

2018

## Concert recording 2018-04-15c

Ashlee Steffen

Florencia Zuloaga

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**Junior Vocal Recital****Ashlee Steffen, mezzo soprano**  
**Florencia Zuloaga, *piano***

April 15, 2018, 1:00 pm  
Stella Boyle Smith Concert Hall

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O Thou that tellest good tidings to Zion .....George Frideric Handel (1685-1759)  
from *Messiah*

Les berceaux  
Prison ..... Gabriel Faure' (1845-1924)  
Clair de lune

Allerseelen ..... Richard Strauss (1864-1949)

Thy hand, Belinda... When I am laid in earth" ..... Henry Purcell (1659-1695)

Che faro' senza Euridice .....Christoff Willibald Gluck (1714-1787)

*Ashlee Steffen is a student of Professor David Malis*

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Ushering and stage management for this concert provided by Sigma Alpha Iota and Phi Mu Alpha.

## Program Notes

**Georg Frideric Handel** (or Händel) was born in 1685 in Halle-upon-Saale, Duchy of Magdeburg, to Georg Handel and Dorothea Taust. Handel, at a young age, showed artistic promise. In his college years, he encountered August Hermann Francke, who was dedicated to promising children, particularly orphans. His experience at the orphanage led to Handel's own charitable impulse when he was assigned the rights to *Messiah*. Handel began his composing career with chamber compositions in Halle. He wrote many compositions and travelled widely in his musical career. One of his most popular pieces was *Messiah*. Composed in 1741 with a scriptural text by Charles Jennens, the "King James Version" of the Bible and Psalms included in the *Book of Common Prayer*, *Messiah* was first performed in Dublin on April 13, 1742, and received its London premiere a year later. Although its structure resembles opera (recitativo, aria, duet, chorus, etc.), it is not in a staged dramatic form. There are three parts: the first discusses the prophecies of Isaiah and moves to the Annunciation to the shepherds. This is the only scene taken from the gospel. In part two, Handel discusses the Passion. Finally, in part three he covers the resurrection of the dead and Christ's glorification in heaven.

### *O Thou That tellest good tidings to Zion*

O Thou, that tellest good tidings to Zion,  
get thee up into the high mountain.

O thou, that tellest good tidings to Jerusalem,  
Lift up thy voice with strength,  
Lift it up, be not afraid.

Say unto the cities of Judah:

Behold your God!

Arise, shine, for thy light is come;

And the glory of the Lord,

The glory of the lord Is risen upon thee!

*"George Frideric Handel."* Wikipedia, Wikimedia Foundation, 11 Apr. 2018, [en.wikipedia.org/wiki/George\\_Frideric\\_Handel](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/George_Frideric_Handel).  
*"Messiah (Handel)."* Wikipedia, Wikimedia Foundation, 10 Apr. 2018, [en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Messiah\\_\(Handel\)](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Messiah_(Handel)).

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**Gabriel Urbain Fauré** was born on May 12, 1845, into a cultured but not particularly musical family. His talent became evident when he was only nine years old which led to him being sent to a music school in Paris. Soon he began to earn a modest living as an organist and teacher, but initially found little time for composing. As a composer, organist, pianist, and teacher, Faure became one of the foremost French composers of his generation and his style influenced many 20<sup>th</sup> century composers. Some of his best known works are his *Pavane*, *Requiem*, *the Nocturnes* for piano and some of the most beautiful songs in the French classical repertoire, including *Après un rêve*, *Clair de lune*, *Les berceaux*, and *Prison*. Faure composed most of his greatest works in the latter part of his life. Fauré's music is considered one of the major links between Romanticism and the modernism of the second quarter of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. *Les berceaux* brilliantly contrasts the fishermen's boats rocking at anchor and then as they head off to sea with the hands of the mothers left behind, rocking the children in their cradles. The amazing harmonies of *Prison* support the desolate thoughts of a prisoner whose only view of the world is through the tiny cell window, and *Clair de lune* is one of the most revered French love songs .

### *Les berceaux*

Le long du quai, les grands vaisseaux,	Along the quay the large ships,
Que la houle incline en silence,	Rocked silently by the surge ,
Ne prennent pas garde aux berceaux,	Do not heed the cradles
Que la main des femmes balance.	Which the hands of the women rock.
Mais viendra le jour des adieux,	But the day of farewells will come,
Car il faut que les femmes pleurent,	for the women are bound to weep,
Et que les hommes curieux	and the inquisitive men
Tentent les horizons qui leurrent	must dare the horizons that lure them!
Et ce jour la les grands vaisseaux	And on that day the large ships,
Fuyant le port qui diminue	fleeing from the vanishing port,
Sentent leur masses retenue	feel their bulk held back
Par l'ame des lointains berceaux.	By the souls of the far away cradles.

