something missing

songs of loss

dan mohr, voice
marianne finckel, piano

friday, may 14, 1999
800 pm
deane carriage barn

many thanks go to amy williams, tom bogdan, fonta hadley, emily wells, sue jones, alan del vecchio, mi familia, my allergies (for making me work harder), and anyone else I may have forgotten. thank you for coming.

program

Two French Songs by Charles Ives

Elégie (Gallet)
de la drama: Rosamunde (Belanger)

Kindertotenlieder (Songs on the Death of Children) (1901-4)
Gustav Mahler
to poems by Friedrich Rueckert

I. *Nun will die Sonn' so hell aufgehn!*
II. *Nun seh ich wohl, warum so dunkle Flammen*
III. *Wenn dein Mütterlein*
IV. *Oft denk' ich, sie sind nur ausgegangen!*
V. *In diesem Wetter!*

interval

Banalités (1940)
Francis Poulenc
to poems by Guillaume Apollinaire

I. *Chanson d'Orkenise*
II. *Hôtel*
III. *Fagnes de Wallonie*
IV. *Voyage à Paris*
V. *Sanglots*

The Cloisters (1967)
John Corigliano
to poems by William Hoffman

I. *Fort Tryon Park: September*
II. *Song to the Witch of the Cloisters*
III. *Christmas at the Cloisters*
IV. *The Unicorn*

Tonight's program deals with different musical treatments of different aspects of loss, death, personal emptiness. The Ives songs, written in his youth as he was falling in love with his wife to be, Harmony, are both laments of the loss of a loved one. Mahler's Kindertotenlieder, *run themselves through the stages of mourning, and end with a reconciliation of the loss of children. Poulenc's* Banalités, *written in time of war, explore departure and apathy, and finally, in* Sanglots *(Sobs), confront the emptiness of the inability to share feeling. The Cloisters is a medieval art museum in northern Manhattan (around 190th St.). It occupies a European monastery that the Rockefellers shipped to New York stone by stone, and had rebuilt in Fort Tryon Park. The park overlooks the Hudson River, with a beautiful view of the George Washington Bridge. Hoffman's poetry, cycling through the seasons, confronts the disillusionment that can occur in the contradictory presence of the old monastery and the new city...the natural beauty and purity of the park vs. the smells of the river and New York...the sacred in the secular...*

elegy

o, sweet spring of before,
green season,
you are gone forever!
I can no longer see the blue sky;
I can no longer hear the happy songs of the birds!
they took away my happiness...

o, beloved, you are gone
and it is in vain that the spring retu
yes, with you
the gay sun and those laughing days
are forever gone, gone...

...as in my heart
all is dark and frozen!
all is withered!
forever!

kindertotenlieder

songs on the death of children

I.

Nun will die Sonn' so hell aufgeh'n,
Als sei kein Unglück die Nacht gescheh'n!
Das Unglück geschah nur mir allein;
Die Sonne sie sheinet allgemein!
Du mußt nicht die Nacht in dir verschränken,
Mußt sie ins ew'ge Licht versenken!
Ein Lämplein verlosch in meinem Zelt!
Heil! Heil sei dem Freudenlicht der Welt!

I.

Now the sun will rise so brightly,
As if no disaster had come in the night!
The disaster came to me alone;
The sun goes on shining everywhere!
You must not let night dwell in your heart,
You must submerge it in eternal light!
A little lamp went out in my heart!
Hail! Hail to the joyful light of the world.

II.

Nun seh ich wohl, warum so dunkle Flammen
Ihr sprühtet mir in manchem Augenblicke, O Augen!
Gleichsam um voll in einem Blicke zu drägen eure ganze Macht zusammen.
Doch ahnt' ich nicht, weil Nebel mich umschwammen,
Gewoben vom verblendenden Geschikke,
Dass sich der Strahl bereits zur Heimkehr schikke,
Dorthin von wannen alle Strahlen stammen.
Ihr wolltet mir mit eurem Leuchten sagen:
Wir möchten nah dir bleiben gerne!
Doch ist uns das vom Schicksal abgeschlagen.
Sieh' uns nur an, denn bald sind wir dir ferne!
Was dir nur Augen sind in diesen Tagen,
In künft'gen Nachten sind es dir nur Sterne.

II.

