

BENNINGTON COLLEGE MUSIC DIVISION

Presents

A SENIOR CONCERT

by

SUSANNAH WATERS

Monday  
June 9, 1986

8:15 p.m.  
Greenwall Music Workshop

"Wie Zittern und Wanken...",  
from Kantate #105, "Herr, gehe nicht ins Gericht"

J.S. BACH

Michael Finckel, tenor cello  
Alice Wu and Anatto Ingle, violins  
Naomi Givin, viola

"Figlia...", duet from Rigoletto

G. VERDI

Susannah Waters, soprano  
Michael Downs, baritone

Simple Love Songs for Beginners  
(Text by Dorothy Parker)

S. WATERS

Susannah Waters, voice  
Jeffrey Levine, double bass

Fünf Mörrike Lieder  
(Text by Edward Morike)

H. WOLF

Fussreise  
Das Verlassene Magdlein  
Jägerlied  
Auf ein Altes Bild  
Verborgeneheit

Susannah Waters, voice  
Jacob Glick, violin  
Maxine Neuman, tenor cello  
Tom Calabro, Michael Severens, Max Weiss, cellos

INTERMISSION

Apparition  
(Text by Walt Whitman)

G. CRUMB

Susannah Waters, voice  
Marianne Finckel, amplified piano

Family Portraits

S. WATERS

Song of the North  
97 Airports  
Two Sides of One Brother

Susannah Waters, voice  
Janet Gillespie, piano

My Bonnie Light Horseman  
Ye Rambling Boys of Pleasure  
The Maid of Coolmore

TRADITIONAL  
TRADITIONAL  
TRADITIONAL

Susannah Waters, voice  
Jonathan Bepler, fiddle, voice  
Matthew Henderson, guitar, voice  
John Hendricks, mandolin, voice  
Andrea Kane, guitar, voice

Les Nuits D'Ete  
(Text by Theophile Gauthier)

H. BERLIOZ

Villanelle  
Le Spectre de la Rose  
Sur les Lagunes  
L'Absence  
L'Ile inconnue

Susannah Waters, voice  
Elizabeth Wright, piano

My love and appreciation go out to many, especially: My family, the base, who are most dear; Michael Downs, for companionship, support, and all the little details he quietly watches over; Jeffrey Levine, for lending me his hat year after year; Willie Finckel, for always making time to be involved in working with me; Hilary Ince, for commitment and challenges yet to come; and to all the people who shared Portugal winters with me and helped my voice to grow.

IF YOU ENJOY THIS CONCERT, please go up and thank Frank Baker, for my singing is the incredible, invaluable gift which he has given to me, and which I can only hope to return to him, and to others, each time I begin a song.  
I love you, Frank.

This concert is being presented in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Bachelor of Arts Degree.

Les Nuits D'Ete (Summer Nights) Poems by Theophile Gautier.

I. Villanelle

When the new season will come,  
When the frosts will have vanished,  
We two shall go, my lovely one,  
To gather lilies-of-the-valley in  
the woods,  
Under our feet, picking the pearls  
Which one sees trembling in the  
morn;  
We shall go to hear the blackbirds,  
We shall go to hear the blackbirds  
whistling.

Spring has come, my lovely one;  
This is the blessed month for lovers;  
And the bird smoothing its wings,  
Says a poem on the rim of its nest.  
Oh, come then to this mossy bank  
To talk of our glorious love,  
And tell me with your voice so  
sweet  
Forever!

Far, far away, straying from our path,  
Putting to flight the hidden rabbit  
And the buck, in the mirror of the  
springs  
Admiring its bent antlers;  
Then homeward, so happy, so at ease,  
Entwining our fingers to make a  
basket,  
Let us return, carrying wild  
strawberries.

II. The Spectre of the Rose

Open your closed eyelids ...  
Gently touched by a virginal dream!  
I am the spectre of the rose  
That you wore last night at the  
ball.  
You have taken me still covered  
with the pearls  
of the dew's silvery tears,  
And amidst brilliant festivities,  
You carried me through the night.  
O you, who were the cause of my  
death,  
Without you being able to escape  
him,  
My rose-coloured spectre will  
come  
Every night to dance at your  
bedside.  
But have no fear at all: I do  
not ask  
Either a mass or De Profundis.  
This fragrant perfume is my soul,  
And I am from Paradise.  
My destiny could be envied,  
And to have so beautiful a fate,  
More than one would have given  
his life;  
For on your breast I have my tomb,  
And on the alabaster where I  
repose,  
A poet wrote with a kiss:  
"Here lies a rose  
Which all kings might envy."

