THE BOB COLE CONSERVATORY OF MUSIC AT CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY, LONG BEACH AND THE COLLEGE OF THE ARTS PROUDLY PRESENT:

LIEDERABEND
ART SONGS IN ENGLISH
GUK-HUI HAN, DIRECTOR

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 3, 2015
4:00PM

GERALD R. DANIEL RECITAL HALL

PLEASE SILENCE ALL ELECTRONIC MOBILE DEVICES.
**PROGRAM**

*Five Elizabethan Songs* ............................................................................................................. Ivor Gurney (1890-1937)

Mason Allred—baritone


Jack Wilkins—tenor

*A Charm of Lullabies, Op. 41* ....................................................................................................... Benjamin Britten (1913-1976)

Molly Burnside—mezzo-soprano

*Vignette: Letters from George to Evelyn* ..................................................................................... Alan L. Smith (b.1955)

Vincentia Deidra Geraldine—soprano

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**PROGRAM NOTES AND TEXTS**

**Five Elizabethan Songs** Musician and poet, **Ivor Gurney** sets himself apart in English art song through rich texture and “rhapsodic” approach. Born in 1890 in Gloucester, Gurney was raised as a chorister at the Gloucester Cathedral. He studied at Royal Holloway and by 1912 he had composed his first set of song titled *Five Elizabethan Songs*. Ivor Gurney’s life was unfortunately plagued with mental disease. Even from an early age he often had mental breakdowns and had attempted suicide. A large portion of his poetry was written while he was fighting in World War I. He enlisted in the war and was stationed in France where the horrors of war affected him and upon his return he spent the majority of his time in war hospitals. Though the number of songs he composed during the war was small, they are among the best.

This set of five songs is considered one of Ivor Gurney’s most beautiful works. Published in 1920, these songs are highly regarded among Gurney’s own music as he states in a letter that they are “the most delightful and beautiful songs you ever cast your beaming eyes upon.” All of the poetry is of Elizabethan origin, and is remarked as being incredibly “English.”

*Orpheus*—William Shakespeare

*Orpheus or Orpheus with his Lute* tells the tale of the Greek figure, Orpheus, who played music so beautifully that it stopped all sorrow and pain, and created the picturesque pleasantries of the world. Gurney’s interpretation of the text allows for a variety of moods to be displayed in both the voice and the piano:

| Orpheus with his lute made trees,       | Everything that heard him play,       |
| And the mountain-tops that freeze,     | Even the billows of the sea,           |
| Bow themselves, when he did sing:     | Hung their heads, and then lay by.     |
| To his music, plants and flowers      | In sweet music is such art:             |
| Ever sprung; as sun and showers       | Killing care and grief of heart        |
| There had made a lasting spring.      | Fall asleep, or, hearing, die          |
Tears—anonymous
Tears explores a text which emphasizes feelings of sorrow and relief in somber musical context. The fountains mentioned in the text are meant to describe a person who has cried so much, that they cannot cry any longer:

Weep you no more, sad fountains;
What need you flow so fast?
Look how the snowy mountains
Heaven's sun doth gently waste!
But my sun's heavenly eyes
View not your weeping,
That now lies sleeping,
Softly now, softly lies
Sleeping.

Sleep is a reconciling,
A rest that peace begets;
Doth not the sun rise smiling
When fair at e'en he sets?
Rest you, then, rest, sad eyes!
Melt not in weeping,
While she lies sleeping,
Softly now, softly lies
Sleeping.

Under the Greenwood Tree—William Shakespeare
This second Shakespeare setting in the set uses a playful texture in the piano to represent two lovers sneaking off to a familiar tree to meet. The song ends with several open fifths in the piano that foreshadows Spring, the last song in this set of five:

Under the greenwood tree
Who loves to lie with me,
And turn his merry note
Unto the sweet bird's throat,
Come hither, come hither, come hither:
Here shall he see
No enemy
But winter and rough weather.

Who doth ambition shun,
And loves to live i' the sun,
Seeking the food he eats,
And pleas'd with what he gets,
Come hither, come hither, come hither:
Here shall he see
No enemy
But winter and rough weather.

Sleep—John Fletcher
Sleep is the most popular piece from this set, and conveys deep sorrow and concern through its complex harmonics and dissonance between the piano and vocal line. The last line “Oh let my joys have some abiding!” is repeated and is significant because the music allows for a subtle change of meaning in the words. The first time it is sung during the climax of the piece it is demanding, while the repeat of the text is clearly more of a plea:

Come, Sleep, and with thy sweet deceiving
Lock me in delight awhile;
Let some pleasing dreams beguile
All my fancies; that from thence
I may feel an influence
All my powers of care bereaving.

