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Bard Undergraduate Senior Projects

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Spring 2014

## Love, Lust, and Loss: A Senior Recital/An Afternoon of Contemporary Works

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Emily Cedriana Donato

I am graduating with a Bachelor of Arts degree from Bard College's Music Department as a classical vocalist. For my senior project I have put together a set of two recitals. My goal was to create contrasting programs that were interesting, each with a specific theme.

The first recital took place on Sunday, December 15th at 7:00 p.m. in the László Z. Bitó Conservatory Performance Space. The concert was titled "Love, Lust and Loss: A Senior Recital" and it explored these themes while demonstrating a wide range of abilities in my voice. Throughout all musical eras, composers have written about the different facets of the human experience of love. My goal was to demonstrate the different ways in which composers express these complex emotions and show the innately human qualities of love, lust and loss. I began with a piece by Claudio Monteverdi that was written in the 1500's and also performed works by living composers and identical emotions were expressed. My Senior Project Advisor, Erika Switzer, played the piano. There were also two featured conservatory instrumentalists: violinist, Reina Murooka and clarinetist, Noemi Sallai. Noemi, Erika and I performed a major chamber work for soprano, clarinet and piano by Franz Schubert, titled "Der Hirt auf dem Felsen." The program also included opera arias by Mozart, Gounod, and Floyd as well as a set of folk songs by Samuel Barber, a modern piece by Lee Hoiby, a set of French *Mélodies*, and a baroque song by Claudio Monteverdi. Overall, I believe it was a successful concert that remained true to the theme in addition to accurately representing the work I have been doing at Bard.

The second concert will take place on Sunday, May 11th at 12:30 in Olin Hall. Titled "An Afternoon of Contemporary Works," this program features works by prominent living composers, among these works are the world premieres of two works I personally commissioned. When thinking of a theme for my second recital, I immediately realized that I wanted to explore my love for contemporary music and I also wanted to create a program in which my friends could be involved in multiple ways. I have deeply enjoyed working with my talented peers in chamber ensembles and also working with my friends on their own compositions. I was drawn to thinking about how contemporary composers set religious and spiritual texts; in all of the works on this program, composers have set texts that mention God or spiritual ideas. The pieces themselves were not written to be performed in houses of worship and the majority of the composers on the program are not religious people. Throughout history, music has always been a part of the way we worship and many composers worked for churches. These are the roots of classical music but this is no longer the case. Contemporary composers are writing for many different venues this concert will explore these roots in a new way. The concert will open with a piece for string quartet, harp and voice titled "The Vision of Dame Julian of Norwich" by Byron Adams. I will be joined by harpist Anna Bikales, violinists Reina Murooka and Ma Zhi, violist Rosemary Nelis, and cellist Sarah Ghandour. The text of the piece comes from the writings of Dame Julian of Norwich (1343-?) in which she expresses feelings of gratitude and humility towards God. The next piece, "The Adulteress" by Nico Muhly, also uses religious text but in a different way: it shows acceptance of sins by referencing texts in which Jesus is completely forgiving of those who have sinned. After the intermission, the two new works will be premiered. I

will start with “Recitative,” by Bard alumnus Maxwell J. McKee. The last piece on the program is a 13-minute work for viola, soprano, and piano called “January Morning,” with a fifteen part text by William Carlos Williams. Mayumi Tsuchida will play piano and Rosemary Nelis will play viola. I find this concert extremely exciting because while the repertoire is incredibly challenging, and my audience will have the opportunity to hear something they have never heard before.

🌀 Program notes (continued) 🌀

*Fleurs*

Francis Poulenc

Francis Poulenc was one of a group of French composers (*Les Six*) who rebelled against Wagnerian and Impressionistic excesses. *Fleurs* exemplifies that rebellion – concise, almost pointillistic. Its words speak of faded flowers in winter; and as they evoke the faded yet beautiful memory of love, so the music steps along in dreamlike contemplation.

*Chanson triste*

Henri Duparc

Henri Duparc is himself a tragic figure. Mental illness brought an end to his composing at only 37, and before he died he destroyed most of his works. His treasured surviving songs include this early work (“Sad Song”, 1868), with its harplike accompaniment and soaring lyricism expressing love’s rapture.

*Ah! Je veux vivre*

Charles Gounod

Gounod’s *Roméo et Juliette* sets this universally beloved love story as only a French Romantic composer can. Juliette’s first act *ariette* is the song of a young girl who, faced with the prospect of an arranged marriage (to Paris), bridles at the thought. In an ecstatic waltz tempered by pensive moments and sparkling with climactic ebullience, she sings of life’s youthful joy, before adult life despoils its perfection.



Emily Cedriana Donato is a nineteen-year-old soprano from Brooklyn, New York. She is a graduate of Bard High School Early College and a senior at Bard College. Ms. Donato began her training at the Brooklyn Youth Chorus Academy, where she studied for ten years, and has spent two summers studying at Boston University’s Tanglewood Institute. Emily has been featured at Sosnoff Hall as a winner of the Bard College Concerto competition and was a finalist in the Schmidt Youth Vocal Competition. With Musica Viva of New York she was featured as a soloist on their 2012 Italian tour, and she was the soprano soloist in the 2013-14 season’s performance of Orff’s *Carmina Burana*. Ms. Donato has performed as a soloist at Carnegie Hall with the American Symphony Orchestra in Paul Dessau’s *Haggadah shel Pessach* and as a soloist with the Orchestra of St. Luke’s at Alice Tully Hall in the New York première of Charles Osbourne’s *Kings and Fishermen*. She has participated in the Queens College Baroque Opera Workshop, the Amherst Early Music Festival, and the Oyster Bay Music Festival. Emily Cedriana Donato is currently a student of Teresa Buchholz at Bard College.



