Stephanie Lynn Aston
With Katalin Lukács

8 p.m. Friday, April 29, 2011

Concert Hall
Conrad Prebys Music Center
University of California San Diego
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UC San Diego Department of Music—http://musicweb.ucsd.edu
Poèmes pour Mi (1936)  Olivier Messiaen (1908-1992)
   I Action de grâces
   II Paysage
   IV Épouvante
   V L'épouse
   IX Prière exaucée

   1. Love Poem I
   2. Love Poem XIII
   3. Love Poem VI
   4. Love Poem III
   5. Love Poem XIV

..........................................Intermission..........................................

Fünf Orchester-Lieder  Alban Berg (1885-1935)
nach Ansichtskartentexten von Peter Alternberg (1912)

   I Seele, wie bist du schöner
   II Sahst du nach dem Gewitterregen
   III Über die Grenzen des All
   IV Nichts ist gekommen
   V Hier ist Friede

Lied der Lulu (1935)  Alban Berg

       ......brief pause......

Olivier Messiaen (1908-1992) was a French composer, organist, and teacher. His music absorbs influences from varying areas, including French organ tradition, modality, Debussy and Stravinsky, as well as Indian rhythms. However, Messiaen combines these elements in novel ways, creating a distinctive sound world.

Poèmes pour Mi was written by Olivier Messiaen in 1936 as a present for his first wife, violinist and composer Claire Delbos, whose pet name was “Mi.” Messiaen’s mother, Cecille Sauvage, was a poet and wrote a cycle of poems called “L’âme en bourgeon” while pregnant with Messiaen in which she references her unborn child. Perhaps Messiaen was his mother’s son, as he wrote the poems for this work, as well as the majority of his vocal works. The poems are on the theme of marriage and its reflection of the union between Christ and the church. In Poèmes pour Mi, we can see Messiaen’s early use of Indian influenced rhythms, as well as his modes of limited transposition. Messiaen also uses chant-based melodies in many of the movements, which seems to give the work a liturgical essence.

The first movement, “Action de grâces,” is a prayer that muses on the gifts of God: nature, his wife, and the sacrifice of Christ. “Paysage” explores the lightness of heart that comes upon seeing one’s beloved. “Épouvante” is a brief glimpse into the tortures of hell, and is quickly mitigated by “L’épouse,” in which the poet advises his wife to follow where the spirit leads. The cycle ends with “Prière exaucée,” a prayer to excite the heart into the joy of praising God.
Poèmes pour Mi

I Action de grâces

Le Ciel,
Et l’eau qui suit les variations des nuages
Et la terre, et les montagnes qui attendent toujours,
Et la lumière qui transforme.
Et un oeil près de mon oeil,
Une pensée près de ma pensée,
Et un visage qui sourrit et pleure avec le mien,
Et deux pieds derrière mes pieds
Comme la vague à la vague est unie.
Et une âme,
Invisible, pleine d’amour et d’immortalité,
Et une vêtement de chair et d’os qui germera pour la resurrection,
Et la Vérité, et l’Esprit, et la grâce avec son héritage de lumière,
Tout cela, vous m’avez donné.
Et vous vous êtes encore donné vous-même,
Dans l’obéissance et dans le sang de votre Croix,
Et dans un Pain plus doux que la fraîcheur des étoiles,
Mon Dieu.
Alléluia!

II Paysage

Le lac comme un gros bijou bleu.
La route pleine de chagrins et de fondrières,
Mes pieds qui hésitant dans la poussière,
Le lac comme un gros bijou bleu.

Et la voilà, verte et bleu comme le paysage!
Entre le blé et le soleil je vois son visage:
Elle sourit, la main sur ses yeux.
Le lac comme un gros bijou bleu.

IV Épouvante

Ha, ha, ha, ha, ha, ha, ho!
N’enfouis pas tes souvenirs dans la terre,

Poèmes pour Mi

I Thanksgiving

The sky,
And water which follows the variations of the clouds,
And earth and the ever-waiting mountains,
And light which transforms.
And an eye close to my eye,
And a thought close to my thought,
And a face which smiles and cries with mine,
And two feet behinds my feet
As wave to wave is joined.
And one soul,
Invisible, full of love and immortality,
And a robe of flesh and bone which will germinate for the resurrection,
And the Truth, and the Spirit, and the grace with its heritage of light.
All this, you have given me.
And you have also given yourself,
In obedience and in the blood of your Cross,
And in a Bread more sweet than the freshness of the stars.
My God.
Alleluia!

II Landscape

The lake like a big blue jewel.
The road full of sorrows and hollows,
My feet that hesitate in the dust,
The lake like a big blue jewel.

And there she is, green and blue like the landscape!
Between the wheat and the sun I see her face: She smiles, her hand over her eyes.
The lake like a big blue jewel.

IV Terror

Ha, ha, ha, ha, ha, ha, ho!
Do not bury your memories in the earth,

V L’Épouse

Va où l’Esprit te mène, Nul ne peut séparer ce que Dieu a uni, Va où l’Esprit te mène, L’épouse est le prolongement de l’époux, Va où l’Esprit te mène, Comme l’Eglise est le prolongement du Christ.