Though but a shadow, but a sliding,
Let me know some little joy!
We that suffer long annoy
Are contented with a thought
Through an idle fancy wrought:
O let my joys have some abiding!

Spring—Thomas Nashe
A bright and joyous ending to the set, Spring uses the voice to mimic the sounds of birds like the cuckoo bird and the nightingale. These sounds are represented by the words “Cuckoo! jug-jug, pu-wee, to-witta-woo” in a playful and sonorous tribute to spring:

Spring, the sweet Spring, is the year's pleasant king;
Then blooms each thing, then maids dance in a ring,
Cold doth not sting, the pretty birds do sing,
Cuckoo, jug-jug, pu-wee, to-witta-woo!

The fields breathe sweet, the daisies kiss our feet,
Young lovers meet, old wives a-sunning sit,
In every street these tunes our ears do greet,
Cuckoo, jug-jug, pu-wee, to-witta-woo!
Spring! The sweet Spring!
**Hermit Songs**  
*Samuel Barber* started writing music when he was seven years old. Little did he know, he would become one of the twentieth centuries most frequently performed American composers. His work is compelling, rhythmically challenging, harmonically rich and lyrically stunning. He was a craftsman, meticulously setting each new text to the exact music required. Leontyne Price, the singer for whom the *Hermit Songs* were composed, said on the topic of Barber's music, “For a singer, Barber’s music is always a challenge; but the end product is so rewarding and so terribly vocal, you can’t wait to pick up another piece of his. It also falls intellectually to the mind and beautifully on the ear, which is a rare combination.” His masterful work remains a cornerstone of the American music legacy.

*Hermit Songs* were composed from October 1952 to January 1953. They were commissioned by the Elizabeth Sprague Coolidge Foundation and premiered by soprano Leontyne Price and Mr. Barber himself at the piano. The cycle includes ten songs, each setting eighth century Irish poem. These poems were discovered in the writings of Irish monks and scholars. Barber was known for his love of Irish literature and poetry and beautifully displays his love here in this cycle. He takes each poem and sets each with precision only he could achieve. He use a variety of forms and styles and omits metrical signatures to accommodate the rhythmic irregularities of the poetry. *Hermit Songs* is one of Barber’s most loved and performed vocal works.

**Saint Patrick’s Purgatory**  
A pilgrim feels despair for being unable to experience true remorse for the sins he’s committed. He wrestles with his hardened heart, praying for the Son of God to pity his soul. Forceful rhythms mark this pilgrimage to Loch Derg:

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Pity me on my pilgrimage to Loch Derg!
0 King of the churches and the bells
beware of your sores and your wounds,
but not a tear can I squeeze from my eyes!
Not moisten an eye after so much sin!
Pity me, O King
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What shall I do with a heart that seeks only its own ease?
0 only begotten Son by whom all men were made,
who shunned not the death by three wounds,
Pity me on my pilgrimage to Loch Derg
And I with a heart not softer than a stone!
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**Church Bell at Night**  
The author explains his desire for a faithful woman by comparing her to a bell, struck on a windy night. He has no time or need for light and foolish women. Listen for the bell tolling through the dissonant chords of the wind:

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Sweet little bell, struck on a windy night,
I would liefer keep tryst with thee
than be with a light and foolish woman.
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**Saint Ita’s Vision**  
The author observes Mary as she consoles her baby, the Messiah, telling him the truth of the world he is called to save. She sees that he is the key to finding everlasting good in the world and wants the world to know, but he is only an infant and his time has not yet come. Hear Mary sing as she rocks her baby Jesus to sleep:

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“I will take nothing from my Lord,” said she,
“unless He gives me His Son from Heaven
In the form of a Baby that I may nurse Him.”
So that Christ came down to her
in the form of a Baby and then she said:
“Infant Jesus, at my breast,
Nothing in this world is true
Save, O tiny nursling, You.
Infant Jesus at my breast,
By my heart every night,
You I nurse are not a churl
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But were begot on Mary the Jewess
By Heaven’s light.
Infant Jesus at my breast,
What King is there but You who could
Give everlasting good?
Wherefore I give my food.
Sing to Him, maidens, sing your best!
There is none that has such right
To your song as Heaven’s King
Who every night
Is Infant Jesus at my breast”.
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The Heavenly Banquet
This is Irish hospitality at its finest. The poet desires to provide a meal and drink to all in heaven, including the three Marys and the King of Kings:

I would like to have the men of Heaven in my own house;  
With vats of good cheer laid out for them.  
I would like to have the three Mary’s, their fame is so great.  
I would like people from every corner of Heaven.  
I would like them to be cheerful in their drinking.  
I would like to have Jesus sitting here among them.  
I would like a great lake of beer for the King of Kings.  
I would like to be watching Heaven's family,  
Drinking it through all eternity.

