

Liberty University School of Music

presents

Student Recital Series

Senior Recital

Eunice Choi, *soprano*

April 18, 2026

Macel Falwell Recital Hall

MUSIC 305

5:00 PM

STUDENT RECITAL SERIES: SENIOR RECITAL

Eunice Choi, *soprano*
Dr. Rebecca Edmiston, *piano*

Program

Non disperar, chi sa?
From *Giulio Cesare* George Frideric Handel
(1685-1759)

Ridente la calma Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart
(1756-1791)

L'abbandono Vincenzo Bellini
(1801-1835)

Ach ich fühls
From *Die Zauberflöte* Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart
(1756-1791)

Gretchen am Spinnrade Franz Schubert
(1797-1828)

Die Nacht Richard Strauss
(1864-1949)

Schlagende Herzen Richard Strauss
(1864-1949)

In quelle trine morbide
From *Manon Lescaut* Giacomo Puccini
(1858-1924)

“Gualtier Malde... Caro nome”
From *Rigoletto* Giuseppe Verdi
(1813-1901)

Were You There When They Crucified My Lord

Spiritual
Arr. Moses Hogan
(1957-2003)

Early in the Morning

Ned Rorem
(1923-2022)

When I Fall in Love

Victor Young
(1899-1956)

Si mes vers avaient des ailes

Reynaldo Hahn
(1874-1947)

Dôme épais le jasmin “The Flower Duet”
From *Lakmé*

Léo Delibes
(1836-1891)

Ellie Flower, *voice*

Ah, je ris de me voir “The Jewel Song”
From *Faust*

Charles Gounod
(1818-1893)

- PROGRAM NOTES -

Non disperar, chi sa?

Handel's *Giulio Cesare in Egitto*, which premiered in 1724, is one of the most celebrated operas of the Baroque period, combining political intrigue with richly drawn characters. Cleopatra, one of its central figures, is portrayed as both a strategic ruler and a charismatic, intelligent woman determined to secure her power. "Non disperar, chi sa?" occurs early in the opera after Cleopatra learns of her brother Tolomeo's violent and misguided attempt to gain favor with Caesar. In response, she chooses a more calculated approach, relying on her wit and charm rather than force. As she expresses confidence in her ability to influence Caesar, the aria reveals her playful intelligence and political ambition. Handel's music reflects this character through a bright and dance-like quality, with a graceful melodic line that conveys both elegance and control. The vocal writing requires agility and clarity, allowing the singer to highlight Cleopatra's charm and confidence. The structure of the aria provides contrast and invites expressive ornamentation, enhancing its lively and engaging character. This scene highlights Handel's ability to portray complex personality through refined and expressive musical writing.

*Anzi tu pur,
effeminato amante,
va' dell'età'
sui primati albori',
di regno invece
a coltivar gli amori!*

*On the contrary, it is you
effeminate lover
you are still
in the dawn of your life
forsaking your kingdom
to pursue your love!*

*Non disperar, chi sa?
se al regno non l'avrai,
avrai sorte in amor.*

*Do not despair, who knows?
If you do not have it in reigning,
you will have luck in love.*

*Mirando una beltà
in essa troverai
a consolar il cor.*

*By looking at a beauty
you will find in her
what consoles the heart.*

- PROGRAM NOTES -

Ridente la calma

“Ridente la calma” is a serene and lyrical concert aria attributed to Mozart, reflecting a sense of peaceful contentment and emotional balance. The text describes a state of gentle happiness, where the soul is free from turmoil and rests in the quiet joy of love and nature. Unlike more dramatic operatic works, this piece embodies simplicity and elegance, offering a moment of calm reflection. Mozart’s music mirrors this tranquility through a smooth, flowing melodic line and delicate phrasing. The vocal line requires sustained legato and control, allowing the singer to convey a sense of ease and warmth. The accompaniment remains light and transparent, supporting the voice without disrupting the aria’s peaceful atmosphere. “Ridente la calma” showcases Mozart’s ability to express beauty through simplicity. With its graceful melody and refined character, the piece captures a quiet, intimate joy, making it a timeless example of Classical lyricism.

