



Seven Singers

Sudeep Agarwala, *Baritone*
Koyel Bhattacharyya, *Soprano*
Elaina Cherry, *Soprano*
Jodie-Marie Fernandes, *Soprano*
Tilke Judd, *Mezzo-Soprano*
Barratt Park, *Baritone*
Gustavo Setrini, *Tenor*

&

One Piano Player

Lindy Blackburn, *Piano*

perform art songs of (mostly)

Women Composers

Pamela Wood, Senior Lecturer
Vocal Repertoire & Performance

Friday May 11, 2007 ♪ 5:30pm ♪ Killian Hall

MIT 21M410/515 VOCAL REPERTOIRE & PERFORMANCE CLASS RECITAL

Pamela Wood, Senior Lecturer in Music

Killian Hall
May 11, 2007
5:30 P. M.

PROGRAM

<i>Per la più vaga e bella</i> (Fernando Saracinelli)	Francesca Caccini (1587-1645)
<i>Sie liebten sich beide</i> (Heinrich Heine)	Clara Wieck Schumann (1819-1896)
Theology (Paul Laurence Dunbar)	Betty Jackson King (1928-1994)
Sudeep Agarwala, G, Baritone	
<i>Bei dir ist es traut</i> (Rainer Maria Rilke)	Alma Schindler Mahler (1879-1964)
I'll Not Forget (Max Ellison)	Jeraldine Saunders Herbison (1941-)
<i>Mots d'amour</i> (Charles Fuster)	Cécile Chaminade (1857-1944)
Koyel Bhattacharyya, '09, Soprano	
Who Has Seen the Wind? (Christina Rosetti)	Denise Bacon
<i>Laue Sommernacht</i> (Gustav Falke)	Alma Schindler Mahler (1879-1964)
<i>Élégie</i> (Albert Samain)	Nadia Boulanger (1887-1979)
Elaina Cherry, '07, Soprano	
<i>Schwanenlied</i> (Heinrich Heine)	Fanny Mendelssohn Hensel (1805-1847)
<i>La speranza al cor mi dice</i> (Metastasio)	Isabella Colbran (1785-1845)
Night (Louise Wallace)	Florence Price (1887-1953)
Jodie-Marie Fernandes, '09, Soprano	
<i>Mignonne</i> (Pierre Ronsard)	Cécile Chaminade (1857-1944)
In the Springtime (William Shakespeare)	Betty Jackson King (1928-1994)
It's Me, O Lord (Traditional)	Arr., Betty Jackson King (1928-1994)
Tilke Judd, G, Mezzo-Soprano	
Beautiful Dreamer (Stephen Foster)	Stephen C. Foster (1826-1864)
<i>Povero Cor</i> (Unknown)	Isabella Colbran (1785-1845)
Oh Were My Love (Robert Burns)	Amy Beach (1867-1944)
Barratt Park, G, Baritone	
<i>Lejanía</i> (Herminio Gimenez)	Herminio Gimenez (1905-1991)
<i>Con male nuove, non si può cantare</i> (Unknown)	Barbara Strozzi (1619-1677)
<i>Mein Stern</i> (Fredericke Serre)	Clara Wieck Schumann (1819-1896)
Gustavo Setrini, G, Tenor	
Lindy Blackburn, G Pianist	

**MIT 21M410/515 VOCAL REPERTOIRE & PERFORMANCE CLASS RECITAL
PROGRAM NOTES**

The focus of this semester's Vocal Repertoire & Performance study has been upon the works of women composers. The students gathered biographical data and explored art songs, operatic arias, choral masterpieces, and arrangements employing sacred and secular texts. Additionally, students conducted inquiry into works indicative of their own heritage. The following notes prepared on the occasion of the culminating Class Recital offer a sampling of the students' findings.

Francesca Caccini was born into a musical family on 18 September 1587 in modern day Florence, Italy. Her father was Giulio Caccini, a famed member and proponent of the monody school of music which flourished in Florence in the sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries. As a child, Francesca was educated not only in composition, but also in singing, guitar, harp, and keyboard. Interestingly, she also received literary training: she is known to have written poetry in both Italian and Latin.

