

Greetings

Edith Hemenway

President, Chopin Club



Concert Program

Aus meinen großen Schmerzen	Robert Franz (1815-1892)
Mit deinen blauen Augen	Richard Strauss (1864-1948)
Der Tod, das ist die kühle Nacht	Johannes Brahms (1833-1897)
Schwanenlied	Fanny Mendelssohn (1805-1847)
Neue Liebe	Felix Mendelssohn (1809-1847)
Ich grolle nicht	Charles Ives (1874-1954)
Sie liebten sich beide	Clara Schumann (1819-1896)
Der Atlas	Franz Schubert (1797-1828)
Du bist wie eine Blume	Lord Berners (1883-1950)
Wo wird einst	Hugo Wolf (1860-1903)
Les deux grenadiers	Richard Wagner (1813-1883)



Introduction of Past Presidents

Introduction of Youth Presidents



Dichterliebe, Op. 48	Robert Schumann (1810-1856)
I. Im wunderschönen Monat Mai	
II. Aus meinen Tränen sprießen	
III. Die Rose, die Lilie, die Taube, die Sonne	
IV. Wenn ich in deine Augen seh'	
V. Ich will meine Seele tauchen	
VI. Im Rhein, im heiligen Strome	
VII. Ich grolle nicht	
VIII. Und wüßten's die Blumen, die kleinen	
IX. Das ist ein Flöten und Geigen	
X. Hör' ich das Liedchen klingen	
XI. Ein Jüngling liebt ein Mädchen	
XII. Am leuchtenden Sommermorgen	
XIII. Ich hab' im Traum geweinet	
XIV. Allnächtlich im Traume seh' ich dich	
XV. Aus alten Märchen winkt es	
XVI. Die alten bösen Lieder	

Past Presidents

Mrs. Maury Caito, 1952-1954
Mrs. Murry M. Halpert, 1958-1960
Mrs. Samuel J. Chester, 1963-1966
Mrs. Paul F. Maeder, 1968-1970
Mrs. Samuel J. Chester, 1970-1972
Mrs. David S. Wadsworth, 1980-1982
Mrs. Margaret D. Gidley, 1982-1984
Miss Rosalind Y. Chua, 1984-1986
Mrs. John J. Beliveau, Jr., 1986-1988
Mrs. Stephen G. Waters, 1988-1989
Miss Rosalind Y. Chua, 1991-1992
Ms. Annamaria Saritelli-DiPanni, 1992-1996
Mrs. Donald Rankin, 1996-1998
Ms. Elizabeth A. Monacelli, 1998-1999
Karen L. Dingley, 2003-2004
Mr. Donald Rankin, 2004-2006
Mr. Ronald Rathier, 2006-2008

Youth Presidents

Dennis (Xiaotian) Wu President, Chopin Young Musicians
John C. Black President, Chopin Student Musicians

About the Artists

Donald George is an Associate Professor of Vocal Music at the Crane School of Music – SUNY Potsdam and an Honored Professor at Shenyang Conservatory in China. He has also taught at the Bavarian Theater Academy in Munich and sung at the Paris Opera, La Scala, Royal Opera of Brussels, Kennedy Center, the State Operas of Berlin, Hamburg and Vienna, the Festivals of Salzburg, Buenos Aires, Jerusalem, and Istanbul. He has sung with Leonard Bernstein, Kurt Masur, Yehudi Menuhin, Jeffry Tate and recorded Elijah, Verdi Requiem, Rossini's *Aureliano in Palmira* and *Le Nozze di Teti e Peleo* (world premiere recording), and Schubert's *Die Schöne Müllerin*.

Lucy Mauro is an Assistant Professor at West Virginia University. During the 2007-2009 seasons, she and Donald George have performed to much acclaim at the University of Michigan at Ann Arbor, University of Missouri at Columbia, Western Illinois University, the Asolo Song Festival in Italy, International Performing Arts Institute in Germany, and TOPOpera Festival in Austria, among other venues. Upcoming performances include those at the 2010 Mozart Festival in Würzburg, Germany and Shenyang Conservatory in China. Their website is www.duodrama.net. She is also the co-editor of *Essential Two-Piano Repertoire*, *Essential Keyboard Trios*, and *Essential Keyboard Duets, Vol. 4 (Duet Transcriptions)* from Alfred Publishing.

Gigi Mitchell-Velasco is an artist of many talents. Her mezzo-soprano has been hailed as "world-class in every aspect," gracing the world's opera and concert stages to this day. She graduated from the Curtis Institute of Music in Flute and was Principal Flute of Sarah Caldwell's Opera Company of Boston for eight seasons. Her first instrument was the organ, and she is the Organist of Providence's St. Sebastian Church. She was vocal coach/pianist at the Crittenden Opera Workshops, and is the official accompanist of The Three Tenors of Rhode Island.

Program Notes

In 1827, **Heinrich Heine**, one of the greatest German lyric poets - and one of the most controversial - collected his poetry into a volume entitled *Buch der Lieder* (Book of Songs). The 245 poems in this volume, his most famous collection, have been set to music nearly 5,000 times. In fact, one of the most popular poems, "Du bist wie eine Blume," has been set by over 400 composers.

In his works, Heine's use of paradox and irony are often a disguise for some underlying truth. His poems can seem naïve and sentimental, yet the underlying themes are often sadness, desperation, rage, and death, and they generally end with a message contrary to the seemingly trite words and emotions. His is a masterly combination, often copied yet rarely surpassed. On his deathbed, when the priest asked if he expected forgiveness, he replied, "God will forgive me; it is his job."