The Crucifixion
The unthinkable has happened, Christ is crucified. His mother watches the horror of her son being put to death and the anguish overwhelms her. It’s as if the physical pain of Jesus is less than his grief caused by his mother’s anguish.

At the cry of the first bird  
They began to crucify Thee, O Swan!  
Never shall lament cease because of that.  
It was like the parting of day from night.  
Ah, sore was the suffering borne  
By the body of Mary’s Son,  
But sorer still to Him was the grief  
Which for His sake  
Came upon His Mother.

Sea-snatch
Outrage ensues as waves of the sea crash into the boat holding this author. How could God allow this to happen? Where is God when he is needed most? These questions are asked and more in this surging piece.

It has broken us, it has crushed us,  
it has drowned us, O King of the starbright  
Kingdom of Heaven!  
The wind has consumed us, swallowed us, as timber is devoured by crimson fire from Heaven.  
It has broken us, it has crushed us,  
it has drowned us, O King of the starbright Kingdom of Heaven!

Promiscuity
I do not know with whom Edan will sleep,  
but I do know that fair Edan will not sleep alone.

The Monk and His Cat
A monk reflects on the quiet joy of his scholarly life, which he shares with a beloved feline companion. You can hear the cat sing along with the Monk as he works at his studies.

Pangur, white Pangur,  
How happy we are  
Alone together, Scholar and cat.  
Each has his own work to do daily;  
For you it is hunting, for me study.  
Your shining eye watches the wall;  
My feeble eye is fixed on a book.  
You rejoice when your claws entrap a mouse;  
I rejoice when my mind fathoms a problem.  
Pleased with his own art  
Neither hinders the other;  
Thus we live ever  
Without tedium and envy.  
Pangur, white Pangur,  
How happy we are  
Alone together, Scholar and cat.
The Praises of God
After hearing the birds singing, this author questioned how some could not sing praises to the Lord. He should be continuously praised. Look to the birds men and women. Sing praise!

How foolish the man who does not raise
His voice and praise with joyful words,
As he alone can, Heaven’s High King.
To whom the light birds with no soul but air,
All day, everywhere laudations sing.

The Desire for Hermitage
The poet meditates in ecstatic solitude. He solemnly contemplates a death to self love in his life as to prepare him for the next life. Within this song’s meditative mood, the lyricism is fervent:

Ah! To be all alone in a little cell
With nobody near me;
Beloved that pilgrimage
Before the last pilgrimage to death.
Singing the passing hours to cloudy Heaven;
Feeding upon dry bread and water from the cold spring.

A Charm of Lullabies, Op. 41
During the 20th century, Benjamin Britten was one of the most influential and prominent British composers. His musical works range from opera and other vocal pieces to orchestral and even film music. Britten was known for his specific style of word setting. It was not text-focused but rather greater emphasis was put on the music itself to capture the nature of the poem.

This song cycle was composed by Britten specifically for Nancy Evans. She was an English mezzo-soprano who had a significant career as an opera singer. Britten also utilized her talent in his opera, Albert Herring, in the role of Nancy (named for her). A Charm of Lullabies is made up of five lullabies that vary greatly in story, character and musical style. These cradle songs are not traditionally sounding lullabies. Throughout this cycle, the way in which Britten accentuates the text through music is extraordinary. He portrays the true essence of each poem through strong melodic, harmonic and rhythmic choices. The unique characteristics he attributes to each song truly differentiate one lullaby from another and the story each lullaby has to tell.

A Cradle Song
This is the first piece in Britten's song cycle, A Charm of Lullabies. A cradle-like motion is established early on with rocking, even notes in the left hand of the piano. This is soon followed by a hypnotic melody in the right hand, as if assisting the mother in lulling her baby to sleep with her own gentle melody. The mother lovingly looks on as her baby sleeps, soaking in the baby’s innocence and appreciating how calmly her baby joyfully dreams who has yet to experience the dreadful cares of the world:

Sleep, sleep, beauty bright,
Dreaming o’er the joys of night;
Sleep, sleep, in thy sleep
Little sorrows sit and weep.
Sweet babe, in thy face
Soft desires I can trace,
Secret joys and secret smiles,
Little pretty infant wiles.