Francesca ultimately worked for the Medici as a teacher and composer, and soon became the highest paid musician on their payroll. Here, she wrote a song book, *Il primo libro delle musiche*, which remains one of the earliest written examples of the monodic style of composition prevalent in Florence. She also composed multiple operas in the service of the Medici, and only one, *La liberazione di Ruggerio dall'isola d'Alcina*, survives.

The details of Francesca Caccini's final years are unclear. She left the service of the Medici late in her career. Tomaso, her son, was delivered to his uncle, Girolamo Rafaelli in February 1645, when it is thought that Francesca either remarried or died.

Per la piu vaga e bella

For the most charming and beautiful

Per la piu vaga e bella

For the most charming and beautiful

Terrena stella,

Earthly star,

Che oggi oscuri di Febo I raggi d'oro

That today hides Phoebus' golden rays,

Mia core ardeva;

My heart once burned;

Vago di rimirare il mio martoro.

Longing to tell of my anguish.

Ma d'avermi schernito,

But having been scoffed at,

Tosto pentito

Deeply repentant,

Con la pieta di lei mi sana il petto.

Your devotion healed my heart

Ond' io fo fede,

Therefore I keep the faith

A chi nol crede,

With whoever does not believe

Che Amore e solo il dio d'ogni diletto.

That Love is the only god of all delights.

Clara Josephine Wieck Schumann was born in modern day Leipzig, Germany. She was known primarily for her talent as a pianist. Considered a piano genius, she had performed the virtuosic works of her predecessors and contemporaries, Bach, Mozart, Beethoven, Brahms and her future husband, Robert Schumann, since the age of thirteen. She also composed and premiered her own works.

After her marriage to Robert Schumann, she was asked to discontinue her compositions, choosing to keep track of the household, instead. She was mother to seven children (an eighth child died during infancy). She was also in charge of the finances of the Schumann household.

Her husband's death marked a return to composition for Clara, who was encouraged by her friend Johannes Brahms. Many of these works and performances, however, were often met with harsh disapproval from her contemporaries. Clara died in 1896, due to complications arising from a stroke.

Sie liebten sich beide

They loved each other

*Sie liebten sich beide, doch keiner
wollt' es dem andern gestehn;
sie sahen sich an so feindlich,
und wollten vor Liebe vergehn.*

They once loved each other, but neither
would to the other confess;
they saw each other as hostile,
yet wanted to perish from love.

*Sie trennten sich endlich und sah'n sich
nur noch zuweilen im Traum;
sie waren längst gestorben
und wußten es selber kaum.*

They finally parted and sometimes sighted
the other in dreams;
they had been dead so long now
and hardly known it themselves.

Betty Jackson King was born in Chicago, Illinois in 1928, to a musician mother. She moved briefly to Vicksburg, Mississippi and returned to Chicago later. In Chicago, she attended Roosevelt University where she received her Bachelor of Arts in piano and a Masters Degree in Composition. She studied further at the Peabody Conservatory of Music in Baltimore and the Westminster Choir College in Princeton, New Jersey.

After earning her degrees, Betty Jackson King taught at the University of Chicago Laboratory Schools, her alma mater, Roosevelt University, at Dillard University in New Orleans, Louisiana and Wildwood High School in Wildwood, New Jersey. Ms. King was much sought after as lecturer and clinician of choral music. She won multiple awards not only for her compositions but also for excellence as a teacher, being honored by the Chicago Umbrian Glee Club and the National Association of Negro Musicians, of which Ms. King was also president. Ms. King passed away in 1994 at the age of sixty-six.

—Sudeep Agarwala

Alma Schindler Mahler (1879-1964), married at one point to composer Gustav Mahler, was lauded as "the most beautiful woman in Vienna" and educated to be a composer. She had a propensity for marrying famous men, including architect Gropius and writer Werfel, and believed that she nurtured her partners' talents by actively participating in the creative process. Though she composed in many forms, her only remaining compositions are lieder. "Bei dir ist es traut," from a collection known simply as *Fünf Lieder*, is set to a text by Rainer Maria Rilke, who is commonly considered the greatest German poet of the twentieth century, and whose poetry often focuses on anxiety and solitude.