Heinrich (Harry) Heine was born to Jewish parents in Düsseldorf December 13, 1797. He earned a degree in law, but in order to join the civil service he changed his name from Harry to Heinrich and converted to Protestantism; however, he neither practiced law nor worked for the government. Throughout his life, he corresponded and was friends with many of the revolutionaries of the times: La Fayette and St. Simon (both fighting in the American Revolution) and Marx and Engels. For a time, he even contemplated emigrating to America. One of his most famous quotes, "Wherever they burn books they will also, in the end, burn human beings," is engraved at the site of the 1933 Nazi book burnings in Berlin. (This quote was in fact written about the burning of the Koran by the Spanish Inquisition.) An outspoken critic of the German government, Heine left for Paris in 1831, where he lived in exile, his works being banned throughout Germany. He spent the last several years of his life ill in his "mattress-grave" in a Paris apartment, in great pain, possibly suffering

from MS. He died in Paris in 1856 and is buried in the Cimetière de Montmartre. In 1897, when an attempt was made to erect a monument to Heine in Düsseldorf, his birthplace, permission was refused on the grounds of Heine's anti-German statements. The monument was then given to the city of New York, where it stands today in Joyce Kilmer Park, known commonly as the Heine or Lorelei Fountain. In the 1930s, his most famous poem, "The Lorelei," set to music by Friedrich Silcher, was ordered by the Nazis to be called a "folk song," thus removing his name. As he said, "I may not deserve to be remembered as a poet, but surely as a soldier in the battle for human freedom."

Some of the many composers who took their inspiration from Heine's texts are represented in this concert. **Robert Franz** was one of the most gifted of German songwriters, composing over 500 songs, mostly forgotten now. **Richard Strauss** composed only a few songs with texts by Heine. **Johannes Brahms** was a good friend of Heine and was the pianist for the first performance of Schumann's *Dichterliebe*. The **Mendelssohns**, brother and sister Felix and Fanny, were also friends of Heine. It being unseemly for a woman to compose, Fanny either never published her songs or they were published in her brother's name. (When Felix had his first audience with Queen Victoria, the Queen sang, in his honor, her favorite Felix Mendelssohn song, after which he had to tell her that it was composed by his sister.) **Charles Ives** studied at Yale under the Munich-trained Horatio Parker; thus Ives was versed in the German music tradition. Obstinate, Ives inserts an *apologia* to his setting of Heine's "Ich grolle nicht" in his collection of songs: "The writer has been severely criticized for attempting to put music to texts of songs, which are masterpieces of great composers... These songs are inserted not so much in spite of the criticism as because of it."

Clara Schumann, Robert's wife, like Fanny Mendelssohn, did not publish much in her lifetime. She composed "Sie liebten sich beide" for Robert's birthday in 1842 with this dedication: "Not much, but with love to my good Robert..." **Franz Schubert** composed only six songs with texts by Heine, but they are among his greatest. In January 1828, at the last gathering of Schubert and his friends (now known as the *Schubertiade*), he was introduced to Heine's *Buch der Lieder*. Schubert brought the book home and in spite of his severe illness, set six of the poems before his death in November. **Lord Berners** was extremely wealthy and notorious for his eccentricity. At his house in Faringdon he

dyed pigeons in vibrant colors and at one point had a giraffe as a pet and tea companion. Stravinsky declared him England's best composer. He chose to compose this song, claiming that it was not a love song, on a white pig about to be slaughtered; thus the piano is instructed to play "schnauzend" or gruntingly! Today's song by **Hugo Wolf** is in a revised English translation by Donald George; the original text was used as Heine's epitaph, carved on his tomb in Paris. **Richard Wagner** used Heine's *The Memoirs of Herr von Schnabelewopski* as his inspiration for his first masterpiece, *The Flying Dutchman*. Wagner's setting of "Les deux grenadiers" is in a French translation, in the style of the French *Grand Opera*, performed today in the 19th century *Melodram* style, with a text (arranged here by Donald George) spoken over the music.

Robert Schumann is the composer most closely associated with Heine, having written many songs to his texts, including the brilliant cycle *Dichterliebe*. In this work, the sixteen songs are less a cycle about a poet's unrequited love than they are an exploration of the poet's fateful inability to love. A striking characteristic of *Dichterliebe* is the unforgettable integration of the piano, with its varying accompaniments, introductions, and postludes of never before heard length and brilliance. The astonishing epilogue on the piano seems to sum up the entire cycle, going through a variety of moods and emotions, as if in a dream, bringing this cycle of despairing and shattered love, "the old wicked songs," to an unsettled, melancholy conclusion.

President's Day Committee

Elizabeth Schwering Berberian
Barbara Speer

Pourers

Members of the Chopin Student Musicians Club

Projectionist

Kayoko Beth Shimmyo

*This concert was made possible through:
The Chopin Past Presidents' Memorial Endowment
The Irene Smith Endowment
The Alice Liffmann Endowment*

The Chopin Club has been recognized by the Internal Revenue Service as a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization.

www.chopinclub.org

Chopin Club

Providence, Rhode Island

One Hundred Thirty-first Presidents' Day Celebration Concert

"The Old Wicked Songs"
of Heinrich Heine



Heinrich Heine

The life and times of Heinrich Heine
in Song, Poetry and Imagery

Donald George, tenor
Lucy Mauro, piano
Gigi Mitchell-Velasco, narrator

**April 11, 2010
2:00 p.m.**

Mary K. Hail Music Mansion
88 Meeting Street, Providence, RI