Alles wenden.

Balmy breezes are awakened;  
they stir and whisper day and night,  
everywhere creative.  
O fresh scents, O new sounds!  
Now, poor heart, do not be afraid.  
Now all must change.

Die Welt wird schöner mit jedem Tag,  
Man weiss nicht, was noch werden mag,  
Das Blühen will nicht enden.  
Es blüht das fernste, tiefste Tal:  
Nun, armes Herz, vergiss der Qual!  
Nun muss sich Alles, Alles wenden.

The world grows fairer each day;  
we cannot know what is still to come;  
the flowering knows no end.  
The deepest, most distant valley is in flower.  
Now, poor heart, forget your torment.  
Now all must change.

## Sei mir begrüßt

Rückert's poem invokes two different romantic situations. In one, the singer serenades their beloved while they are together. However, the lyric also suggests the lover sings to their beloved who is absent, perhaps never to return. Schubert balances this poetry between a major and minor tonality so that the audience longs for the beloved as much as the singer does. The beautiful challenge of this piece lies in finding its best tempo: taken too fast, this piece sounds like a waltz, but taken too slow, it becomes a dirge. The correct tempo creates the perfect tension between love and loss.

O du Entriss'ne mir und meinem Küsse!	You who were torn from me and my kisses
Sei mir gegrüsst!	I greet you!
Sei mir geküsst!	I kiss you!
Erreichbar nur meinem Sehnsuchtsgrusse!	whom only my yearning greeting can reach,
Sei mir gegrüsst!	I greet you!
Sei mir geküsst!	I kiss you!
Du von der Hand der Liebe diesem Herzen	You who were bestowed on this heart
Gegeb'ne! du.	by the hand of love,
Von dieser Brust	you who were taken
Genomm'ne mir! mit diesem Tränengases	from my breast! With this flood of tears
Sei mir gegrüsst!	I greet you!
Sei mir geküsst!	I love you!

Zum Trotz der Ferne, die sich,  
feindlich trennend,  
Hat zwischen mich  
Und dich gestellt;  
Dem Neid der Schicksalsmächte zum Verdrusse  
Sei mir gegrüsst!  
Sei mir geküsst!

Defying the distance that,  
hostile and divisive,  
has come  
between you and me;  
frustrating the envious powers of fate,  
I greet you!  
I kiss you!

Wie du mir je im schönsten Lenz der Liebe  
Mit Gruss und Kuss  
Entgegen kamst,  
Mit meiner Seele glühendstem Ergüsse,  
Sei mir gegrüsst!  
Sei mir geküsst!

As in love's fairest spring  
you once came to me  
you once came to me  
so with all the fervor of my soul  
I greet you!  
I kiss you

Ein Hauch der Liebe tilget Räum'  
und Zeiten,  
Ich bin bei dir,  
Du bist bei mir,  
Ich halte dich in dieses Arms Umschlusse,  
Sei mir gegrüsst!  
Sei mir geküsst!

One breath of love dissolves time  
and space,  
and I am with you,  
you are with me;  
I hold you closely in my arms' embrace,  
I greet you!  
I kiss you!



## Gretchen am Spinnrade

*Gretchen am Spinnrade*, one of Schubert's best-known *lieder*, features expressive piano and vocal interaction that sweeps the audience into the singer's whirlwind of emotion. The piano part evokes the rapid rhythm of a spinning wheel with sixteenth notes. As Gretchen, the vocalist reminisces about her lover with a growing intensity. The piece builds to a musical and emotional climax, after which the singer calms and continues her work at her spinning wheel.

Meine Ruh' ist hin,	My peace is gone,
Mein Herz ist schwer;	My heart is heavy,
Ich finde sie nimmer	I will find it never
Und nimmermehr.	and never more.

Wo ich ihn nicht hab'	Where I do not have him,
Ist mir das Grab,	That is the grave,
Die ganze Welt	The whole world
Ist mir vergällt.	Is bitter to me.

Mein armer Kopf	My poor head
Ist mir verrückt,	Is crazy to me,
Mein armer Sinn	My poor mind
Ist mir zerstückt.	Is torn apart.

Meine Ruh' ist hin,	My peace is gone,
Mein Herz ist schwer;	My heart is heavy,
Ich finde sie nimmer	I will find it never
Und nimmermehr.	and never more.

Nach ihm nur schau' ich  
Zum Fenster hinaus,  
Nach ihm nur geh' ich  
Aus dem Haus.

For him only, I look  
Out the window  
Only for him do I go  
Out of the house.

Sein hoher Gang,  
Sein' edle Gestalt,  
Seines Mundes Lächeln,  
Seiner Augen Gewalt,

His tall walk,  
His noble figure,  
His mouth's smile,  
His eyes' power,

Und seiner Rede  
Zauberfluß,  
Sein Händedruck,  
Und ach sein Kuß!