Bei dir ist es traut

With you it is safe

*Bei dir ist es traut
Zage Uhren schlagen
Wie aus alten Tagen,
Kann mir ein Liebes sagen,
Aber nur nicht laut!*

With you it is safe
Timid clocks strike
As in days of old,
Say something sweet to me,
But not too loudly!

*Ein Tor geht irgendwo
Draussen im Blütentreiben,
Der Abend horcht an den Scheiben,
Lass uns leise bleiben,
Keiner weiss uns so!*

A gate squeaks somewhere outside
Out there in the blossoming flowers,
The evening listens at the window panes,
Let us keep quiet,
So no one knows we're here!

Jeraldine Saunders Herbison (1941-), of Richmond, Virginia, studied violin, voice, and piano at Virginia State College, and studied compositional techniques with Undine Smith Moore and Thomas Clark. She taught and directed string orchestra music in public schools for thirty years, and was elected Honorary Composer at the National Music Camp at Interlochen. Herbison's works have been widely performed by various groups, and her cello pieces have been performed at the Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts. She currently performs with several orchestras, and continues to compose. Her piece "I'll Not Forget," from a cycle of five art songs for voice and piano, was composed in 1978 on a text by Max Ellison (twentieth century), former poet laureate of Michigan, who inhabited a makeshift wooden house known as Frog Holler and published four books of poetry.

Cecile Chaminade (1857 - 1944) was a composer born to a musical family of the French bourgeoisie. Her father discouraged her from formal musical training, because he felt it would be inappropriate for her, as a woman. Her pianistic skills caught the attention of composer Georges Bizet, who introduced her to other important composers and musicians of the time and encouraged her to study privately. When her father's death forced her to support her family, she turned to composition as a source of income. Her works, mostly simple vocal and piano pieces, were targeted toward women with little training, and her objective was to charm rather than challenge the performers and their audiences. "Mots d'amour," a sweet art song that captured the zeitgeist of her day, follows a text of "dubious literary quality" by Charles Fuster (1866 - 1929), a French poet.

Mots d'amour

Words of Love

*Quand jet e dis des mots lasses,
C'est leur douleur qui fait leurs charmes!
Ils balbutient, et c'est assez,
Les mots ont des larmes.*

When I speak to you with weary words,
It is their sadness that gives them charm!
They hesitate, and it is enough
The words have tears.

*Quand je te dis des mots fougueux,
Ils brûlent mon coeur et mes lèvres,
Ton être s'embrace avec eux,
Les mots ont des fièvres.*

When I speak to you with fiery words,
They burn my heart and lips,
Your being is caught in their blaze,
The words have passion.

*Mais qu'ils qu'ils soient, les divins mots,
Les seuls mots écoutés des femmes,
Dans leurs soupirs ou leurs sanglots,
Les mots ont des âmes.*

But whatever they may be, the divine words,
The only words that women hear,
In their sighs or in their sobs,
The words have souls.

—Koyel Bhattacharyya

Denise Bacon is an accomplished living composer whose works include choral, instrumental, and solo vocal pieces. Her experiences studying the Kodaly method and folk songs of Hungary led her to apply the same concepts to American folk music, working within both folk and art song traditions. She has received two awards from the Hungarian government, and is an Honorary Member of the International Kodaly Society. "Who Has Seen the Wind?" employs a text by Christina Rossetti. This short composition is filled with complex harmonies and an evocative vocal line.

Known as the most beautiful woman in Vienna, **Alma Schindler Mahler** had a habit of marrying influential and artistic men. Her father was a landscape painter and she received extensive training in literature, music, and art from an early age. She first tried composing at the age of 6, but gave it up at the request of Gustav Mahler early in their marriage. *Laue Sommernacht* comes from her *Fünf Lieder*, with text by Gustav Falke. The piece, rich with harmonic interest throughout, ends on the dominant which communicates the unresolved yearning felt in the last verse.