IX Prière exaucée

Ébranlez la solitaire, la vielle montagne de douleur, Que le soleil travaille les eaux amères de mon coeur! O Jésus, Pain vivant et qui donnez la vie, Ne dites qu’une seule parole, et mon âme sera guérie. Ébranlez la solitaire, la vielle montagne de douleur, Que le soleil travaille les eaux amères de mon coeur! Donnez-moi votre grâce, Donnez-moi votre grâce, Donnez-moi votre grâce! Carillone, mon coeur! Que ta resonance soit dure, et longue, et profonde! Frappe, tape, choque pour ton roi! Frappe, tape, choque pour ton Dieu! Voici ton jour de gloire et de la resurrection! La joie est revenue.

You will not find it again. Do not pull, do not crumple, do not tear. The bloody tatters will follow you into the darkness. Like spasmodic vomiting. And the loud crash of the bolts on the irreparable door. Will give rhythm to your despair. To sate the powers of fire. Ha, ha, ha, ha, ha, ha, ha, ha! ha!

V The Wife

Go where the Spirit leads you, Nothing can separate that God has united, Go where the Spirit leads you, The wife is the extension of the husband, Go where the spirit leads you, As the Church is the extension of Christ.

IX Fulfilled Prayer

Shake the lone, old mountain of sorrow, That the sun may work the bitter waters of my heart! O Jesus, living Bread and who gives life, Say but one single word, and my soul will be healed. Shake the lone, old mountain of sorrow, That the sun may work the bitter waters of my heart! Give me your grace, Give me your grace, Give me your grace! Ring out, my heart! That your resonance may be firm, and long, and deep! Strike, beat, shock for your king! Strike, beat, shock for your God! Here is your day of glory and of the resurrection! Joy has returned.
Nicholas Deyoe was born in 1981 in Boulder, Colorado. He attended the University of Northern Colorado from 1999 - 2006, receiving a B.M. in Music Theory/Composition and an M.M. in Orchestral conducting. In 2004, Nicholas spent four months in Oldenburg, Germany studying composition with Violeta Dinescu. He now lives in San Diego where, after completing an M.A. in 2008, he is pursuing a Ph.D. in Composition from UCSD, and is currently acting as an assistant conductor for the La Jolla Symphony under Steve Schick. Nicholas has conducted Red Fish Blue Fish, Ensemble Ascolta, The Darmstadt Preisträgerensemble, Noise, The University of Northern Colorado Symphony, Chamber, and Sinfonietta Orchestras, and several ad hoc ensembles in Colorado, California, and Germany. Nicholas’s music works with noise, delicacy, drama, and flexible intonation. His music has been performed in the United States, Canada, Germany, Iceland, and Japan. Upon completion of his studies in San Diego, Nicholas plans to open a performance venue dedicated to experimental music in Los Angeles.

5 McCallum Songs are settings of friend and composer Clinton McCallum’s poetry that were written for me, and are being premiered at this recital. Each song uses various timbres, pitch inflections, rhythmic modifications and textures as a palette of possible expressions for the text.
5 McCallum Songs

1 Love Poem I
I want to look at you with throbbing eyes
I want to watch me through you
and feel your tears of adoration
construct this image like a nude
air brush the rough edges
feel you painful longing
for someone else that it seems you’ve always wanted
there is a paradise under these clothes
a fairy tale waiting to be opened
I want to show you the cover
and snatch the book away.

2 Love Poem XIII
I woke up sweating breathless.
She fleeting image.
I felt I had just barely escaped.
Laying there beside me
her eyelids twitched
sending me around to my sleep.
Itching aching I crossed the room
to calm myself in front of the mirror
like it’s gonna make us feel better.
How can you dream of she?
Don’t you know that I have to look her in the eyes?
There’s an open door
the wind’s too strong
if I don’t act now it will sweep her away.
She stands, proud and lonely.

3 Love Poem VI
Ah, now you see
that I’m something superior
and
I’ll feed you
and
I’ll dress you
and
I’ll keep you never lonely
You look so angelic
with black tears on your cheeks
Your begging eyes
free my soul
I’ll never let you go.

4 Love Poem III
to convince you
to convince you
to convince you
to convince you
only

5 Love Poem XIV
I walked you to your door
I fumbled over doubt and projection
I smiled
said good night
and as I turned
you grabbed me and kissed me.
Alban Berg (1885-1935) formed part of the Second Viennese School, along with his teacher, Arnold Schoenberg, and fellow student Anton Webern. Around the time of WWI, they together moved from tonality to write serial, or twelve-tone music. Berg’s compositional style is a complex combination of serial methods with tonally influenced melodic writing.

Fünf Orchester-Lieder nach Ansichtskartentexten von Peter Altermberg was written in the summer of 1912, and was the first work written without the guidance of Schoenberg. Although brief, it contains precursors of his mature style, including formal and motivic complexity, and large scale dramatic gestures.