*Ridente la calma
nell'alma si desti;
Né resti più segno
di sdegno e timor.*

*Tu vieni, frattanto,
a stringer mio bene,
Le dolce catene sí grate
al mio cor.*

*May a happy calm
arise in my soul
and may neither a bit of anger
nor fear survive in it.*

*In the meantime you are coming,
my beloved, to grasp
those sweet chains that make
my heart so grateful.*

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- PROGRAM NOTES -

L'abbandono

“L'abbandono” is a deeply expressive Italian art song that reflects the anguish of abandonment and unfulfilled love. The text portrays a speaker consumed by sorrow, lamenting the loss of a beloved and the emotional emptiness that follows. This sense of longing and despair is central to the piece, capturing the vulnerability and intensity often associated with early Romantic vocal music. Bellini's setting is characterized by a long, flowing melodic line that emphasizes legato and expressive phrasing, hallmarks of his bel canto style. The vocal line unfolds with a natural, speech-like quality, allowing the singer to shape the text with flexibility and emotional nuance. Subtle shifts in harmony and dynamics heighten the sense of yearning, while the accompaniment provides a gentle yet supportive foundation. Through its lyrical intensity and elegant simplicity, “L'abbandono” exemplifies Bellini's gift for melodic writing and his ability to convey deep emotion with clarity and restraint. The piece offers a poignant exploration of love and loss, making it a powerful and intimate addition to the vocal repertoire.

*Solitario zeffiretto,
a che movi i tuoi sospiri?
Il sospiro a me sol lice,
ché, dolente ed infelice,
chiamo Dafne che non ode
l'insoffribil mio martir.*

*Lonely breeze
why do you sigh?
Sighs are meant for me alone
for, grieving and unhappy,
I call on Daphnis who does not hear
my unbearable torment.*

*Langue invan la mammoletta
e la rosa e il gelsomino;
lunge son da lui che adoro,
non conosco alcun ristoro
se non viene a consolarmi
col bel guardo cilestrino.*

*The sweet-smelling violet,
the rose and the jasmine
languish in vain;
I am far from him whom I adore,
and I have no relief unless he comes and
console me with his beautiful blue gaze.*

*Ape industrie, che vagando
sempre vai di fior in fiore,
ascolta, ascolta.*

*Industrious bee, who always flit
from flower to flower,
listen, listen:*

*Se lo scorgi ov'ei dimora,
di' che rieda
a chi l'adora,
come riedi tu nel seno
delle rose al primo albor.*

*If you find him where he is,
tell him to come back
to the one who adores him,
as you come back to the bosom of the roses
at the first light of dawn.*

- PROGRAM NOTES -

Ach, ich fühl's

Mozart's *Die Zauberflöte*, which premiered in 1791, blends elements of fairy tale, philosophy, and human emotion within a richly symbolic story. At its center is Pamina, whose sincerity and devotion stand in contrast to the trials and misunderstandings she must endure. "Ach, ich fühl's" occurs when Pamina believes that Tamino no longer loves her, leaving her overwhelmed with sorrow and doubt. In this moment, she expresses a deep sense of abandonment and heartbreak, revealing her vulnerability and the depth of her emotional sincerity. Unlike the more fantastical elements of the opera, this aria presents a moment of genuine human feeling. Mozart's music reflects this emotional intensity through a restrained and lyrical melodic line, supported by a delicate and transparent accompaniment. The gentle pacing and subtle dynamic contrasts create a sense of stillness, allowing the voice to convey the quiet unfolding of Pamina's grief. This scene highlights Mozart's ability to express profound emotion with clarity and simplicity, capturing the fragility of the human heart through elegant and expressive musical writing.