Laue Sommernacht

Balmy Summer Night

*Laue Sommernacht
Am Himmel stand kein Stern
Im weiten Walde suchten wir uns
Tief im Dunkel, und wir fanden uns.*

Balmy summer night,
In Heaven there are no stars,
In the wide forests we searched ourselves
Deep in darkness, and we found ourselves.

*Fanden uns im weiten Walde
In der Nacht, der sternenlosen
Hielten staunend uns im Arme
In der dunklen Nacht.*

Found ourselves in the wide forests
In the night, saviours of the stars,
Held ourselves in wonder in each other's arms
In the dark night.

*War nicht unser ganzes Leben
Nur ein Tappen, nur ein Suchen,
Da in deine Finsternisse.
Liebe, fiel dein Licht!*

Was not our whole life
Just a groping, just a seeking,
There in its darkness
Love, your light shone.

Nadia Boulanger is well known for her immense contributions to classical music as a teacher of composition, but her own compositional career is often overlooked. She began composing at a young age, but her last compositions, a set of songs on poems of Maclair, were published in 1922 when Boulanger was still only 35. *Elegie* is a poem written by Albert Samain, of the French Symbolist school. The nature of the poetry is reflected in Boulanger's remote tonality and suspended dissonances. Boulanger's pianistic skill is reflected in the virtuosic character of the accompaniment.

Élégie

Elegy

*Une douceur splendide et somber
Flotte sous le ciel étoilé
On dirait que là haut dans l'ombre
Un paradis s'est écroulé.*

A splendid and somber softness
Floats under the starry sky.
One might say that high in the shadows
A paradise is collapsing.

*Et c'est comme l'odeur ardente
L'odeur fiévreuse dans l'air noir
D'une chevelure d'amante
Dénouée à travers le soir.*

And like the burning aroma,
A feverish scent in the night
From the hair of a lover
Destitute in the twilight.

*Tout l'espace languit de fièvres
Du fond des coeurs mystérieux
S'en viennent mourir sur les lèvres
Des mots qui font fermes les yeux.*

All space languishes from fever
At the bottom of mysterious hearts
Coming to die on the lips,
These words that come to close the eyes.

*Et de ma bouche où s'évapore
Le parfum des bonheurs derniers
Et de mon coeur vibrant encore
S'élèvent de vagues pities*

And from my mouth where emanates
The perfume of last happiness.
And from my still beating heart
Rise vague pities.

*Pour tous ceux-là, qui, sur la terre
Par un tel soir tendant les bras
N'ont point dans leur coeur solitaire
Un nom à sangloter tout bas.*

For all those on the earth
By evening reach out their arms.
In their lonely hearts they don't have
A name to cry out.

—Elaina Cherry

Fanny Mendelssohn was born in Hamburg, Germany, in November 1805. Her brother was the renowned composer, Felix Mendelssohn, who studied music alongside her and under whose name, her many works began to be published. A child prodigy in piano performance and composition, **Fanny Mendelssohn Hensel** wrote hundreds of pieces for piano, voice (solo and ensemble) and orchestra.

Heinrich Heine was born in 1797 in Düsseldorf, Germany. Before he began to write poetry actively, he was a businessman and studied law. However, his passion for literature led him to become one of the most famous composers of lyric poetry, a large portion of which was set to music by many composers, including Robert Schumann, Franz Schubert, Johannes Brahms, and the Mendelssohn siblings.

Schwanenlied

Swan Song

*Es fällt ein Stern herunter
Aus seiner funkelnden Höh,
Das ist der Stern der Liebe,
Den ich dort fallen seh.
Es fallen von Apfelbaume
Der weissen Blätter so viel,
Es kommen die neckenden Lüfte
Und treiben damit ihr Spiel.*

A star is falling down
From a sparkling height
It is a star of love,
Which I see falling there.
They fall from apple trees
Whose white flowers are so plentiful.
The teasing winds are coming
And play their game.