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**Prison**

Le ciel est par dessus le toit, si bleu, si calme.  
Un arbre, par dessus le toit, berce sa palme;  
La cloche dans le ciel qu'on voit doucement tinte.  
Un oiseau, sur l'arbre qu'on voit, chante sa plainte.  
Mon Dieu, mon Dieu, la vie est la simple et tranquille.  
cette paisible rumeur la vient de la ville.  
qu'as tu fait, o toi, que voila pleurant sans cesse?  
Dis, qu'as tu fait, toi que voila  
*de ta jeunesse?*

The sky above the roof is so blue, so calm.  
A tree above the roof rocks its crown.  
The bell, in the sky that one sees, softly rings.  
A bird, on the tree that one sees, sings plaintively.  
My God, my God! Life over there is simple and quiet.  
That peaceful clamour there, comes from the town  
What have you done, you who now weep endlessly?  
Tell me, what have you done, you, there,  
with your youth?"

**Clair de Lune**

Votre ame est un paysage choisi  
que vont charmants masques et bergamasques,  
jouant du luth et dansant et quasi  
tristes sous leurs deguisements fantasques.  
Tout enchantant sur le mode mineur,  
L'amour vainqueur et la vie opportune  
Ils n'ont pas l'air de croire a leur bonheur,  
Et leur chanson se mele au clair de lune,  
Au calme clair de lune triste et beau!  
Qui fait rever les oiseaux dans les arbres,  
Et sangloter d'extase les jets d'eau,  
Les grands jets d'eau sveltes parmi les marbres.

Your soul is a chosen landscape  
Where charming masqueraders and dancers are  
promenading, playing the lute and dancing and rather  
sad beneath their fantastic disguises.  
All enchanted in the minor key  
of triumphant love and the opportune life.  
They seem not to believe in their happiness,  
yet their song blends with the moonlight..  
The quiet moonlight, sad and beautiful!  
which sets the birds in the trees,  
Sobbing in ecstasy among the fountains ,  
The great, slim fountains among the marble statues.

*"Gabriel Fauré." Wikipedia, Wikimedia Foundation, 10 Apr. 2018, en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gabriel\_Faur%C3%A9.*

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**Richard Georg Strauss** was born in 1864 in Munich, the son of Josephine and Franz Strauss. Strauss is considered to be one of the last great composers of the Romantic period and one of its' finest operatic composers. Strauss received an excellent musical education from his father, principal horn player in the Court Opera of Munich, and wrote his first composition at six. In his boyhood he regularly attended orchestra rehearsals of the Munich Court Orchestra and received private instruction in music theory and orchestration. He gave his first performance in Vienna of his own Violin Concerto in D minor in 1882, playing a piano reduction of the orchestra part with his teacher Benno Walter as soloist. Then he entered into Ludwig Maximilian University of Munich where he studied philosophy and art history. As assistant conductor to Hans Von Bulow in Berlin, he eventually who eventually succeeded him, at the great maestro's urging. Some of Straus's first compositions were solo instrumental and chamber work. Alexander Ritter, a noted composer and violinist, persuaded Strauss to abandon rather conservative style and being writing tone poems. His father, at first reticent to allow his son to study the progressive works of Richard Wagner, but the younger Strauss, at 16 years of age, obtained a score of Tristan und Isolde, and his Operatic genius came to the forefront. A lover of the soprano voice, Strauss wrote many of his greatest roles for soprano. He married Pauline de Ahna (a soprano) in 1894 and they had one son, Franz. Strauss friend, Ludwig Thuile, introduced Strauss to poetry of Gilm which contained the poem *Allerseelen*. In 1882. The song describes "All Souls Day", the day of the year when people commemorate and recall their loved ones who have died.

### Allerseelen

Stell' auf den tisch die duftenden reseden,	Place here by me the mignonette so fragrant,
die letzen rothen Astern trag herbei	And close beside them asters bright and gay,
und lass uns wieder von der Liebe reden,	And let us speak again of love's sweet rapture,
wie einst im mai	As once in May
Gib mir die hand, dass ich sie Heimlich drücke,	give me your hand, so that, in secret, I might caress it.
Und wenn mans sieht	should others see,
Mir ist es einerlei,	I'll care not what they say.
Gib mir nur einen	again enthrall me
Deiner süssen blicke, wie einst im mai	with your glance so tender as once in May
Es blüht und duftet heut auf jedem	today on every grave the flowers are blooming
Grabe, ein tag im jahr ist ja den toden frei,	One day each year all who have died are free,
Komm an mein herz,dass ich dich wieder habe	Come to my heart, that I again may hold you
Wie einst im mai.	As once in May.