*Ach, ich fühl's, es ist verschwunden,
Ewig hin der Liebe Glück!
Nimmer kommt ihr Wonnestunde
Meinem Herzen mehr zurück!
Sieh', Tamino, diese Tränen,
Fließen, Trauter, dir allein!
Fühlst du nicht der Liebe Sehnen,
So wird Ruh' im Tode sein*

*Ah, I can feel it, love's happiness
Is fled forever!
Nevermore, O hours of bliss,
Will you return to my heart!
See, Tamino, these tears
Flow for you alone, beloved.
If you do not feel love's yearning,
I shall find peace in death!*

- PROGRAM NOTES -

Gretchen am Spinnrade

“Gretchen am Spinnrade” is one of Schubert’s most celebrated art songs, set to a text from Johann Wolfgang von Goethe’s *Faust*. The song portrays Gretchen seated at her spinning wheel, consumed by thoughts of Faust and overwhelmed by longing and emotional turmoil. As she reflects on her love, her thoughts become increasingly obsessive, revealing both her passion and inner distress. Schubert’s setting vividly captures this psychological intensity through the piano accompaniment, which mimics the continuous motion of the spinning wheel. The right hand’s repeating figure suggests the whirring of the wheel, while the left hand evokes the steady treadle, creating a sense of restless momentum. Above this, the vocal line shifts between lyrical reflection and heightened emotional urgency, mirroring Gretchen’s fluctuating state of mind. Through its seamless integration of text and music, “Gretchen am Spinnrade” exemplifies Schubert’s gift for musical storytelling. The song’s dramatic intensity and vivid imagery make it a powerful exploration of love, longing, and emotional obsession.

*Meine Ruh' ist hin,
Mein Herz ist schwer,
Ich finde sie nimmer
Und nimmermehr.*

*My peace is gone
My heart is heavy;
I shall never
Ever find peace again.*

*Wo ich ihn nicht hab'
Ist mir das Grab,
Die ganze Welt
Ist mir vergällt.*

*When he's not with me,
Life's like the grave;
The whole world
Is turned to gall.*

*Mein armer Kopf
Ist mir verrückt
Mein armer Sinn
Ist mir zerstückt.*

*My poor head
Is crazed,
My poor mind
Shattered.*

*Meine Ruh' ist hin,
Mein Herz ist schwer,
Ich finde sie nimmer
Und nimmermehr.*

*My peace is gone
My heart is heavy;
I shall never
Ever find peace again.*

*Nach ihm nur schau' ich
Zum Fenster hinaus,
Nach ihm nur geh' ich
Aus dem Haus.*

*It's only for him
I gaze from the window,
It's only for him
I leave the house.*

*Sein hoher Gang,
Sein' edle Gestalt,
Seines Mundes Lächeln,
Seiner Augen Gewalt.*

*His proud bearing
His noble form,
The smile on his lips,
The power of his eyes,*

- PROGRAM NOTES -

Gretchen am Spinnrade (cont.)

*Und seiner Rede
Zauberfluss.
Sein Händedruck,
Und ach, sein Kuss!*

*And the magic flow
Of his words,
The touch of his hand,
And ah, his kiss!*

*Meine Ruh' ist hin,
Mein Herz ist schwer,
Ich finde sie nimmer
Und nimmermehr.*

*My peace is gone
My heart is heavy;
I shall never
Ever find peace again.*

*Mein Busen drängt sich
Nach ihm hin.
Ach dürft' ich fassen
Und halten ihn.*

*My bosom
Yearns for him.
Ah! if I could clasp
And hold him,*

*Und küssen ihn
So wie ich wollt'
An seinen Küssen
Vergehen sollt'!*

*And kiss him
To my heart's content,
And in his kisses
Perish!*

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- PROGRAM NOTES -

Die Nacht

“Die Nacht” is a beautifully introspective art song by Richard Strauss, set to a poem by Hermann von Gilm. The text reflects a quiet sense of unease as night gently envelops the world, taking away light, color, and sound. As darkness falls, the speaker begins to fear that night might also take away what is most precious, the presence of a loved one. Strauss’s setting is delicate and atmospheric, with a flowing, subdued accompaniment that mirrors the gradual descent of night. The vocal line is smooth and lyrical, requiring sustained legato and careful dynamic shading to convey the piece’s intimate and reflective mood. Subtle harmonic shifts add a sense of uncertainty, reinforcing the underlying tension within the otherwise calm and gentle texture. Through its understated beauty and emotional depth, “Die Nacht” captures a fleeting moment of vulnerability, where stillness and longing intertwine. The song exemplifies Strauss’s ability to create rich expression within a restrained and intimate musical setting.