And his mouth's  
Magic flow,  
His handclasp,  
and ah! his kiss!

Meine Ruh' ist hin,  
Mein Herz ist schwer;  
Ich finde sie nimmer  
Und nimmermehr.

My peace is gone,  
My heart is heavy,  
I will find it never  
and never more.

Mein Busen drängt  
Sich nach ihm hin.  
Ach dürft ich fassen  
Und halten ihn!

My bosom urges itself  
toward him.  
Ah, might I grasp  
And hold him!

Und küssen ihn  
So wie ich wollt',

And kiss him,  
As I would wish,

An seinen Küssen  
Vergehen sollt'!

At his kisses  
I should die!

**Francis Poulenc**  
**(1899-1963)**  
**Jean Moréas**  
**(1856-1910)**

Airs Chantés

Francis Poulenc composed *Airs Chantés* between 1927-28. Oddly, Poulenc chose the poetry of Jean Moréas as lyrics because of a longstanding animosity between the two men. Poulenc even stated that he selected these poems in order to intentionally create dissonant pieces that the poet would have dislike. Poulenc uses odd leaps, strange accents, and an overemphasis on the poetic meter. His tempos are marked at an unrealistic speed for the vocalist and the melodic lines do not complement the poetry. Ironically, later listeners find the poetry pleasant and the music bizarre -- if entertaining -- which reverses Poulenc's intent to punish Moréas.

Air romantique

J'allais dans la campagne  
avec le vent d'orage,  
Sous le pâle matin,  
sous les nuages bas;  
Un corbeau ténébreux  
escortait mon voyage,  
Et dans les flaques d'eau  
retentissaient mes pas.

I walked the countryside  
under the oncoming storm  
In the pale morning light,  
under low hanging clouds;  
A sinister raven  
was my only company,  
And my feet splashed  
through the puddles of water.

La foudre à l'horizon  
faisait courir sa flamme

At the horizon the lightning  
arowed its fire downward

Et l'Aquilon doublait  
ses longs gémissements;  
Mais la tempête  
était trop faible pour mon âme,  
Qui couvrait le tonnerre  
avec ses battements.

And the north wind doubled  
his drawn-out groaning;  
But the storm  
was too weak for my soul,  
Who drowns out the thunder  
with its beats.

De la dépouille d'or  
du frêne et de l'érable  
L'Automne composait  
son éclatant butin,

The golden glowing foliage  
of the ash and the acorn  
Is relished pray  
to the autumn

Et le corbeau toujours,  
d'un vol inexorable,  
M'accompagnait sans rien  
changer à mon destin.

And still the raven  
with unrelenting persistence  
keeps me company  
with out changing my destiny.

### Air Champêtre

Belle source, belle source,  
Je veux me rappeler sans cesse,  
Qu'un jour, guidé par l'amitié  
Ravi, j'ai contemplé ton visage, ô déesse,  
Perdu sous la mou, sous la mousse à moitié.

Beautiful spring, beautiful spring,  
I will never forget how I,  
led by friendship,  
Was enthralled by your face, oh goddess,  
Lost in sultriness, half hidden under moss.

Que n'est-il demeuré, cet ami que je pleure,  
O nymphe, à ton culte attaché,  
Pour se mêler encore au souffle qui t'effleure,  
Et répondre à ton flot caché?

Where is he now, the friend I mourn,  
Oh nymph, attached to your cult,  
I join the breeze that caresses you,  
I join the breeze that caresses you,

## Air grave

Ah! fuyez à présent ,  
Malheureuses pensées!  
O! colère, o! remords!  
Souvenirs qui m'avez  
Les deux tempes pressées,  
De l'étreinte des morts.

Sentiers de mousse pleins,  
Vaporeuses fontaines,  
Grottes profondes, voix  
Des oiseaux et du vent  
Lumières incertaines  
Des sauvages sous-bois,  
Insectes animaux,  
Beauté future,

Ne me repousse pas,  
Ô divine nature  
Je suis ton suppliant.  
Ah! fuyez à présent,  
Malheureuses pensées!  
O! colère, o! remords!

Ah! Away with you  
you morose thoughts!  
Oh! Rage, Oh, remorse!  
Memories that have  
Made my head ache  
With the full force of the dead.

Paths covered with moss,  
Frothy fountains,  
Deep caves, the voices  
Of the birds and the wind.  
Gloomy twilight  
In the wild underbrush,  
Insects, animals,  
Future beauty,

Don't reject me,  
Oh, heavenly nature,  
I worship you.  
Ah! Away with you,  
you morose thoughts!  
Oh! Rage, Oh, remorse!