*Es Singt der Schwan im Weiher,
Und rudert auf und ab,
Und immer leiser singend,
Taucht er ins Fluthengrab.
Es ist so still und dunkel,
Verweht ist Blatt und Blüth',
Der Stern ist knisternd zerstoßen.
Verklungen das Schwanenlied.*

A swan is singing in a pond,
Paddling up and down,
And sings quieter and quieter,
Peeks down into a watery grave.
It is so quiet and dark,
The leaves and blossoms blow away,
The star vanishes in smoke
The swan song fades away.

Isabella Colbran was one of the most well-known singers of her age. Her powerful voice and dramatic stage presence made quite a name for her, through the Teatro San Carlo, in Naples, Italy. She was the wife of Giachino Rossini for fifteen years, and it is said he wrote several famous operas especially for her, including *Otello* and *Semiramide*. Many of her vocal pieces reflect her affinity for high, virtuosic melodies.

Pietro Metastasio, born in 1698, was an Italian writer and poet, and was recognized at a young age to have unmistakable improvisational literary talent. He studied law until his twenties, but was then commissioned to write only for musical composers of the day. Many of his poems and dramas were thus set to music by the likes of Pergolesi, Scarlatti and Durante, but undeservedly fell into neglect after his death in 1782.

La speranza al cor mi dice

Hope tells my heart

*La speranza al cor mi dice
Che saró felice ancor.
Ma la speme inganna trice
Poimi dice il mio timor.*

Hope tells my heart
That I will know joy again.
But love's deceit appears, and with it, fears.
Yet hope comes again and foretells joy to come.

Florence Price was born in Arkansas, USA, and was performing by the age of four. She became a renowned African American composer by the 1920s and composed over 300 works for voice, symphony orchestra and piano. Many of her pieces reflect her African American heritage in their style and rhythm. Her vocal pieces consist mainly of arrangements of African American spirituals, and art songs, into which group "Night" falls.

—Jodie-Marie Fernandes

Cécile Chaminade was born in Paris to a very musical family. Though her father prevented her from studying in the Paris Conservatoire because he felt it did not fit with the proper role of a woman, she studied piano and composition privately with members of the faculty. Chaminade was an extremely prolific composer, and wrote over 400 compositions which she published to earn a living. Her most popular pieces were staples of the elegant salon concerts during the turn of the century and included many *character pieces* and *mélodies*.

The text for this *mélodie* is one of Pierre de Ronsard's best-known poems "*Mignonne, allons voir si rose*" which contains his most prevalent themes: the passage of time, the fragility of life and the invitation to live in the moment.

Mignonne

Beloved

*Mignonne, allons voir si la rose
Qui ce matin avoit desclose
Sa robe de pourpre au Soleil,
A point perdu ceste vesprée
Les plis de sa robe pourprée,
Et son teint au vostre pareil.*

Beloved, come let us see if the rose
That had this morning unveiled
Her robe of scarlet to the sun,
Has lost, this evening
Any of the folds of her scarlet robe
And her blush, so like yours.

*Las! voyez comme en peu d'espace,
Mignonne, elle a dessus la place
Las! las ses beautez laissé cheoir !
Ô vraiment marastre Nature,
Puis qu'une telle fleur ne dure
Que du matin jusques au soir !*

Alas! See how in so short a time,
Alas! Alas! See how in this place
Its beauties have all faded
Oh truly Nature is a cruel stepmother
When such a flower lives
Only from morning until evening.

*Donc, si vous me croyez, mignonne,
Tandis que vostre âge fleuronne
En sa plus verte nouveauté,
Cueillez, cueillez vostre jeunesse :
Comme à ceste fleur la vieillesse
Fera ternir vostre beauté.*

So, if you believe me, my darling
While your age still flowers
In its most verdant freshness
Gather, gather your youth
For, just as this flower has faded,
Old age will wither your beauty.

The childhood of **Betty Jackson King** (1928-1994) was enriched musically and spiritually by her father, who was a Pastor of a community church in Chicago, and her mother, who founded the Imperial Opera Company which fostered vocal development of young singers. She received her advanced musical degrees from the Chicago Music College in 1950 and 1952. Her professional career included teaching, conducting and composing.