*Aus dem Walde tritt die Nacht,
Aus den Bäumen schleicht sie leise,
Schaut sich um in weitem Kreise,
Nun gib Acht!*

*Night steps from the woods,
Slips softly from the trees,
Gazes about her in a wide arc,
Now beware!*

*Alle Lichter dieser Welt,
Alle Blumen, alle Farben
Löscht sie aus
und stiehlt die Garben
Weg vom Feld.*

*All the lights of this world,
All the flowers, all the colours
She extinguishes
and steals the sheaves
From the field.*

*Alles nimmt sie, was nur hold,
Nimmt das Silber weg des Stroms
Nimmt vom Kupferdach des Doms
Weg das Gold.
Ausgeplündert steht der Strauch:
Rücke näher, Seel’ an Seele,
O die Nacht, mir bangt, sie stehle
Dich mir auch.*

*She takes all that is fair,
Takes the silver from the stream,
Takes from the cathedral’s copper
roof The gold.
The bush stands plundered:
Draw closer, soul to soul,
Ah the night, I fear, will steal
You too from me.*

- PROGRAM NOTES -

Schlagende Herzen

“Schlagende Herzen” is a lively and expressive art song that captures the excitement and intensity of young love. The text reflects a sense of urgency and emotional energy, as the speaker is swept up in the overwhelming feeling of a racing heart and passionate affection. This heightened emotional state gives the song a vibrant and animated character. Strauss’s setting mirrors this intensity through a driving rhythmic pulse and a forward-moving accompaniment, creating a sense of momentum and restlessness. The vocal line is energetic and expansive, requiring both agility and expressive clarity to convey the text’s enthusiasm. Dynamic contrasts and rhythmic vitality play an important role in shaping the song’s dramatic character. Through its spirited energy and expressive immediacy, “Schlagende Herzen” highlights Strauss’s ability to capture the exhilaration of love. The piece stands as a vivid and engaging example of his early song writing, full of youthful intensity and emotional drive.

*Über Wiesen und
Felder ein Knabe ging,
Kling-klang schlug ihm das Herz,
Es glänzt ihm am
Finger von Golde ein Ring,
Kling-klang schlug ihm das Herz.
„Oh Wiesen, oh Felder,
Wie seid ihr schön!
Oh Berge, oh Täler
Wie schön!
Wie bist du gut,
wie bist du schön,
Du goldene Sonne in Himmeshöh'n!“
Kling-klang schlug ihm das Herz.*

*A boy was walking across
meadows and fields,
Pit-a-pat went his heart,
A golden ring
gleamed on his finger,
Pit-a-pat went his heart.
‘O meadows, O fields,
How fair you are!
O mountains, O valleys,
How fair!
How good you are,
how fair you are,
You golden sun in heaven above!’
Pit-a-pat went his heart.*

*Schnell eilte der Knabe
mit fröhlichem Schritt,
Kling-klang schlug ihm das Herz,
Nahm manche
lachende Blume mit,
Kling-klang schlug ihm das Herz.
„Über Wiesen und Felder
Weht Frühlingwind,
Über Berge und Wälder
Weht Frühlingwind.*

*The boy hurried on
with happy steps,
Pit-a-pat went his heart,
Took with him many
a laughing flower,
Pit-a-pat went his heart.
‘Over meadows and fields
A spring wind blows,
Over mountains and woods
A spring wind blows.*

- PROGRAM NOTES -

Schlagende Herzen (cont.)

