

## Tuesday Noon Recital Paper

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The noon recital was filled with performances of higher quality. Here we will discuss the performances. Also not to be forgotten is the humorous qualities of the show host Dr. Robert Mathews. The theme of the show seemed to be 'Love Songs'.

The first performance was sung by Genial Capps, mezzo-soprano. With accompaniment on the piano by Melena Hmeleva. The love song was Mozart, "vol che sapete" from *Le nozze di Figaro*. I found the performer had good expression of music which in turn made me connect with the music. Though sung in a language I don't know I could feel that it was a love song. To add to this is the fact that I didn't hear any out of key pitches from the performer. At one point she made me feel that she was singing to straight to me with her gestures of music, I suppose that's one of the goals of a performer.

The second performance was a Bach piece performed by Megan Radcliffe, and the flute. "Jesu Joy of Man's desireing". I know that "Jesu" is short for "Jesus" normally so I take this as a sacred song. Accompanying Megan is Melena Hmeleva on the piano. In the explanation of the song the host explained that the flute piece was never intended to be the main melody of the song, but this counter melody was composed so well that it had become the memorable piece of the music that we all recognize the song by. Sure enough I recognized it right away. I loved the melody and the piece was flawlessly performed save one fault. However, I was not able to connect emotionally to the music; I felt the performance lacked emotion. I seemed the part though well rehearsed was lessened by the performers stage fright, a problem I'm confident will be overcome in the future. I loved the high's on lows of the flute and felt the song very melodic.

Third performance was "si mes vers avaient des ailes" a piece by Rynaldo Hahn. This is a later piece that is considered post romantic in composed around 1890, and was written by a child prodigy like Liszt. However, Hahn was accepted into the Paris Conservatory who had a firm policy to reject all child prodigies, and previously had rejected Liszt on those grounds. However, after hearing Hahn felt his talent so gifted they made an exception for him. It's amazing that I have never heard of him but know the name of Franz Liszt so well. I felt the performer done very well. I was moved by the performance. I didn't really understand the story but the vocals were great.

Fourth performance was a madrigal by Thomas Morley. I was very pleased to see this as I have begun to enjoy some madrigals, and the English language is always welcome. The name of the song was "Sing we chant it". And was performed by the following artists: Geniel Capps-soprano, Katherine McLain-second soprano, Benjamin Jackson-alto, Robert Mathews-tenor, and Mario Nieto-Bass. The song was perfectly executed, and I felt excitement and the four voices intertwined. It was an enjoyment to hear the "Fa la la" refrain in live performance. I must admit that this made me want to look further into maybe composing and performing some counter-point and madrigals.

Fifth performance was a song composed in the 17<sup>th</sup> century, an aria. The title of the song is "Non posso disperar" from *Eraclea*, and its composer was Giovanni Bononcini. Keeping with the love song theme this song points out its better to hope for love than to have it. A questionable premise indeed. The song

was formed by Anthony Harman, a tenor, and accompanied by Milena Hmeleva on the pianoforte. I felt the music was performed well and enjoyed the tenor voice after all the sopranos.

With the next performance we broke from vocals to a piano piece. It was the "March" from "The Nutcracker Ballet". Composed by Tchaikovsky and performed here by Steven Shepard. Our host pointed out that Tchaikovsky felt this composition to be an utter failure, especially after the poor marks by the early skeptics. I felt the piece was performed very well, I defiantly felt the peace and love the piano music. I did notice that the piano is out of tune on one key. However, this didn't take away from the performance.

"Breit Uber mein Haupt" was the next piece of music performed. A piece of music composed by Richard Strauss from his Op 19; It is a love song. Our host pointed out that Strauss felt that we should be able to tell it's a love song by the music alone. The vocalist sang expertly and my heart was moved by the song and the performance. The range she worked in was dynamic and I really enjoy the high end of the soprano vocal range that she produced. This song left me wanting to hear more, I felt that thought the song fit her talent it was wanting in length. Just simply too short to adequately show case the exceptional performance she gave us.

Performance eight. What can I say, I love the French horn. Miss McLain was expertly showing just how a French horn could move ones heart. She performed "Concerto No. 4 for horn II". A song composed by Mozart made the expectation for performance high. It was just that. Mozart wrote this concerto for a friend who was a cheese maker. This was the 2<sup>nd</sup> movement, and was very beautiful. The concerto piano accompaniment was very good also. I felt majestic while listening to the scales and sound of the horn weave it's way through the air. I also felt that this was just the break we needed what a breath of fresh air, I look forward to hearing more.

Jessika Spencer took the stage for performance nine. A song by Franz Schubert, "Gretchenam Spinnrade" Op 2.D.118. Miss Spencer the vocalist and piano accompaniment by Milena Hmeleva. The love story is about a woman at a spinning wheel trying to find love. In the music we are promised to recognize when she is kissed. I felt vocal projection was very good. Indeed I could tell when she was kissed by the music. The dynamics were great and the song fun.

Lastly the "Avant de quitter ces lieux", by Charles Gounod. This is out of the Opra Faust. The opra's story is intense as I went on youtube and was very moved by what I seen. I grew up hating opra, however, in the last month I have heart two that I really liked that peeked my interest, this being one of them. Felt our vocalist done a good job, however, I feel that the intense subject matter was some how over looked. Mr Baggett vocalized it very well, with dynamic range, theatrics all present and accounted for, but it felt cheerful to me. Maybe that it was supposed to be cheerful, but after watching others online that moved me so, I don't think so. In any case the song was performed well and left me interested enough that I questioned my hatred of opra, and concluded that I was suffering from childhood rock-n-roll syndrome of which is sense being treated

One last note, the accompaniment throughout was amazing, the breadth and depth of Milena is astounding. I am sure to continue to be a big fan, and am appreciative of the time she sacrifices to lift up and support all of us in the music program. It seems she never misses a beat.