III. On the Lagoons

My fair friend is dead,  
I will mourn forever;  
She has taken with her into the  
tomb  
My soul and my love.  
Without waiting for me  
She has returned to heaven;  
The angel who led her away  
Did not wish to take me.  
How bitter is my fate!  
Oh! To go to sea without love!  
The white form  
Is lying in the coffin.  
How all of nature  
Seems gloomy to me!

The forgotten dove  
Weeps and dreams of the absent  
one;  
My soul weeps and feels  
That it is left alone!  
How bitter is my fate!  
Oh! To go to sea without love!  
The immense night over me  
Spreads like a shroud;  
I am singing my song  
That heaven alone can hear.  
Oh! How fair she was,  
And how much I loved her!  
I will never love  
A woman as much as I loved her...  
How bitter is my fate!

Les Nuits D'Ete (continued)

Apparition (George Crumb)

Text by Walt Whitman

IV. Absence

Come back, come back, my love!  
Like a flower far from the sun,  
The flower of my life is closed  
Far from your smile!  
What distance between our hearts!  
What space between our kisses!  
Oh bitter fate, oh cruel absence!  
Oh great unappeased desire!  
Come back, come back, my love!  
Like a flower far from the sun,  
The flower of my life is closed  
Far from your smile!  
From here to where you are, how  
wide the country;  
How many cities and hamlets,  
How many valleys and mountains,  
To tire the hoofs of the horses!  
Come back, come back, my love!  
Like a flower far from the sun,  
The flower of my life is closed  
Far from your smile.

V. The Unexplored Island

Tell me, young fair one,  
Where do you want to go?  
The sail swells its wing,  
The wind will blow!  
The oar is of ivory  
The flag of silk  
The rudder of pure gold;  
For ballast I have an orange,  
For sail an angel's wing,  
For foam I have a seraph.  
Tell me, young fair one,  
Where do you wish to go?  
The sail swells its wing,  
The wind will blow.  
Is it to the Baltic Sea?  
To the Pacific Ocean?  
Towards the island of Java?  
Or is it to Norway,  
To gather the snow flowers,  
Or the flowers of Angsoka?  
Tell me, fair young one,  
Tell me, where do you wish to go?  
Lead me, says the fair one,  
To the faithful shore,  
Where one loves forever!  
This shore, my fair one,  
Is not known at all,  
In the land of loves!  
Where do you wish to go?  
The wind will blow!

I. The night in silence under many star  
The ocean shore, and the husky  
whispering wave, whose voice I  
know,  
And the soul, turning to thee,  
o vast and well-veiled death,  
And the body, gratefully, nesting  
close to thee.

II. When lilacs last in the dooryard  
bloomed,  
I mourned, and yet shall mourn,  
With ever returning spring.

III. Dark mother, always gliding near  
with soft feet,  
Dark mother, have none chanted for  
thee,  
A chant of fullest welcome?  
Then I chant it for thee,  
I glorify thee above all,  
I bring thee a song that when thou  
must indeed come, come unflater-  
ingly.  
Dark, mother, always gliding near,  
with soft feet.

IV. Approach, strong deliveress!  
When it is so, when thou hast taken  
them,  
I joyously, joyously sing the dead!  
Lost in the loving floating ocean  
of thee,  
Loved in the flood of thy bliss,  
O death.

V. Come, lovely and soothing death,  
Undulate round the world, serenely  
arriving,  
In the day, in the night,  
To all, to each, sooner or later,  
Delicate death  
Come, lovely and soothing death!

Five Lieder, Music by Hugo Wolf, Text by Eduard Morike

I. Fussreise (Journey by Foot)

When, with fresh-cut stick,  
at early morn,  
I walk in the woods,  
up hill and down:  
then, like the small bird in the  
trees,  
singing and stirring,  
or the golden grape  
sensing spirits of delight  
in the first morning sun,  
my dear old Adam feels  
autumn and spring fever too,  
God-heartened,  
never foolishly wasted  
first-delight-of-paradise.

So you are not so bad, old  
Adam, as strict teachers say;  
but keep on loving and praising,  
singing and extolling,  
as if each were a new day of  
Creation,  
your dear Creator and Keeper.

Would he grant it be so,  
and my whole life  
were the gentle sweat  
of just such a morning journey!

II. Das Verlassene Magdlein  
(The Forsaken Maid)

At cock-crow, early,  
before the tiny stars are gone,  
I must be at my hearth,  
must light the fire.

Pretty the flames glow,  
the sparks leap;  
I stare into them,  
lost in grief.

Suddenly it comes to me,  
unfaithful boy,  
that last night  
I dreamt of you.

Tear upon tear  
then falls;  
so the day starts --  
would it were gone again!

III. Jagerlied (Hunter's Song)

Dainty is the bird's step on the snow  
when wandering on the mountain height:  
daintier my love's dear hand  
in her letter to me in a far-off land.