Among King's compositions were two operas, a cantata, a requiem and a ballet; organ and piano works; instrumental works for violin and piano; many choral compositions; and art songs (including *In the Springtime*, written in 1976) and arrangements of spirituals (including *It's Me, O Lord*).

She was elected the president of the National Association of Negro Musicians in 1979 and she often lectured on the musical and historical importance of preserving African-American spirituals. She encouraged African-American composers to utilize Negro folk themes in composition.

—Tilke Judd

Stephen Collins Foster (1826-64) was a prolific composer of American songs. Foster grew up in a Scots-Irish family in Pittsburgh, then a fledgling town not far removed from the frontier. He received little or no formal training in music and did not see a piano until he was in his twenties. Nevertheless, his love of music propelled him to become the most popular American songwriter of his day. His primary genres included love songs, minstrel songs, and songs about the American Civil War. “Beautiful Dreamer” was one of his last songs and was published posthumously.

Isabella Colbran (1784-1845) became one of the most famous dramatic coloratura sopranos in Europe during her residency at the Neapolitan Teatro San Carlo. Known for her remarkable range, flexibility, and dramatic stage presence, she attracted the attention of both the famed impresario Domenico Barbaja and composer Gioacchino Rossini, whom she married in 1822. Colbran retired from the stage in 1822 after she suffered a decline in her voice. In addition to her influence on Rossini's composition, Colbran left behind four collections of song. “Povero Cor” is from the collection *Sei Canzoncine*. The time and place of composition and the source of the poetry is unknown.

Povero Cor

Poor Heart

*Povero cor tu palpiti
ne a torto in questo di
tu palpiti cosi povero core
si tratta o dio di perdere
per sempre il caro ben
che di sua mano
in sen m'inpresse amore.*

My poor heart, you palpitate so,
How right you are to tremble.
You throb so, poor heart
For fear of losing forever,
Of losing forever that beloved image
That love's hand
Has engraved in my heart.

Amy Cheney Beach (1867-1944) was one of the most important American composers during the late nineteenth century. She started her musical career as a concert pianist but changed her focus to composition after her marriage to Dr. H.H.A. Beach in 1885. Her most important works include her Mass (1890), Eilende Wolken (1892), and “Gaelic” Symphony in e-minor (1896). “Oh Were My Love” is from a collection of songs set to the poetry of Robert Burns.

—Barratt Park

Herminio Gimenez was one of the most important composers of Paraguayan music. He was born in the town of Caballero, Paraguay on February 20, 1905, and began his musical career at the age of 10 in the military band of the village of Paraguari. He continued his musical studies at the Paraguayan Institute of music and eventually became director of music for the armed forces during the Chaco war with Bolivia (1932–1935), profoundly influencing the national style of music. He spent the latter half of his life in political exile in Argentina, as a member of the opposition during Paraguay’s 40-year dictatorship. *Lejanía*, perhaps the most famous of Giménez’s vocal compositions, was written in 1937. It was published in 1958, after it appeared in the film *Codicia*. The piece is a guarania, a song form characterized by slow and melancholic rhythms and typically composed with orchestral accompaniment. The guarania originated in Paraguay and, along with Polka, Galopa, and Chamame, now represents an important genre in Paraguayan music. The text, written by Giménez himself, is the song of a lover calling out to his lost love; it is written in both Spanish and Guaraní, the indigenous language that is spoken by a majority of Paraguayans and that is especially utilized for music, poetry, humor, and culture. The expressiveness, sensibility, and wit of the Guaraní language is difficult to capture in translation, and the result can often make the text seem overly sentimental and trite. I have done my best to convey the meaning of the poem, but, not a poet myself, I can only hope to better portray the poets and composers intentions in performance.

Lejanía

Distance

*Lejano amor primero de mi niñez
Rohechaga’u.
Lejano amor sublime en sueño azul
Mamópa reime?*

Far away first love of my childhood,
How I want to see you.
Far away, sublime love of a blue dream,
Where are you now?