*Im Herzen mir innen
weht Frühlingswind,
Der treibt zu
Dir mich leise, lind!“
Kling-klang schlug ihm das Herz.*

*A spring wind is
blowing in my heart,
Driving me to you,
softly and gently!’
Pit-a-pat went his heart.*

*Zwischen Wiesen
und Feldern ein Mädels stand,
Kling-klang schlug ihr das Herz,
Hielt über die Augen
zum Schauen die Hand,
Kling-klang schlug ihr das Herz.
„Über Wiesen und Felder,
Über Berge und Wälder
Zu mir, zu mir schnell kommt er her!
Oh wenn er bei mir nur,
bei mir schon wär!“
Kling-klang schlug ihr das Herz.*

*Between meadows
and fields a young girl stood,
Pit-a-pat went her heart,
She shaded her eyes
with her hand as she gazed,
Pit-a-pat went her heart.
‘Over meadows and fields,
Over mountains and woods,
To me, to me he’s hurrying!
Ah! would he were with me,
with me already!’
Pit-a-pat went her heart.*

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- PROGRAM NOTES -

In quelle trine morbide

Puccini's *Manon Lescaut*, which premiered in 1893, tells the story of a young woman torn between her desire for luxury and her love for the devoted Des Grieux. Manon ultimately chooses a life of wealth and comfort, but soon finds herself emotionally unfulfilled despite her surroundings. "In quelle trine morbide" occurs as Manon reflects on her situation, surrounded by elegance yet longing for the genuine love she once knew. As she recalls her past with Des Grieux, the aria reveals her growing sense of emptiness and regret. The moment captures a more introspective side of her character, as she begins to recognize the cost of her choices. Puccini's music beautifully mirrors this inner conflict. The long, flowing melodic lines and rich harmonies create a sense of yearning and emotional depth, while the delicate accompaniment supports the intimacy of the moment. The lyrical character of the aria allows the voice to convey both tenderness and vulnerability, as Manon expresses her quiet longing. This scene highlights Puccini's ability to portray complex emotion, blending warmth, regret, and sincerity through expressive and nuanced musical writing.

*In quelle trine morbide ...
nell'alcova dorata
v'è un silenzio
gelido, mortal, v'è un silenzio,
un freddo che m'agghiaccia!
Ed io che m'ero avvezza
a una carezza
voluttuosa
di labbra ardenti
e d'infuocate braccia
or ho tutt'altra cosa!
pensierosa
O mia dimora umile,
tu mi ritorni innanzi
gaia, isolata, bianca
come un sogno gentile
di pace e d'amor!*

*In those soft lace ...
in the golden alcove
there is a silence
frosty, mortal, there is a silence,
a cold that chills me!
And I was used to it
to a caress
voluptuous
of burning lips
and fiery arms
or I have another thing!
pensively
O my humble home,
you come back to me
gay, isolated, white
like a kind dream
of peace and of love!*

- PROGRAM NOTES -

“Gualtier Malde... Caro nome”

Verdi's Rigoletto, which premiered in 1851, remains one of Verdi's most celebrated operas. The opera tells the story of Rigoletto, a court jester whose bitterness and cynicism contrast with the innocence of his daughter Gilda. Her sheltered life leaves her especially vulnerable to the Duke of Mantua's charm and deception. “Caro nome” occurs after Gilda's first encounter with the Duke, who has introduced himself under the name “Gualtier Maldè.” As she gently repeats the name of her supposed beloved, the aria captures her sense of wonder, joy, and tender anticipation. The moment reveals her youthful sincerity and the dreamlike excitement of first love. Verdi's music beautifully mirrors Gilda's emotional state. The flowing melodic lines and delicate ornamentation create an atmosphere of lightness and radiance, suggesting innocence, hope, and romantic idealism. The graceful, lyrical character of the aria allows the voice to convey both warmth and innocence, as if Gilda is absorbed in her own thoughts. This scene offers a striking contrast to the darker themes of the opera, highlighting Verdi's ability to express character and emotion through elegant and expressive musical writing.

