

Love Notes

An die ferne Geliebte, Op. 98 - Ludwig van Beethoven (1770 - 1827)

1. Auf dem Hügel sitz ich spähend
2. Wo die Berge so blau
3. Leichte Segler in den Höhen
4. Diese Wolken in den Höhen
5. Es kehret der Maien, es blühet die Au

Impromptu in Gb Major, D. 899, No. 3 - Franz Schubert (1797 - 1828)

Interval

Intermezzo in A Major, No 2, Op 118 - Johannes Brahms (1833 - 1897)

Andante teneramente

Dichterliebe, Op. 48 - Robert Schumann (1810 - 1856)

1. Im wunderschönen Monat Mai
2. Aus meinen Tränen sprießen
3. Die Rose, die Lilie, die Taube, die Sonne
4. Wenn ich in deine Augen seh
5. Ich will meine Seele tauchen
6. Im Rhein, im heiligen Strome
7. Ich grolle nicht
8. Und wüßten's die Blumen, die kleinen
9. Das ist ein Flöten und Geigen
10. Hör' ich das Liedchen klingen
11. Ein Jüngling liebt ein Mädchen
12. Am leuchtenden Sommermorgen
13. Ich hab' im Traum geweinet
14. Allnächtlich im Traume
15. Aus alten Märchen winkt es
16. Die alten, bösen Lieder

Programme Notes

Love is complicated! It would seem this was a universal truth with which the German Romantics were only all too familiar.

Beethoven's choice of text for what would become his one and only song cycle, *To a Distant Beloved*, is both puzzling and intriguing. Immediately, parallels might be drawn to the legendary 10 page hand-written letter addressed to his own "Immortal Beloved", found by Beethoven's friends following his death in 1827. Written in 1812, it is a passionate declaration that was sadly never sent, and therefore, never received. It seems a curious choice to write a letter, retain it, and then secret it amongst one's most personal possessions. Four years later, Beethoven would compose his song cycle the subject of whom is a Distant Beloved. Whether these two individuals are intended to be one and the same will likely never be definitively or satisfactorily ascertained. Nevertheless, one must wonder what sort of complicated romantic relationships must have existed between the oft-cantankerous composer and the objects of his affection. Musically, the cycle is singularly unique in composition. It is the only German language song cycle in which the music is through-composed; that is, Beethoven links the six songs through the piano accompaniment, thus ensuring the music is both seamless and uninterrupted by moments of silence.

Beethoven's romantic complications are nothing when compared to those of Franz Schubert, who is considered by many musical historians and scholars to have been at the very least bisexual, if not homosexual. Regardless of his attractions, Schubert went to extraordinary lengths and efforts to maintain an air of ambiguity in regards to his romantic liaisons; perhaps out of necessity given the time in which he lived and the pressures of societal expectations and norms. He left no clues - no mysterious dedications in his music. As part of a collection of four impromptus composed in 1827, Schubert's famous *G Flat Major Impromptu* is a truly sensuous work, brimming with moments of ecstasy. It begs the listener to ponder what or *who* was Schubert's font of inspiration? It is perhaps one of the finest examples of how the young composer empties himself of his passions into his art. The main theme, the first phrase of which is merely two notes, shows his mastery over not only melody but also texture.

Brahms' *Intermezzo* comes from a collection of six pieces he dedicated to Clara Schumann - a woman he loved utterly and unapologetically, but a woman he could never have. It was a forbidden love, considering her marriage and devotion to her husband, Robert. Of this Opus, the second piece, this intermezzo, is undoubtedly one of most intimate and seductive moments in 19th century piano repertoire. Immediately, the listener feels as if they're intruding upon something intended to be private. Cleverly, Brahms inverts the three note theme which rises with anticipation at the start so that it falls, in almost exhaustion, at the close.

Robert Schumann's relationship with his wife Clara got off to a famously tumultuous and complicated start. Upon learning of their romantic involvement, Clara's father, Robert's dedicated teacher and mentor, forbade the relationship to continue. Eventually and in desperation, Schumann would sue Herr Wieck in order to be able to marry Clara - a truly gallant and grand gesture of his love and devotion. *Dichterliebe* is a cycle, the theme of which is twofold; the first half speaks to a sense of infatuation (bordering on obsession), while the second speaks to the devastation when those affections go unanswered. A sense of almost cynical hopelessness pervades the second half of the cycle as the voice resolves that death is the only cure for a broken heart. Schumann must certainly be drawing from his own emotional turbulence when, at the height of his trial, it was still uncertain which way things might end for Clara and him.