*Distante queda el recuerdo
De aqeullas tardes de mborayhu.
Que acuden a mi memoria
Como bandadas de pykasu.*

Distant remains the memory
Of those afternoons of love,
That return to my thoughts
Like flocks of doves.

*Recuredos que queman mi alma
Porque es hoy triste Che rekove.
Por eso voy entonando
Este triste canto guarani etc.*

Memories that burn my soul
Because, today, my existence is empty.
That is why I now intone
This sad song to you in pure *guarani*.

*Rohechaga’u
Che mborayhumi.
Mamópa reho
Che reja guive?
Ani ne ñaña
Mitakuñami.*

How I want to see you
My love.
Where have you gone
Since you left me?
Don’t be cruel,
Young love.

*Ejumi jevy
Na che konsola!
Ako ka'aru
Che reja guive,
Che año tyre'y
Aipykui tape.
Ñuati che kutu.
Che piru che ka.
Che py'a okai,
Che reja guive
Ako ka'aru.*

Return to me
And console me.
In the afternoon,
since you left me,
in utter loneliness
I walk my path.
Thorns pierce my feet.
I am wasting away.
And my heart burns.
Since you left me . . .
In the afternoon.

Barbara Strozzi was a 17th century Venetian composer, singer, and lutenist, and a student of Francesco Cavalli, the foremost opera composer of the time. She was the daughter of a prominent poet and librettist and was active in Venetian intellectual and literary circles, particularly within the *Accademia degli Unisoni*, a society founded by her father for musical discussion and experimentation. “Con male nuove, non si può cantare,” was published in 1654 with 10 other secular cantate in the collection *Cantate, ariete a una, due e tre voci, Opus 3*. It is typical of much of the period’s music for its rapid alternation of meter, mixture of vocal styles, and for its choice of text, which focuses on the dangers of romantic love.

Con male nuove, non si può cantare

With new ills, one cannot sing

*Questa, questa è la nuova
ch'io v'ho da dire amanti,
ch'amando non si trova
altro che pene e pianti.
Ben il mio cor il prova
e volete ch'io canti.*

This is the new one
That I wish to call my lover,
Who in loving one finds
Nothing but pain and weeping.
Well, my heart will attempt it
And you wish me to sing.

Among the most well-known and celebrated female composers, **Clara Wieck Schumann** achieved fame primarily from her virtuosic career as a pianist. Clara’s life is often invoked to illustrate the historical plight of women composers; as wife to Robert Schumann, Clara’s domestic duties and eight pregnancies took their toll on her professional life and her confidence in her abilities as a composer. Her husband, though consistently supportive wrote, “children, and a husband . . . do not go well with composition. Clara cannot work at it regularly and I am often disturbed to think how many tender ideas are lost because she cannot work them out.” *Mein Stern* (1848) was published in London in the English translation but never published in Germany during Clara’s lifetime. The melody’s slow-moving step-wise motion and the ‘rippling’ accompaniment give the sense of the movement of the night sky over the ocean’s waves, as described by the poet, Friedericke Serre.

Mein Stern

My Star

*O du mein Stern, schau dich so gern,
Wenn still im Meere die Sonne sinket,
Dein goldnes Auge so tröstend winket
In meiner Nacht!*

O star of mine, I gladly watch,
When the sun still sinks quietly into the sea,
Your golden eye winking comfortingly
In my dark night!

*O du mein Stern, aus weiter Fern,
Bist du ein Bote mit Liebesgrüßen,
Laß deine Strahlen mich durstig küssen
In banger Nacht!*

*O du mein Stern, verweile gern,
Und lächelnd führ' auf des Lichts Gefieder
Der Träume Engel dem Freunde wieder
In seine Nacht.*

O star of mine, from far away,
You are a herald of loving greetings,
O let your beams give me thirsty kisses
In the yearning night!

O star of mine, please linger awhile,
And smiling travel on starlight's feathers,
In dreams appear as my friend's bright angel
In his dark night.

—Gustavo Setrini