I would like to thank Erika Switzer, Noemi Sallai, Reina Murooka, Teresa Buchholz, James Bagwell, Peter Laki, Miriam Michel, and my wonderful friends and family.  
*Emily Cedriana Donato*

*Love, Lust and Loss*  
A Senior Recital

Emily Cedriana Donato, *soprano*  
Erika Switzer, *piano*

with

Noemi Salai, *clarinet*  
Reina Murooka, *violin*

Sunday, December 15, 2013 at 7:00 p.m.

Bito Hall  
Bard College  
Annandale-on-Hudson, New York

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## Program

<i>Quel sguardo sdegnosetto</i> ( <i>Scherzi Musicale</i> , 1632)	Claudio Monteverdi (1567-1643)
<i>L'amero saro costante</i> (from <i>Il Re pastore</i> , K.208)	Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart (1756-1791)
Piercing eyes, Hob. XXVIa no. 35	Franz Josef Haydn (1732-1809)
<i>Der Hirt auf dem Felsen</i> , D.965	Franz Schubert (1797-1828)

## Intermission

The Trees on the Mountains (from <i>Susannah</i> )	Carlisle Floyd (1926- )
Folk Song Arrangements At the mid hour of night Come you not from Newcastle? O Waly, Waly	Benjamin Britten (1913-1976)
Goodby, Goodby, World (text from Thornton Wilder's <i>Our Town</i> )	Lee Hoiby (1926-2011)
<i>Fleurs</i> (from <i>Fiançailles pour rire</i> , no. 6, FP.101)	Francis Poulenc (1899-1963)
<i>Chanson triste</i> , Op. 2, No. 4	Henri Duparc (1848-1933)
<i>Ab! Je veux vivre</i> (from <i>Roméo et Juliette</i> )	Charles Gounod (1818-1893)



## Program Notes

*Quel sguardo sdegnosetto* Claudio Monteverdi  
Monteverdi, bridging the transition from Renaissance to Baroque, composed the solo songs and duets of the 1632 *Scherzi*. *Quel sguardo* is one of a number of strophic songs – simple yet elegant. Fierce and fiery darts from the eyes are the weapons of love's passion and pain.

*L'amero saro costante* Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart  
The *Shepherd King* is an early (1775) Mozart opera or *serenata* (staged cantata), with a dual theme of fidelity and duty. Aminta, torn between being a shepherd and rightful heir to the throne, is also torn between true love and a dutiful marriage. This soprano role was originally sung by a *castrato*.

Piercing eyes Franz Josef Haydn  
We do not often think of Haydn as a composer of art songs, yet this charming love song dispels any doubt of his skill in writing expressively for the solo voice. Love's light shines from the eyes and conquers the heart.

*Der Hirt auf dem Felsen* Franz Schubert  
Composed for a soprano who had already inspired Haydn and Beethoven, Anna Milder-Hauptmann (Beethoven's *Leonore*), *The Shepherd on the Rock* is Schubert's final work. Like Mozart's *Exultate jubilate* and Bach's *Jauchzet Gott*, this work celebrates the art, range, and skill of great singing. The singer in this mini-drama of love and longing is echoed by the clarinet, through many emotions, but it exuberantly carries the day at the end.

The Trees on the Mountains Carlisle Floyd  
*Susannah*, possibly the most widely-performed American opera, is set in the Tennessee mountains, in revivalist territory. Its subtext is the McCarthyism of the 1950s, which also inspired playwright Arthur Miller ("The Crucible"). The young girl of the title, accused of sinning and forced into sex by a travelling preacher, sings bitterly in her folk song-like aria of her loss of innocence and exile from her community.

Folk Song Arrangements Benjamin Britten  
Benjamin Britten's centennial is being celebrated this year. A composer of immense range, he had a *Schubertian* affinity for songwriting. These love songs blend the sophistication of art song with the directness of folk song.

Goodby, Goodby, World Lee Hoiby  
The American composer Lee Hoiby is best known for his vocal works, which range from songs to opera, and his work was championed by the great American soprano Leontyne Price. The text of "Goodby, Goodby, World" is taken from Thornton Wilder's classic play of life in an idealized American town. It is Emily's monologue, in which – now dead and speaking from beyond – she is making her final farewell to the living.

(continued over)

An Afternoon of Contemporary Works  
Sunday, May 11<sup>Th</sup> at 12:30 in Olin Hall  
Emily Cedriana Donato, Soprano

*The Vision of Dame Julian of Norwich*

Zhi Ma, Reina Murooka- Violin

Rosemary Nelis - Viola

Sarah Ghandour - Cello

Anna Bikales - Harp

Byron Adams

(1955-)

*The Adulteress*

Erika Switzer - Piano

Nico Muhly

(1981-)

Intermission

*Recitative\**

Erika Switzer - Piano

Maxwell J. McKee

(1991-)

*January Morning\**

Rosemary Nelis - Viola

Mayumi Tsuchida - Piano

Kyle Tieman-Strauss

(1994-)

\* = World Premiere