Chalium S. P. Poppy began his earliest musical training as a choir boy in the UK. While still a pupil, he was accepted to study organ at the Royal College of Organists in London. Chalium accepted the offer of a scholarship to study music at the Universtat fur Musik und darstellende in Vienna, culminating in a Masterstudium in Protestant Church Music with Honours.

His unique education and experience allows him to enjoy an extremely versatile career as a professional church musician, conductor, oratorio soloist, occasional operatic singer, music commentator, clinician, and teacher. He has performed as an oratorio soloist extensively throughout Europe and North America appearing alongside some of the world's finest orchestras including the Fretwork Ensemble, the Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra, the Freiburger Barockorchester, Les Musiciens du Louvre, and Tafelmusik. He has worked with famed early music interpreters Marc Minkowski, Ton Koopman and Christopher Hogwood.

Following a successful career in Europe as a singer, Chalium relocated to North America. While in Canada, he appeared as a soloist with many of Canada's leading choirs and orchestras including the Vancouver Symphony Orchestra, the Victoria Symphony Orchestra, the Victoria Chamber Orchestra, the Vancouver Island Symphony Orchestra, and the Calgary Philharmonic Orchestra to name a few, producing recordings with many of these ensembles. For two years he served as producer and host of his own weekly program on national radio, "Classic Examples". He also founded his own orchestra, the Nanaimo Chamber Orchestra, that, while under his leadership specialised in music of the Italian Baroque.

After meeting and marrying a New Zealander in 2009, Chalium relocated to Mount Maunganui where he works as a full-time musician. He has appeared as a guest soloist with the Tauranga Civic Choir, Hamilton's Cantando and Civic Choirs, City of Dunedin Choir, Rotorua Civic Choir, the Bay of Island Singers, and Auckland's Handel Consort and Quire, Viva Voce, Graduate Choir, The South Auckland Choral Society, as well as the Auckland Philharmonia Orchestra, The Trust Waikato Symphony Orchestra, the Bay of Plenty Sinfonia, the Southern Symphonia of Dunedin, Opus Orchestra and NZBarok. He has performed in many New Zealand premieres of works by Handel, Rameau, Charpentier, and others. In 2011, Chalium recorded the bass solos in New Zealand's first recordings of Handel's *Messiah* and Bach's *Easter Oratorio* to feature baroque-period instruments. He has also recorded two of Bach's cantatas for the Auckland Philharmonia Orchestra. He currently has seven operatic roles in his repertoire.

He is currently the Organist and Choirmaster for the Anglican Parish of Mount Maunganui. He founded the Chancel Choir of St. Peter's which sings sacred choral music spanning the Middle Ages to the 21st Century weekly for Choral Eucharist and monthly for Choral Evensong. He is also the Founding Artistic and Musical Director of the Scholars Baroque Aotearoa – a chamber choir dedicated to informed performances of early music with an emphasis on stylistic

excellence. With the Scholars Baroque, Chalium has conducted the New Zealand premieres of works by Jean-Philippe Rameau and Michael Haydn to critical acclaim.

As a conductor, Chalium has appeared as a guest conductor of the Tauranga Civic Choir, the Bay of Plenty Sinfonia, Opus Orchestra, and NZBarok.

Chalium has received national accolades and recognition of his commitment and dedication to musical excellence and in particular for his exploration of lesser-known choral works. In 2010, he received a commendation from the French Consulate to New Zealand in gratitude for his efforts in championing the music of the French Baroque.

Catherine Smalberger was born in Derbyshire in England and trained as a doctor at the Medical College of St Bartholomew in the University of London. She worked as a doctor in England, South Africa and Canada before coming to live in Tauranga in 2002. She now works in palliative care at Waipuna Hospice. She holds a Masters degree in palliative care.

Catherine began playing the piano at the age of six, attaining a distinction at Grade 8 and a High Distinction in her licentiate diploma in performance piano. She played as the soloist in concerti with the university orchestra and has given many recitals over the years. She has been the accompanist for both soloists and choral groups in London, South Africa and here in New Zealand, and has played as rehearsal pianist for the Scholars Baroque Aotearoa choir.

Catherine is married to a Tauranga anaesthetist and they have four children. She enjoys cooking and travel, especially - when Covid 19 doesn't prevent it - attempting long hiking trails such as the Anapurna Circuit and the pilgrimage trails in Italy.