

2:00 pm Sunday, December 13, 2015
Chapel, First Unitarian Church, San Francisco

Ted Rust, oboe; Viva Knight, piano Dolci in the Chapel

Songs Without Words, by Felix Mendelssohn (1809-1847)

arr. for oboe and piano by David Walter

Answering a writer who wanted to set his own poems to the *Songs Without Words*, Mendelssohn wrote: "What the music I love expresses to me is not too indefinite to put into words, but on the contrary, too definite."

Book II, opus 30 (1833-34)

7. *Andante espressivo*
8. *Allegro di molto*
9. *Adagio non troppo*
10. *Agitato e con fuoco*
11. *Andante gracioso*
12. *Venetianisches Gondollied*

Book III, opus 38 (1836-37)

13. *Con moto*
14. *Allegro non troppo*
15. *Presto e molto vivace*
16. *Andante*
17. *Agitato moto*
18. *Duetto, Andante con moto*

Intermission

Dichterliebe ("A Poet's Love") by Robert Schumann (1810-1856)

Schumann set poems of Heinrich Heine to music in 1840-1844, creating one of the great Romantic song cycles. The complete cycle of sixteen songs was sung in public for the first time in 1861 by the baritone Julius Stockhausen, with Johannes Brahms at the piano.

1. *Im wunderschönen Monat Mai*

In beautiful May, when the buds sprang, love sprang up in my heart: in beautiful May, when the birds all sang, I told you my desire and longing.

2. *Aus meinen Tränen sprießen*

Many flowers spring up from my tears, and a nightingale choir from my sighs: If you love me, I'll pick them all for you, and the nightingale will sing at your window.

3. *Die Rose, die Lilie, die Taube, die Sonne*

I used to love the rose, lily, dove and sun, joyfully: now I love only the little, the fine, the pure, the One: you yourself are the source of them all.

4. *Wenn ich in deine Augen seh*

When I look in your eyes all my pain and woe fades: when I kiss your mouth I become whole: when I recline on your breast I am filled with heavenly joy: and when you say, 'I love you', I weep bitterly.

5. *Ich will meine Seele tauchen*

I want to bathe my soul in the chalice of the lily, and the lily, ringing, will breathe a song of my beloved. The song will tremble and quiver, like the kiss of her mouth, which in a wondrous moment she gave me.

6. *Im Rhein, im heiligen Strome*

In the Rhine, in the sacred stream, great holy Cologne with its great cathedral is reflected. In it there is a face painted on golden leather, which has shone into the confusion of my life. Flowers and cherubs float about Our Lady: the eyes, lips and cheeks are just like those of my beloved.

7. Ich grolle nicht

I hold no grudge, though my heart breaks, love ever lost to me! Though you shine in a field of diamonds, no ray falls into your heart's darkness. I have long known it: I saw the night in your heart, I saw the serpent that devours it: I saw, my love, how empty you are.

8. Und wüßten's die Blumen, die kleinen

If the little flowers only knew how deeply my heart is wounded, they would weep with me to heal my suffering, and the nightingales would sing to cheer me, and even the little stars would drop from the sky to speak consolation to me: but they can't know, for only One knows, and it is she that has torn my heart asunder.

9. Das ist ein Flöten und Geigen

There is a playing of flutes and fiddles and trumpets, for they are dancing the wedding-dance of my best-beloved. There is a thunder and booming of kettle-drums and shawms. In between, you can hear the good cupids sobbing and moaning.

10. Hör' ich das Liedchen klingen

When I hear that song which my love once sang, my breast bursts with wild affliction. Dark longing drives me to the forest hills, where my too-great woe pours out in tears.

11. Ein Jüngling liebt ein Mädchen

A youth loved a maiden who chose another: the other loved another girl, and married her. The maiden married, from spite, the first and best man she met: the youth was sickened at it. It's the old story, and always new: and the one whom she turns aside, she breaks his heart in two.

12. Am leuchtenden Sommermorgen

On a sunny summer morning I went out into the garden: the flowers were talking and whispering, but I was silent. They looked at me with pity, and said, 'Don't be cruel to our sister, you sad, death-pale man.'

13. Ich hab' im Traum geweinet

I wept in my dream, for I dreamt you were in your grave: I woke, and tears ran down my cheeks. I wept in my dreams, thinking you had abandoned me: I woke, and cried long and bitterly. I wept in my dream, dreaming you were still good to me: I woke, and even then my floods of tears poured forth.

14. Allnächtlich im Traume

I see you every night in dreams, and see you greet me friendly, and crying out loudly I throw myself at your sweet feet. You look at me sorrowfully and shake your fair head: from your eyes trickle the pearly tear-drops. You say a gentle word to me and give me a sprig of cypress: I awake, and there is no sprig, and I have forgotten what the word was.

15. Aus alten Märchen winkt es

The old fairy tales tell of a magic land where great flowers shine in the golden evening light, where trees speak and sing like a choir, and springs make music to dance to, and songs of love are sung such as you have never heard, till wondrous sweet longing infatuates you! Oh, could I only go there, and free my heart, and let go of all pain, and be blessed! Ah! I often see that land of joys in dreams: then comes the morning sun, and it vanishes like smoke.

16. Die alten, bösen Lieder

The old bad songs, and the angry, bitter dreams, let us now bury them, bring a large coffin. I shall put very much therein, I shall not yet say what: the coffin must be bigger than the Heidelberg Tun². And bring a bier of stout, thick planks, they must be longer than the Bridge at Mainz³. And bring me too twelve giants, who must be mightier than the St. Christopher in the cathedral at Cologne. They must carry the coffin and throw it in the sea, because a coffin that large needs a large grave to put it in. Do you know why the coffin must be so big and heavy? I will also put my love and my suffering into it.

note 1. The Madonna in the Altarpiece of the Three Kings (c. 1440) by Stephan Lochner, in the Lady Chapel of the Cathedral at Cologne

note 2. The Tun at Heidelberg, possibly the world's largest wine vat

note 3. An ancient Roman bridge across the Rhine, spanning more than 50 meters