High into the sky a heron soars  
where no shaft or ball can fly;  
higher and swifter still  
are the thoughts of faithful love.

IV. Auf Ein Altes Bild  
(Inspired by an Old Picture)

In a green landscape's summer flowers  
by cool water, reeds and rushes,  
see how the innocent little boy  
plays freely on the Virgin's lap!  
And there, in the wood full of wonder,  
Ach, is greening already the wood  
for the cross!

V. Verborgenheit (Concealment)

Leave, oh world, oh leave me be!  
Tempt me not with gifts of love,  
Leave this heart to have alone  
its bliss, its agony!

Why I grieve, I do not know,  
my grief is unknown grief  
all the time I see through tears  
the sun's delightful light.

Often, scarce aware am I,  
pure joy flashes  
through the oppressing heaviness  
-- flashes blissful in my heart.

Leave, oh world, oh leave me be!  
Tempt me not with gifts of love,  
leave this heart to have alone  
its bliss, its agony!

Duet from Rigoletto, by Giuseppe Verdi

This duet comes from the second scene of the first act. Rigoletto is a deformed hunchback who works as a jester in Duke of Mantua's court. He is generally despised and cursed by the people of the court. In this scene, we meet his daughter Gilda for the first time. At the beginning of the duet, Gilda, who has never left the house and knows nothing of Rigoletto's life, comes out to greet him. They embrace tenderly and in the course of the following conversation Gilda asks him to tell her something of her family. Interrupting, Rigoletto cautions her about leaving the house, but is reassured when she replies that she ventures out only to go to church. Pressed by Gilda for information about her mother, Rigoletto asks her not to remind him of his past happiness, speaking of her mother with tenderness and regretting her early death. Gilda tries to persuade him to reveal something about his country, family, and fiends, but Rigoletto will tell her nothing. Fearful for his daughter because of his many enemies, Rigoletto asks Gilda's chaperone to watch over her carefully.

R: Daughter!  
G: Father!  
R: I am only happy when you are near.  
G: Oh how you love me!  
R: You are my life!  
What does the world hold for me  
but you?  
G: Your're sighing... what ails you?  
Tell your poor daughter.  
If there's a mystery -- dispel it --  
tell me about my family.  
R: You have none.  
G: What name do you bear?  
R: What does it matter to you?  
G: If you don't want to tell me about  
yourself...  
R: (Interrupting) Never go out.  
G: I only go to church.  
R: You do well.  
G: ...if not about yourself, then at  
least tell me about my mother.  
R: Oh, don't remind an unfortunate  
wretch of his past happiness.  
She, dear angel, felt for me  
in my misery.  
Alone, deformed, poor,  
she loved me from compassion.  
She died, alas! May the earth  
rest lightly on her beloved head.  
You alone remain to the poor wretch  
now.  
Oh God! Be thanked!  
G: Oh, how he suffers! What can be  
the cause of such weeping?  
Father, no more, be calm, the  
sight of you thus rends my heart.

R: You alone remain to him you  
alone...  
G: Tell me your name, tell me why  
you are so sad.  
R: Why tell my name? It would  
serve no purpose.  
I am your father, let that  
suffice.  
In this world, I am most likely  
feared, some bear me a grudge  
perhaps, others curse me.  
G: Then you have no country, no  
family, no friends?  
R: Country, relatives, friends!  
Religion, family, homeland,  
my entire world, you are all  
of these for me!  
G: Oh, if I can make you happy,  
then my life is happy.  
R: Oh, good woman, watch over this  
flower which I have confided  
chaste to your care.  
Keep close watch that its  
freshness may never be stained.  
From the rough winds  
that have caused other flowers  
to droop, protect her, and give  
her back to her father unspotted.  
G: How he loves me, what care he  
takes of me! Of what are you  
afraid, father?  
A guardian angel close to God  
in heaven is watching over us.

"Wie Zittern und Wanken..." by J.S. Bach

How they tremble and waver,  
The thoughts of sinners,  
As they each accuse one another,  
and then hope to excuse themselves.

So is a distressed conscience,  
Through its own torture, torn apart.

