



the firm 2008

six concerts

concert two

Why does the evening, why does the night, put warmer love in our hearts?— Is it the nightly pressure of helplessness?—Or is it the exalting separation from the turmoils of life, that veiling of the world in which, for the soul, nothing remains but souls?

The contemplation of night should lead to elevating rather than to depressing ideas. Who can fix his mind on transitory and earthly things, in presence of those glittering myriads of worlds; and who can dread death or solitude in the midst of this brilliant, animated universe, composed of countless suns and worlds, all full of light and life and motion?

Jean Paul

Pilgrim Church provides wheelchair access via the rear (northern) doors.

Toilets can be accessed through the door on the left of the performance area.

The Firm

Presents

Stefan Ammer piano

Greta Bradman soprano

Robert Macfarlane tenor

Gesänge der Frühe Op.133

Robert Schumann

Song I

Luke Altmann

Winter Songs

Quentin Grant

Vier Lieder Op.2

Arnold Schönberg

Interval – 12 minutes

Nachtländler

Raymond Chapman Smith

Quattro Liriche

Luigi Dallapiccola

Four Morgenstern Duets

Grahame Dudley

Four Duets Op.34

Robert Schumann

Herbstlied Op.43, no.2

Robert Schumann

Gesänge der Frühe Op.133 Robert Schumann
(Morning Songs)

1. Im ruhigen Tempo
2. Belebt, nicht zu rasch
3. Lebhaft
4. Bewegt
5. Im Anfange ruhiges, im Verlauf bewegtes Tempo

"Music is poetry raised to a higher power; the angels must surely discourse in musical sounds, spirits in words of poetry" (Schumann, Diaries, 14 July 1828)

On 24 February 1854, only three days before he threw himself into the Rhine, Schumann offered his publisher the Gesänge der Frühe, which he had composed between 15 and 18 October 1853. his last complete work for solo piano. Schumann described these works as "depicting the emotions on the approach and advance of morning, but more as an expression of feeling than as painting".

Following his immurement in Richarz's asylum he continued to do all he could to expedite publication of what he regarded as these extremely important pieces, fearing perhaps that their appearance in print would be thwarted by his illness.

The Gesänge der Frühe were originally entitled "To Diotima / Songs of the Morning", but Schumann subsequently struck out the words "to Diotima", since neither Brahms nor Joachim knew who Diotima was and had clearly not read any Hölderlin. This was to change.

Song I

Luke Altmann

The text for this piece is from the 347 line epic questionnaire *Investigating the Structure of Personality* by PhD candidate in Clinical Psychology, Greta Bradman.

I'm an even-tempered person.
I'm known for my prudence and common sense.
I pay my debts promptly and in full.
I wouldn't enjoy vacationing in Las Vegas.

Modern dance bores me.
Philosophical arguments bore me.
Being perfectly honest is a bad way to do business.
Sometimes I cheat when I play solitaire.

I work hard to achieve my goals.
I keep my belongings neat and clean.
I keep a cool head in emergencies.
I do what is needed to stay on top.
I manipulate people to get what I want.
I have control of my feelings.
I'm set in my ways.
I plan ahead carefully for holidays.

I rarely experience strong emotions.
Some people think I'm cold and calculating.
I don't like to waste time speculating on the nature of human existence.
As a child I rarely enjoyed games of make-believe.

Winter Songs

Quentin Grant

Poems by Georg Trakl, adapted by the composer

1. Winter Walk in A-Minor

Red spheres emerge from branches,
Snowed under softly and black by a long snowfall.
The priest escorts the dead man.
The nights are filled by celebrations of masks.
Then tousled crows glide over the village;
In books fairy tales are written miraculously.
At the window an old man's hair flutters.
Demons go through the ill soul.
The well freezes in the courtyard. Decayed stairs fall
In the darkness and a wind blows
Through old shafts which are buried.
The palate tastes the frost's strong spices.

2. In Winter

The acre shines white and cold.
The sky is lonely and immense.
Jackdaws circle over the pond
And hunters climb down from the forest.
A silence dwells in black treetops.
Firelight flits from the huts.
Sometimes a sleigh rings far away
And slowly the gray moon rises.
A deer bleeds to death softly at the field's edge
And ravens splash in bloody gutters.
The reeds tremble yellow and upraised.
Frost, smoke, a step in the empty grove.

3. Silence

Over the forests the moon
Gleams pale, makes us dream,
The willow by the dark pond
Weeps soundlessly in the night.
A heart extinguishes - and placidly
The fogs flood and rise -
Silence, silence!



Trakl

Vier Lieder Op.2

Arnold Schönberg (1874-1951)

1. Anticipation (R. Dehmel)

The sea green pond,
beside the red villa
beneath the dead oak,
reflects the shining moon.

Where the oak's dark reflection
reaches through the water,
there is a man and slips
a ring off his hand.

Three opals glint;
red and green gleams
from the pale gems
and submerges.