Lied der Lulu comes from the opera Lulu, written by Berg between 1929 and 1935. As one of Berg’s last works, it contains an extremely complex motivic and formal structure, in which all of the material is somehow derived from the melody of the first phrase of the Lied. The opera also contains a fully developed combination of serial methods with Berg’s previous style. Lulu is a passionate tale, based on Erdgeist and Die Büsche der Pandora by Frank Wedekind, of a woman’s rise and fall in society through association with her many husbands and lovers. In the Lied, Lulu is defending her right to live after being told by her husband, Dr Schön, to kill herself.
Fünf Orchester-Lieder nach Ansichtskartentexten von Peter Altenberg

I Seele, wie bist du schöner
Seele, wie bist du schöner,
tiefer, nach Schneestürmen.
Auch du hast sie, gleich der natur.
Und über beiden liegt noch ein trüber Hauch,
Eh das Gewölk sich verzog!

II Sahst du nach dem Gewitterregen…
Sahst du nach dem Gewitterregen den Wald!??
Alles rastet, blinkt, und ist schöner als zuvor,
Siehe, Fraue, auch du brauscht Gewitterregen!

III Über die Grenzen des All…
Über die Grenzen des All blicktest du sinnend hinaus;
Hattest nie Sorge um Hof und Haus!
Leben und Traum vom Leben- plötzlich ist alles aus.
Über die Grenzen des All blicktest du noch sinnend hinaus!

IV Nichts ist gekommen…
Nichts ist gekommen, nichts wird kommen für meine Seele.
Ich habe gewartet, gewartet oh, gewartet!
Die Tage werden dahinschleichen,
und umsonst wehen meine aschblonden seidenen Haare um mein bleiches Antlitz!

V Hier ist Friede…
Hier ist Friede.
Hier weine ich mich aus über alles!
Hier löst sich mein unfaßbares,
Unermeßliches Leid, das mir die Seele

Five Songs with Orchestra to words written on picture-postcards by Peter Altenberg

I Soul, how you are more beautiful
Soul, how you are more beautiful, profounder, after snowstorms.
And you have them, same as nature.
And over both lies still a gloomy breath, until the clouds themselves blow away!

II Saw you after the rainstorm…
Saw you the forest after the rainstorm?
All rests, glitters, and is more beautiful than before,
See, woman, you also need rainstorms!

III Over the brink of all…
Over the brink of all you looked reflecting outward;
Had never a care for land and house!
Living and dreaming of life- suddenly all is over.
Over the brink of all you looked still reflecting outward!

IV Nothing is come…
Nothing is come,
Nothing will come for my soul.
I have waited, waited oh, waited!
The days will creep there,
and in vain blows my ash blonde silken hair around my pale face.

V Here is peace…
Here is peace.
Here I cry myself out over all!
Here frees my inconceivable, immeasurable grief, that burns
verbrennt…
Siehe, hier sind keine Menschen,
keine Ansiedlungen.
Hier ist Friede!
Hier tropft Schnee leise in Wasserlachen…

**Lied der Lulu**
Wenn sich die Menschen um meinet willen umgebracht haben,
so setzt das meinen Wert nicht herab.
Du hast so gut gewußt, weswegen Du mich zur Frau nahmst,
wie ich gewußt habe weswegen ich Dich zum Mann nahm.
Du hattest Deine besten Freude mit mir betrogen,
Du konntest nicht gut auch noch dich selber mit mir betrügen.
Wenn Du mir Deinen Lebensabend zum Opfer bringst,
so hast Du meine ganze Jugend dafür gehabt.
Ich habe nie in der Welt etwas anderes scheinen wollen,
also wofür man mich genommen hat;
Und man hat mich nie in der Welt für etwas anderes genommen, als was ich bin.

my soul…
See, here are no people,
no settlements.
Here is peace!
Here snow drops softly in pools of water….
Luciano Berio (1925-2003) was an Italian composer who was very interested in investigating the abilities of every instrument. His most famous works are the Sequenzas, solo works for various instruments that explore different types of virtuosity. He wrote many works for voice, several of which were written with Cathy Berberian, his first wife, in mind. The use of gesture was a key element in a number of his works. Berio wrote many experimental works, using instruments as well as electronics, during one of the most innovative periods, musically speaking, of the twentieth century.

Sequenza III is a work for solo voice written for Cathy Berberian. It explores the gamut of vocal possibilities, from everyday speech activities, to full classical singing. The text is a modular poem by Markus Kutter that Berio contorts to meet his needs. Berio’s goal was to create a work that could be viewed by each audience member in its own light, similar to a painting or work of literature.
Thank You!

First, thank you all for coming! I would like to extend special thanks to the following people: my committee, my voice professors while I have been at UCSD, Susan Narucki and Carol Plantamura, Kate Lukacs, who has played with me for years and graciously agreed to play with me tonight, and my husband Nick, who has written me a beautiful piece.