*Gualtier Maldè...
nome di lui sì amato,
Ti scolpisci nel
core innamorato!*

*Walter Maldè...
name of the man I love,
be thou engraved upon
my lovesick heart!*

*Caro nome che il mio cor
Festi primo palpitar,
Le delizie dell'amor
Mi dei sempre rammentar!*

*Beloved name, the first to move
the pulse of love within my heart,
thou shalt remind me ever
of the delights of love!*

*Col pensier il mio desir
A te sempre volerà,
E fin l'ultimo mio sospir,
Caro nome, tuo sarà.*

*In my thoughts, my desire
will ever fly to thee,
and my last breath of life
shall be, beloved name, of thee.*

*Il mio desir a te ognora volerà,
fin l'ultimo sospiro tuo sarà.*

*My desire shall ever fly to you,
until your very last breath.*

- PROGRAM NOTES -

Were You There When They Crucified My Lord

“Were You There When They Crucified My Lord” is a deeply moving African American spiritual that reflects on the crucifixion of Jesus Christ. Rooted in the Christian tradition, the text invites the listener to personally witness Christ’s suffering, asking a series of questions that draw the believer into the emotional and spiritual weight of the event. The repeated line, “sometimes it causes me to tremble,” expresses a profound response of awe, sorrow, and reverence. In this arrangement, Moses Hogan enhances the spiritual’s expressive depth through rich harmonies and dynamic contrast. While the melody remains central, the accompaniment and harmonic texture intensify the emotional impact, moving between moments of quiet reflection and powerful climactic passages. The vocal line requires both control and expressive nuance, allowing the performer to convey a deeply personal and spiritual connection to the text. Through its combination of simplicity and intensity, “Were You There” becomes both a reflection on suffering and an expression of faith. Hogan’s arrangement brings a heightened emotional dimension to this timeless spiritual while preserving its reverent and contemplative character.

Early in the Morning

“Early in the Morning” is a lively and expressive art song by Ned Rorem that captures the energy and emotional immediacy of youthful love. Set to a text by Robert Hillyer, the poem reflects a sense of urgency and excitement, as the speaker recalls moments of love shaped by spontaneity and longing. The text moves quickly, mirroring the restless and impulsive nature of the emotions it describes. Rorem’s setting highlights this vitality through a rhythmic and forward-moving accompaniment, paired with a vocal line that is both conversational and expressive. The music shifts fluidly to reflect the changing moods of the text, requiring clarity of diction and flexibility in phrasing. Subtle harmonic color and rhythmic variation contribute to the song’s sense of immediacy and emotional nuance. Through its vivid text setting and energetic character, “Early in the Morning” showcases Rorem’s distinctive ability to blend speech-like lyricism with musical sophistication. The piece captures a fleeting moment of passion and reflection, offering a vibrant contrast to more introspective works in the vocal repertoire.

- PROGRAM NOTES -

When I Fall in Love

“When I Fall in Love” is a timeless American standard that expresses a sincere and idealistic view of love. The text reflects a desire for a love that is lasting and genuine, rejecting anything fleeting or uncertain. With its message of wholehearted devotion, the song captures both vulnerability and hope, emphasizing the importance of emotional honesty. Young’s music is marked by a smooth, flowing melody and rich harmonic language that enhance the song’s warmth and intimacy. The vocal line unfolds naturally, allowing for expressive phrasing and subtle dynamic shading. Its lyrical simplicity invites a personal interpretation, giving the performer the opportunity to communicate both tenderness and sincerity. Through its elegant melody and heartfelt message, “When I Fall in Love” remains one of the most beloved songs of the American popular repertoire. Its enduring appeal lies in its ability to convey the timeless longing for a love that is true and lasting.