And he kisses the gems, and
his eyes shine
like the sea green bottom:
a window opens.

A woman's pale hand
beckons him
from the red villa
beside the dead oak.

2. Present me with your golden comb (R. Dehmel)

Present me with your golden comb;
every morning shall remind you
that you kissed my hair.
Present me with your silken sponge;
every night I want to have an idea
for whom you prepare yourself in the bath,
O Mary!

Present me with everything you have;
my soul is without vanity,
I receive your blessing with pride.
Bestow on me your heaviest burden:
don't you want to lay your heart -
also your heart - on my locks,
Magdalen?

3. Elevation (R. Dehmel)

Proffer me your hand,
merely the finger, then
I look upon the whole world
as my own.

O, how my country is full of flowers,
behold it and see
that it can rise with us above the clouds
to the sun!

4. Sun in the forest (J. Schlaf)

A light shimmers
in the brown, rushing night,
a green-golden sheen.

Flowers shine forth and grass
and the singing, springing rivulets
and memories.

All your songs of joy
that faded away long ago:
golden is their awakening again.

And I see your lustrous golden hair,
and I see your bright golden eyes
shining through the green, whispering nights.

And I fancy I lie on the grass beside you
and hear you playing the shiny syrinx again
under azure skies.

A light shimmers
in the brown, rolling nights
a golden sheen.

Nachtländler Raymond Chapman Smith

In memory of Michael Hamburger (1924 – 2007)

1. Sehr mässig
2. Leicht bewegt
3. Intermezzo: Ruhevoll
4. Fliessend
5. Intermezzo: Ruhevoll
6. Sehr rasch
7. Sehr ruhig

To the Fates

One summer only grant me, you powerful Fates,
And one more autumn only for mellow song,
So that more willingly, replete with
Music's late sweetness, my heart may die then.

The soul in life denied its god-given right
Down there in Orcus also will find no peace;
But when what's holy, dear to me, the
Poem's accomplished, my art perfected,

Then welcome, silence, welcome cold world of shades!
I'll be content, though here I must leave my lyre
And songless travel down; for *once* I
Lived like the gods, and no more is needed.

Friedrich Hölderlin
(Trans. Michael Hamburger)

Quattro Liriche

Luigi Dallapiccola (1904-75)

di Antonio Machado

1. Spring has come.
White hallelujahs
from the brambles in flower!
2. Last night I dreamed I saw
God and that I was talking to God;
And I dreamed that God could hear me ... Later, I
dreamed that I was dreaming.
3. Lord, you tore from me what I loved most.
Listen again, my God, to my heart's cry:
Your will was done, Lord, not mine.
Lord, my heart and the sea are already alone
4. Spring has come.
No one knows what has happened.



Dallapiccola

Four Morgenstern Duets

Grahame Dudley

I first found Christian Morgenstern's "Die grosse Lalula", written in its completely invented language, in a book on Dada many years ago. I then remembered a book of his poems forgotten on my bookshelf and began setting the texts which most appealed to me while, at the same time, playing with simple preparations inside the piano.

This year I have expanded the songs to include duets which will at some stage be combined to form a cycle for piano and voices.

The other three poems set here are similar to "Lalula" in that they appeal mostly to the ear and not the eye. The images are striking and vivid: The defiled Picket fence whose 'spacelessness' is portrayed by jarring piano clusters; the growing panic of the snail, trying to decide whether to escape from the confines of its permanently attached residence (E natural), and the wonderfully laid-back Does, calmly meditating, ruminating and strumming a little.

Morgenstern dedicated his poems to "the child in Man".

1. Das grosse Lalula

Kroklokwaftzi? Semememi!
Seiokronto – prafiplo:
Bifzi, bafzi; hulalemi:
quasti basti bo . . .
Lalu, lalu lalu lalu la!

Hontraruru miromente
zasku zes rü rü?
Entepente, leiolente
klekwapufzi lü?
lalu lalu lalu lalu la!

Simarar kos malzipempu
silzuzankunkrei (;)!
Marjomar dos: Quempu Lempu
Siri Suri Sei[]!
Lalu lalu lalu lalu la!

2. The Does' Prayer

The does, as the hour grows late,
med-it-ate;

med-it-nine;

med-it-ten;

med-eleven;

med-twelve;

mednight!

The does, as the hour grows late,
meditate.
They fold their little toesies,
The doesies.

3. The Snail's Monologue

Shall I dwell in my shell?
Shall I not dwell in my shell?
Dwell in shell?
Rather not dwell?
Shall I not dwell,
shall I dwell,
dwell in shell
shall I shell,
schallIshellIshallIshellIshallI . . . ?

*(The snail gets so entangled with his thoughts or, rather,
the thoughts run away with him so that he must
postpone the decision.)*

4. The Picket Fence

One time there was a picket fence
with space to gaze from hence to thence.