## Air vif

Le trésor du verger  
et le jardin en fête,  
Les fleurs des champs, des bois, ,  
éclatent de plaisir  
Hélas! hélas!  
Et sur leur tête le vent enfle sa voix

The treasure of the orchard  
and the festive garden,  
the flowers of the fields  
and woodlands burst with pleasure,  
Alas!  
And above them the wind raises his voice.

Mais toi noble océan  
que l'assaut des tourmentes  
Ne saurait ravager  
Certes plus dignement,  
lorsque tu te lamentes,certainly,  
Tu te prends à songer.

But you, noble Ocean  
that the assault of storms  
could not ravage,  
with more dignity,  
once you lament,  
you lose yourself in dreams.

**Charles Griffes  
(1884-1920)  
William Sharp  
(1855-1905)**

Three Poems of Fiona MacLeod

Charles Griffes, one of America's Impressionistic composers, created several songs using lyrics by Fiona Macleod, the *nom de plume* of William Sharp [1855-1905] an early Impressionist Scottish poet. Griffes' use of word painting and dissonance connects the emotional content of the poem to the music. The opening line in *The Lament of Ian the Proud* signifies the voice on the wind that the singer hears. As the piece progresses, the same theme returns when the singer becomes lost in his grief and sorrow. *Thy Dark Eyes to Mine* sweeps the audience along as the singer pours out his/her affection to the beloved. The piano swells with the voice to a culmination in the word "kiss." *The Rose of the Night* captures the sensations of a forbidden love. The singer compares his/her love to a rose and passion to an imperishable fire. Although originally composed for an orchestra, Griffes' adaptation of these pieces for the piano encompasses the musical and emotional range of a larger ensemble

The Lament of Ian the Proud

What is this crying that I hear in the wind?  
Is it the old sorrow and the old grief?  
Or is it a new thing coming, a whirling leaf  
About the gray hair of me who am weary and blind?  
I know not what it is, but on the moor above the shore

And thereon is writ:  
She will return no more.  
O blown, whirling leaf,  
and the old grief, and wind  
crying to me  
who am old and blind!

## Thy Dark Eyes to Mine

Thy dark eyes to mine, Eilidh,  
Lamps of desire!  
O how my soul leaps  
Leaps to their fire!

Sure, now, if I in heaven,  
Dreaming in bliss,  
Heard but a whisper,  
But the lost echo even  
Of one such kiss --

All of the Soul of me  
Would leap afar --  
If that called me to thee  
Aye, I would leap afar  
A falling star!

There is a stone which the purple nets of heather bind,

## The Rose of the Night

The dark rose of thy mouth  
Draw nigher, draw nigher!  
Thy breath is the wind of the south,  
A wind of fire,  
The wind and the rose and darkness,  
O Rose of my Desire!

Deep silence of the night,  
Husht like a breathless lyre,  
Save the sea's thunderous might,  
Dim, menacing, dire,  
Silence and wind and sea, they are thee,  
O Rose of my Desire!

As a wind-eddy flame  
Leaping higher and higher,  
Thy soul, thy secret name,  
Leaps thro' Death's blazing pyre,  
Kiss me, Imperishable Fire, dark Rose,  
O Rose of my Desire!



**Charles Gounod**  
**(1819-1893)**

*Roméo et Juliette*

Je veux vivre

Je veux vivre (often called “Juliette’s Aria”) takes place in the Act I, during the masquerade ball. At this moment Juliette and Roméo have not yet met. The aria features a fast, upbeat tempo which reflects Juliette’s excitement. Gounod uses a repetitive refrain to show how enthralled Juliette is by her first ball. The young woman’s first words in the opera are Je veux vivre -- I want to live. Gounod contrasts the optimism and gaiety of this aria with the tormented duet the lovers sing in the final act, using the two pieces to show how far they have fallen in their tragic love.

Je veux vivre	I want to live
Dans ce rêve qui m'enivre	In this dream which intoxicates me
Ce jour encore,	This day still,
Douce flamme	Sweet flame
Je te garde dans mon âme	I keep you in my soul
Comme un trésor!	Like a treasure!
Je veux vivre, etc.	I want to live, etc.
Cette ivresse de jeunesse	This intoxication of youth
Ne dure, hélas! qu'un jour!	Lasts, alas, only for one day!
Puis vient l'heure	Then comes the hour
Où l'on pleure.	When one weeps.

Loin de l'hiver morose  
Laisse moi, laisse moi sommeiller  
Et respirer la rose,  
Avant de l'effeuiller.  
Ah! - Ah! - Ah!

Far from the morose winter  
Let me, let me slumber  
And inhale the rose,  
Before plucking its petals.  
Ah! - Ah! - Ah!

Douce flamme!  
Reste dans mon âme  
Comme un doux trésor  
Longtemps encore.  
Ah! - Comme un trésor  
Longtemps encore.

Sweet flame!  
Stay in my soul  
Like a sweet treasure  
For a long time still.  
Ah! - Like a treasure  
For a long time still.