*"Allerseelen (Strauss)." Wikipedia, Wikimedia Foundation, 11 Apr. 2018, en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Allerseelen\_(Strauss).*  
*"Richard Strauss." Wikipedia, Wikimedia Foundation, 11 Apr. 2018, en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Richard\_Strauss.*

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**Henry Purcell** was born in 1659 to Henry and Elizabeth Purcell, a well-known musical couple in Westminster. Purcell was one of the greatest English composers in the Baroque era, perhaps the most famous until Elgar, Vaughan Williams, Walton and Britten in the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Purcell is believed to have started composing when he was 9. His father died when he was quite young and his mother moved the family from their home close to Westminster Abbey to a more modest location and his uncle, Thomas, became his guardian. Purcell served in many prestigious musical positions in his lifetime, including as organist at Westminster Abbey, a position he would hold for the rest of his life. One of his earliest works was for the King's birthday. Purcell wrote music for many plays including the composition for his chamber opera *Dido and Aeneas*, which became a very important landmark in the history of English music for the stage. This opera is about two lovers, Dido, the queen of Carthage and Aeneas, a Trojan prince. When Aeneas leaves Dido she is overwhelmed with sadness and chooses to die rather than live without her beloved. Her well known final aria, "When I am laid in earth" is sung to her handmaiden and friend, Belinda.

***Recitative and Aria - Thy Hand, Belinda....When I am laid in earth***

Thy hand, Belinda: Darkness shades me:

On thy bosom let me rest:

More I would, but death invades me:

Death is now a welcome guest.

When I am laid am laid in earth,

May my wrongs create

No trouble in thy breast

Remember me,

But, ah... forget my fate.

Remember me! Remember me!

But, ah.... forget my fate!

*"Henry Purcell." Wikipedia, Wikimedia Foundation, 10 Apr. 2018, en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Henry\_Purcell.*

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**Christof Willibald Gluck** was born in 1714 in Bavaria. Gluck became a successful musician at a very young age. He accepted an invitation to become house composer at London's King's Theatre, without much success. Gluck eventually started to write operas, including *La caduta dei giganti* and *Artamene*. Gluck claimed Handel as a great influence on his musical style. He finally settled in Vienna where he became a Kapellmeister. He wrote *Le Cinesi* for a festival and *La danza* for the birthday of the future Emperor Leopold II. After his opera *Antigono* was performed in Rome, Gluck was made a Knight of the Golden Spur by Pope Benedict XIV. Gluck's fame spread to France under former music pupil, Marie Antoinette. *Orfeo ed Euridice*, first performed in Vienna, is based on the myth of Orpheus and set to a libretto by Ranieri de' Calzabigi. It belongs to the genre "Azoina teatrale", meaning an opera on a mythological subject with choruses and dancing. This is the first of Gluck's "reform" operas, in which he tried to replace the abstract plots and overly complex music of *opera seria* with "noble simplicity" in both music and drama. Along with *Iphigenie en Tauride* and *Iphigenie en Aulide*, it is one of Gluck's best known and most popular works.

In the aria "Che faró senza Euridice?", Orfeo has gone to Hell to retrieve his (once deceased) wife, and forgets the admonition to not look at her until the completion of their perilous journey. Overcome by love and impatience, he turns to see her and she dies again, making this a truly rare operatic occurrence...one of the main characters dying twice in the same opera.

### Che faró senza Euridice?

Ove trascorsi? Ahime!	Where am I? Alas! Where was I pushed
Dove mi spinse un delirio d'amor!	By a delirium of love?
Cara sposa! Euridice! Mia diletta!	Dear wife! Euridice! My delight!
Ah! Piu non m'ode,	Ah, she can no longer hear me,
Ella e morta per me!	She is dead because of me!
Ed io, io fui.. che morte a lei recava!	And I death have brought to her,
Oh! Legge, spietata qual,	Oh, merciless law!
Martir al mio somiglia!	Like martyrdom it seems to me!
In quest'ora funesta sol di morir con te,	In this fatal hour only to die with you
Lasso mi resta!"	leave me at peace!

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"Che faro' senza Euridice	What will I do without Euridice
Dove andro' senza il mio ben	Where will I go without my beloved
Euridice! Oh Dio risponde	Euridice, Oh God, answer
Io son pure il tuo fedele,	I am surely your loyal one.
Euridice! Ah, non m'avanza	Euridice! Ah no help comes to me
Piu soccorso piu speranza,	nor any hope
Ne dal mondo ne dal ciel	Neither from earth, nor from heaven

*"Christoph Willibald Gluck." Wikipedia, Wikimedia Foundation, 10 Apr. 2018, en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Christoph\_Wilibald\_Gluck.*

**Poem translations -**

*"Les Berceaux" - Sully Prudhomme*

*"Prison" and "Clair de lune" - Paul Verlaine*

*"Allerseelen" - Florence Easton*

*"Che faro' senza Euridice" - David Malis*

**I would like to thank God for this opportunity to share my voice with my family who has always been there for me, my friends, and my teacher, David Malis, for teaching me how to use my voice.**

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