- PROGRAM NOTES -

Si mes vers avaient des ailes

“Si mes vers avaient des ailes” is a delicate and lyrical French *mélodie* set to a poem by Victor Hugo. The text expresses a gentle longing, imagining that the speaker’s words could take flight like birds to reach a distant beloved. This sense of lightness and quiet yearning gives the song an intimate and dreamlike quality. Hahn’s setting is marked by elegance and restraint, with a smooth, flowing melody that reflects the natural inflection of the French language. The vocal line requires subtle phrasing and tonal clarity, allowing the singer to convey both tenderness and simplicity. The accompaniment remains delicate and supportive, enhancing the atmosphere without overshadowing the voice. Through its refined simplicity and expressive nuance, “Si mes vers avaient des ailes” exemplifies the charm and intimacy of the French *mélodie* tradition. The piece captures a fleeting, poetic moment of longing, where love is expressed with grace, softness, and understated beauty.

*Mes vers fuiraient,
doux et frêles,
Vers votre jardin si beau,
Si mes vers avaient des ailes,
Comme l’oiseau.*

*My verses would flee,
sweet and frail,
To your garden so fair,
If my verses had wings,
Like a bird.*

*Ils voleraient, étincelles,
Vers votre foyer qui rit,
Si mes vers avaient des ailes,
Comme l’esprit.*

*They would fly, like sparks,
To your smiling hearth,
If my verses had wings,
Like the mind.*

*Près de vous, purs et fidèles,
Ils accourraient nuit et jour,
Si mes vers avaient des ailes,
Comme l’amour.*

*Pure and faithful, to your side
They’d hasten night and day,
If my verses had wings,
Like love!*

- PROGRAM NOTES -

Dôme épais le jasmin

Delibes's *Lakmé*, which premiered in 1883, is one of the most beloved works of the French operatic repertoire. Set in colonial India, the opera tells the story of Lakmé, the daughter of a Brahmin priest, whose life becomes entangled with a British officer, creating tension between love and cultural conflict. "Dôme épais le jasmin," known as the Flower Duet, occurs early in the opera as Lakmé and her companion Mallika gather flowers by the river. Removed from the surrounding tension, this moment captures a sense of peace, beauty, and shared intimacy. As the two women sing together, the duet reflects a serene and dreamlike atmosphere, emphasizing their close bond and the natural beauty around them. Delibes's music beautifully mirrors this tranquil scene. The flowing, intertwining vocal lines move in graceful parallel motion, creating a sense of unity and balance between the two voices. The lilting rhythm and delicate accompaniment enhance the gentle, floating quality of the duet, evoking both elegance and calm. This moment offers a striking contrast to the dramatic conflicts of the opera, highlighting Delibes's gift for melody and his ability to create atmosphere through refined and expressive musical writing.

LAKME

*Dôme épais le jasmin,
A la rose s'assemble,
Rive en fleurs
frais matin,
Nous appellent ensemble.
Ah! glissons en suivant
Le courant fuyant:
Dans l'on de frémissante,
D'une main nonchalante,
Gagnons le bord,
Où l'oiseau chante,
l'oiseau, l'oiseau chante.
Dôme épais, blanc jasmin,
Nous appellent ensemble!*

LAKME

*Thick dome jasmine,
At the rose assembles,
Fresh flowering
shore in the morning,
We call together.
Ah! slide next
The current running away:
In the quivering one,
With a nonchalant hand,
Let's win the edge,
Where the bird sings,
the bird, the bird sings.
Thick dome, jasmine white,
Call us together!*

- PROGRAM NOTES -

Dôme épais le jasmin (cont.)