An architect who saw this sight
approached it suddenly one night,

removed the spaces from the fence
and built of them a residence.

The picket fence stood there dumbfounded
with pickets wholly unsurrounded,

a view so naked and obscene,
the senate had to intervene.

The architect, however, flew
to Afri- or Americoo.

Vier Duette Op.34

Robert Schumann (1810-56)

1. Love's Garden (R.Reinick)

Love is a rose bush.
Where does it bloom?
There now, in our garden,
wherein we two, my love and I,
stay each true to his own,
for which in gratitude it
daily strews new flowers for us.
And if in heaven roses bloom,
yet they could not bloom more beautiful.

Love is a clear stream.
Where does it flow?
There now, in our garden.
So many waves, so much pleasure
and all kinds of joy;
also it mirrors the world around,
as though it were even much fairer.
On it we sail away so happy,
as birds fly through the sky.

Love is a shining star.
Where does it shine?
There now, in our garden.
O darling tell me, for what do you let me
often wait so long?
For if I do not see you all hours,
the glow of the star burns my heart;
but then you come, it soars gently,
as the sun rises in May.

2. Lover's serenade (R. Burns)

Are you still awake, darling? Greetings and kisses!
Your lover draws near in the downpour.
Love makes him lame in hand and foot;
He so longs to be with his sweetheart.

Even if it is still so stormy outside,
I know the cunning of young lads.
Go back, from where you have come.
I am not letting you in.

Hark, how the weather-vanes flutter!
See, how the little stars are setting!
Don't let me stand here in the rain,
Open up, open up your chamber!

The storm, which looms at night,
Does not bring a greater problem to the crazy wanderer
Than that which to a young and blushing girl
Does the sweet flatteries of men.

You deny me, darling, such a favour,
So that impatience will be the death of me,
And the blame for my early death
Will be yours alone, yes, yours alone.

Just as the little bird that sings and flies,
Overcome by the cunning of the fowler,
In the end falls into the evil snare,
Cries: O trust not the appearance!

3. At my door (R. Burns)

Who is at my bedroom door?
It's me!
Go, be off with you, what do you want here?
Really sweet!
You come in the dark like a thief.
So catch me!
Do you have a little love for me?
With all my heart!

And if I opened the door as you wish?
O open it!
That would be the end of sleep and peace!
Let them be!
Are you a dove in a dovecot?
With my little dove!
Will you coo until dawn?
Very possibly!

No, I will never let you in!
You must nonetheless!
Would you likely appear every day?
With pleasure!
How cheeky you are and how dare you!
So may I?
As long as you tell not a soul!
Of course not!

4. Portrait of a family (A. Grün)

Grandfather and grandmother,
they sat in the garden arbour;
there was a silent smile on their faces,
like a sunny winter's day.

Arms intertwined,
my beloved and I rested there,
our hearts blossomed and sounded
like flower groves in May.

A little stream rippled by
with a babbling hiking song;
silently the clouds drifted in the sky,
until they disappeared from our view.

The withered foliage of the trees
rustled and scattered,
and in silence time with its soft footsteps
passed by us.

Without a word the old silent pair
gazed on the young couple.
A double mirror of life
stood before us light and true.

They looked at us and thought
of the beautiful past.
We looked at them and thought
of times long in the future.

Herbstlied Op43, no.2 (...für Angela...)

Autumn Song (Mahlmann)

The foliage falls from the trees,
The tender summer foliage.
Life with its dreams
Decomposes into ash and dust.

The little birds in the woods sang,
How silent the wood becomes now!
Love is gone away
No little birds will sing.

Love surely returns again
In the dear forthcoming year
And everything then returns
That has now died away.

Winter be welcome,
Thy garb is pure and new.
He has taken the jewellery,
He protects the jewellery faithfully.

*Music is the only one of the fine arts in
which not only man, but all other
animals, have a common property, - mice
and elephants, spiders and birds.*

Jean Paul

You are warmly invited to join us after
the concert for complimentary drinks and
a selection of Tortes by Gabriele.

Next concert:
Monday September 1st
Kristian Chong, piano

Please refer to our web site for further
information on upcoming concerts

www.firmmusic.com.au

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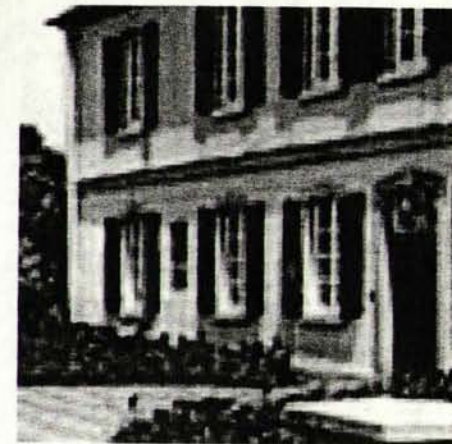
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All the Firm musicians



*Memory is the only paradise from which we
cannot be driven.*

Jean Paul