Now I can see why such dark flames
You flashed at me at times—oh your eyes!
As if you wanted to compress all your power into one look.
Yet I knew not, enshrouded in the mist
Created by a deceptive fate,
That your ray was already bent on returning
To those realms whence all rays descend.
Your shining lights tried to tell me:
"We would like to stay with you,
But fate has denied us our wish.
Just look at us, for soon we shall be far!
What seem but eyes to you these days,
In future nights will have changed to stars."

III

Wenn dein Mütterlein tritt zur Tür herein,
Und den Kopf ich drehe, ihr entgegen sehe,
Fällt ouf ihr Gesicht erst der Blick mir nicht,
Sondern auf die Stelle, näher, näher nach der Schwelle,
Dort, wo würde dein lieb Gesichtchen sein,
Wenn du freudenhelle trätest mit herein,
Wie sonst, mein Töchterlein.
Wenn dein Mütterlein tritt zur Tür herein,
Mit der Kerze Schimmer, ist es mir, al immer känst du mit herein,
Huschtest hinterdrein, als wie sonst ins Zimmer!
O du, o du, des Vaters Zelle,
Ach, zu schnelle, erlosch'ner Freudenschein.

III

When your dear mother comes through the door
And I turn my head to look at her,
My first glance does not dwell on her face,
But on the spot closer to the threshold,
There, where your dear little face would be,
If you should enter with her joyfully,
As once you did, little daughter of mine.
When your dear mother comes through the door,
by the candle's light you always enter too,
Slipping behind her, as of yore,
into the room!
Oh you, oh you, core of your father's being,
Light of joy, extinguished too soon.

IV

Oft denk' ich, sie sind nur ausgegangen!
Bald werden sie wieder nach Hause gelangen!
Der Tag ist schön! O, sei nicht bang!
Sie machen nur einen weiten Gang!
Jawhohl, sie sind nur ausgegangen,
Und werden jetzt nach Hause gelangen!
O, sei nicht bang, der Tag ist schön!
Sie machen nur den Gang zu jenen Höh'n!
Sie sind uns nur vorausgegangen
Und werden nicht wieder nach Haus verlangen!
Wir holen sie ein aug jenen Höh'n,
Im Sonnenschein!
Der Tag ist schön in jenen Höh'n!

IV

I often think they only have gone out,
And soon they will be home again!
The day is lovely! Oh, be not afraid!
They only have gone out for a long walk!
Indeed, they only have gone out,
And soon now will come home again!
Oh be not be a afraid, the day is lovely!
They only have gone out to yonder hills!
They only went ahead of us
And do not feel like coming home again!
We shall overtake them on yonder hills,
In the sunshine!
The day is lovely on yonder hills!

V.

In diesem Wetter, in diesem Braus,
Nie hätt' ich gesendet die Kinder hinaus!
Man hat sie getragen, getragen hinaus!
Ich durfte nichts dazu sazen!
In diesem Wetter, in diesem Saus,
Nie hätt' ich gelassen die Kinder hinaus!
Ich fürchtete, sie erkranken;
Das sind nun eitle Gedanken,
In diesem Wetter, in diesem Graus,
Nie hätt' ich gelassen die Kinder hinaus,
Ich sorgte, sie stürben morgen;
Das ist nun nicht zu besorgen.
In diesem Wetter, in diesem Graus,
Nie hätt' ich gesendet die Kinder hinaus.
Man hat sie hinaus getragen,
Ich durfte nicht dazu sagen!
In diesem Wetter, in diesem Saus,
in diesem Braus, sie ruh'n, sie ruh'n
Als wie in der Mutter, der Mutter Haus:
Von keinem Stürm erschreckket,
Von gottes Hand bedekket,
Sie ruh'n, sie ruh'n wie in der Mutter Haus!

V

In such a weather, in such a storm,
I would never have sent the children out!
They have been carried, been carried off!
I was not allowed to say a word!
In such a weather, in such a storm,
I would never have let the children go out!
I was afraid that they might fall ill;
These are idle thoughts now.
In such a weather, in such a storm,
I would never have let the children go out,
I was afraid they might die on the morrow;
I need not worry about it any more.
In such a weather, in such a storm,
I never would have let the children out,
They have been carried off,—
I was not allowed to say a word!
In such a weather, in such a storm,
In such a tempest, they rest, they rest
As in their Mother's house;
By no storm frightened,
By God's hand protected,
They rest, they rest as in their Mother's house.