MILLIKA

*Sous le dôme épais,
où le blanc jasmin
A la rose s'assemble,
Sur la rive en fleurs
riant au matin,
Viens, descendons ensemble.
Doucement glissons
De son flot charmant
Suivons le courant
fuyant:
Dans l'on de frémissante,
D'une main nonchalante,
Viens, gagnons le bord,
Où la source dort
Et l'oiseau, l'oiseau chante.
Sous le dôme épais,
Sous le blanc jasmin,
Ah! descendons ensemble!*

LAKME

*Mais, je ne sais quelle crainte subite,
S'empare de moi,
Quand mon père
va seul à leur ville maudite;
Je tremble, je tremble d'effroi!*

MALLIKA

*Pourquoi le Dieu Ganeça le protège,
Jusqu'à l'étang où s'ébattent joyeux
Les cygnes aux ailes de neige,
Allons cueillir les lotus bleus.*

LAKME

*Oui, près des cygnes
aux ailes de meige,
Allons cueillir les lotus bleus.
Ensemble*

MILLIKA

*Under the thick dome,
where the jasmine white
At the rose assembles,
On the bank in blooming
laughing in the morning,
Come, let's go down together.
Gently gliding
From its charming flow
Let's follow the current
running away:
In the quivering one,
With a nonchalant hand,
Come, win the edge,
Where the source is sleeping
And the bird, the bird sings.
Under a dome,
Under the jasmine white,
Ah! let's go down together!*

LAKME

*But, I do not know what sudden fear,
Take hold of me,
When my father goes alone
to their cursed city;
I tremble, I tremble with terror!*

MALLIKA

*Why the God Ganeça protects him,
Up to the pond where frolic
Swans with snow wings,
Let's go pick the blue lotus.*

LAKME

*Yes, near the swans
to the eves of meige,
Let's go pick the blue lotus.
Together*

- PROGRAM NOTES -

Ah, je ris de me voir

Gounod's *Faust*, which premiered in 1859, tells the story of a scholar who makes a pact with the devil in exchange for youth and pleasure, ultimately leading to the seduction and downfall of the innocent Marguerite. Her character represents purity and vulnerability, making her transformation throughout the opera especially poignant. "Ah, je ris de me voir," known as the Jewel Song, occurs when Marguerite discovers a box of jewels left for her by Faust. As she tries them on, she becomes captivated by their beauty and the image of herself they create. The aria captures her delight, curiosity, and growing fascination with luxury, revealing a shift from innocence toward vanity and desire. Gounod's music reflects this transformation through a sparkling and virtuosic vocal line, filled with brilliant runs and ornamentation. The light, dance-like character and shimmering accompaniment enhance the sense of excitement and wonder, while also showcasing the singer's agility and brilliance. This scene highlights Gounod's ability to combine charm and technical display, creating a vivid and engaging portrait of Marguerite's character.

*Ah! je ris de me voir
si belle en ce miroir,
Ah! je ris de me voir
si belle en ce miroir,
Est-ce toi, Marguerite, est-ce toi?
Réponds-moi, réponds-moi,
Réponds, réponds, réponds vite!
Non! Non! ce nest plus toi!
Non...non, ce nest plus ton visage;
C'est la fille d'un roi;
Ce n'est plus toi,
C'est la fille d'un roi
Qu'on salut au passage!
Ah, s'il était ici!
S'il me voyait ainsi!
Comme une demoiselle
Il me trouverait belle, Ah!*

*Ah, I laugh to see myself
so beautiful in this mirror,
Ah, I laugh to see myself
so beautiful in this mirror,
Is it you, Marguerite, it is you?
Answer me, answer me,
Respond, respond, respond quickly!
No, no! it is no longer you!
No...no, it is no longer your face;
It is the daughter of a king,
It is no longer you, etc.
It is the daughter of a king,
Whom one bows to as she passes!
Ah, if only he were here!
If he would see me like this
Like a lady
He would find me so beautiful, Ah!*

*Achevons la métamorphose,
Il me tarde encor d'essayer
Le bracelet et le collier!
Dieu! cest comme une main,
Qui sur mon bras se pose! ah! ah!
Ah! je ris
de me voir si belle
dans ce miroir!*

*Let us complete the metamorphosis,
I am late yet in trying on
The bracelet and the necklace!
God! it is like a hand
Which is placed on my arm! Ah, ah!
Ah, I laugh
to see myself so beautiful
in this mirror!*

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Eunice Choi is a student of Dr. Wayne Kompelien

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