Simple Love Songs for Beginners (Text by Dorothy Parker)

- I. Pictures in the Smoke  
Oh gallant was the first love,  
And glittering and fine.  
The second love was water,  
In a milk-white cup.  
The third love was his,  
And the fourth was mine.  
And after that,  
I always get them all mixed up.
- II. A Very Short Song  
Once when I was young and true,  
Someone left me sad.  
Broke my brittle heart in two  
And that is very bad.  
Love is for unlucky folk.  
Love is but a curse.  
Once there was a heart I broke,  
And that I think is worse.
- III. Unfortunate Coincidence  
By the time you swear you're his  
Shivering and sighing.  
And he vows his passion is  
Infinite, undying.  
Lady, make a note of this.  
One of you is lying.
- IV. Summary  
Every love's the love before  
In a duller dress.  
That's the measure of my love.  
Here's my bitterness.  
Would I knew a little more,  
Or very much less.
- V. The Small Hours  
No more my little song comes back  
And now of nights I lay  
My head on down to watch the black  
And wait the unfailing grey.  
Oh sad are winter nights and slow  
And sad's a song that's dumb,  
And sad it is to lie and know  
Another dawn will come.
- VI. Experience  
Some men break your heart in two  
Some men fawn and flatter.  
Some men never look at you  
And that cleans up the matter.  
Some men bring you caviar  
On a silver platter  
Some men never leave the bar,  
And bore you with their chatter  
And that cleans up the matter.  
Some men give you what you need.  
Some men leave you shattered  
Some men leave you mouths to feed,  
An endless pitter-patter,  
Of babies getting fatter,  
And that cleans up the matter.

HERE ARE SOME THOUGHTS ABOUT SINGING WHILE YOU'RE WAITING (or if you get bored)

These thoughts are all from my journal, since I can really only tell you what I have learned for myself.

Never sing a note that you don't mean, that you don't hear in your mind first. You have to have the structure ready first, then the sound. You have to envisage the pitch, color, shape, emotion first before you begin to sing.

Your voice is the perfect instrument. Your body is made to do anything. All you need to do is THINK. Singing is an important part of your body, as natural and as involuntary as breathing or speaking. It's not out there. It's inside.

Worked today on having the shapes ready before you make the sound -- it made all the words much clearer. One note already has the thought of the next in it. All the sounds done before the pitch is sung.

Work with Michael: extraneous jaw-closing is the one thing stopping the sound from being open and easy -- slow, hard work in the mirror but necessary -- the tongue should feel like an acrobat, moving every which way freely without closing the throat behind.

Lesson with Frank: such detailed diction work, easy to get and makes everything so much easier, deeper -- its just remembering that is the trick, having the concentration it takes to not sing before the shapes are ready, to know what I am doing consciously with the dynamics of the word, thinking/feeling the vowels in back while mouthing the shapes silently in front.

Wolf Lieder -- do the dynamics down in your stomach, not with your mouth. Fussreise -- phrase it more, don't hit every note, but think of phrases, valleys up and down, dynamics are done in the pelvis, not in the mouth -- back further.

You can't describe what you're doing when you're singing wonderfully -- you can only say what you're not doing. All the physical, technical work is not doing, is getting rid of, the positive work is never physical, but imaginative, with my mind, my feelings my thoughts. You never approach it from doing something physically, rather from thinking, HARD, about what you want.

Michael: Try not to jerk in little catch breaths, stay open in the throat all the time, and make the breaths a part of the song, don't "take" breaths, breathe from deep down, fill out lower back... When I was practicing, I noticed that so many little problems were fixed by noticing my pelvis, just thinking of it, thinking of the sound initiated there, seemed to help the tightness in the jaw.

Another important theme of late is the "no mouth" sensation -- reverberations behind and on top of my head -- around me like a halo -- a feeling of being behind my face -- floating above the physicality of singing, where my mind and imagination is ahead of my body, in control, calm and slow amidst the storm of reverberations.

When I sang "Human Voice" for the group, I stayed back in my eyes, back in the character, less acting, got into the tiredness of her, sang as if I was telling a friend not an audience, so I didn't have to go out or "perform", less "acting", this seems to bring a lot of different colors to the sound because it was more conversational, less "singy".

Being with the shapes and sounds and my intention all the time -- that has got to become automatic, like a flutist knowing ahead of time the shapes of her fingering, like a cellist's muscle memory, know all the shapes and stay with every sound, don't let my focus have any time or desire to wander, that's my "technique".

With every song, no matter how difficult or technical or inaccessible it may be labelled, it must become your own song, when you perform it, it must be as natural as your own speech, as if it is your creation, at that very moment -- if you think/talk about it as intellectual, technical, notes on a page, it will be all those things.

(This list is for me as much as you. Listen, and see if I am thinking.)

Notes are only the symbols of a composer's impulse. Don't sing notes.

Singing, when it is right, often feels like falling backwards, into a pool of sound over and over again, into someone's arms, pelvis loose, throat wet and soft, the bottom dropped out and mushy.

Make sure nothing you do is "singy" -- done unconsciously or just for singy style -- I really have to watch myself -- it has got to be your own speech, impetus, accents, thoughts, and one of the best ways to find out what is your own is to be still.

A new sensation: dummy mouth, jaw dropped and numb, and then I feel the vibrations all around my mouth -- my face and mouth is so loose it can be vibrated, and my spit too.