The Highland Balou
One will hear a strong Scottish influence throughout this piece. A drone-like tone is played in the left hand of the piano which represents the deep drone of a bagpipe. The mother in this song knows that her son is destined for great things in life for he is the son of the great Clanronald. Even though the father has left the proud mother and her baby boy, she still has hopes for her son because greatness is in his blood, and she is determined that he live up to it:
Hee Balou, my sweet wee Donald,  
Picture o’ the great Clanronald!  
Brawlie kens our wanton Chief  
What gat my young Highland thief.  
(Hee Balou!)

Leeze me on thy bonnie craigie!  
And thou live, thou’ll steal a naigie,  
Travel the country thro’ and thro’,  
and bring hame a Carlisle cow!

Thro’ the Lawlands, o’er the Border,  
Weel, my babie, may thou furder!  
Herry the louns o’ the laigh Countrie,  
Synge to the Highlands hame to me!

Sephestia’s Lullaby
Right away a sense of longing and despair is portrayed in this lullaby. The unresolved tension in the initial chord reflects the tension felt by the mother in this piece. She is a single mother who was left alone by the father of her baby. Although dealing with the turmoil she feels in her situation, she finds the strength to lull her baby to sleep by saying not to worry now, for there will be enough grief in the future to overcome:

Weep not, my wanton, smile upon my knee;  
When thou art old there’s grief enough for thee.

Mother’s wag, pretty boy,  
Father’s sorrow, father’s joy;  
When thy father first did see  
Such a boy by him and me,

He was glad, I was woe;  
Fortune changed made him so,  
When he left his pretty boy,  
Last his sorrow, first his joy.

Weep not, my wanton, smile upon my knee;  
When thou art old there’s grief enough for thee.

A Charm
The mother in this piece has had enough of her baby’s crying. After trying numerous times to silence the crying, she resorts to making threats of what will happen if the baby does not stop. The pound of the initial dissonant chord occurs throughout the piece as to portray the baby’s relentless wailing:

Quiet!  
Sleep! Or I will make  
Erinnys whip thee with a snake,  
And cruel Rhadamanthus take  
Thy body to the boiling lake,  
Where fire and brimstones never slake;  
Thy heart shall burn, thy head shall ache,  
And every joint about thee quake;  
And therefor dare not yet to wake!  
Quiet, sleep!  
Quiet, sleep!  
Quiet!
The Nurse’s Song
This piece begins and ends as one may think a lullaby traditionally would: by an unaccompanied, woman’s gentle voice. However, the initial, a capella, melodic line is occasionally unsettling in tone. Even while remaining true to Britten’s style and visiting various tonalities, its overall text is warm and tender in its quest to soothe the sleepy baby:

Lullaby baby, Lullaby baby,
Thy nurse will tend thee as duly as may be.
Lullaby baby!

Be still, my sweet sweeting, no longer do cry;
Sing lullaby baby, lullaby baby.
Let dolours be fleeting, I fancy thee, I...
To rock and to lull thee I will not delay me.

Lullaby baby, Lullabybaby baby,
Thy nurse will tend thee as duly as may be
Lullabybaby baby

The gods be thy shield and comfort in need!
The gods be thy shield and comfort in need!
Sing Lullaby baby,
Lullabybaby

They give thee good fortune and well for to speed,
And this to desire ... I will not delay me.
This to desire ... I will not delay me.

Lullaby lullabybaby baby,
Thy nurse will tend thee as duly as may be.
Lullabybaby baby.

Vignette: Letters from George to Evelyn

Alan Smith is a 21st century American composer and pianist. His compositions have been performed in many prestigious places such as Carnegie Hall, Lincoln Center, Kennedy Center, Wigmore Hall, Tanglewood Music Center, Music Academy of the West and the Ravinia Festival. Moreover, his experiences in composition and vocal coaching have made him become one of the most sought after vocal coach and accompanist. Currently, Alan Smith serves as the chair of Keyboard Studies and the director of the Keyboard Collaborative Arts Program in University of Southern California.

Vignette: Letters from George to Evelyn is a song-cycle composed in 2002 by Alan Smith. The texts of this song cycle are excerpted from the private letters of a World War II bride: Lieutenant George Honts Washington to his wife, Evelyn. Despite the horror of the war that he’s facing, he manages to remain positive and affectionate towards Evelyn. Besides the private letters from George, Alan Smith also added the telegram with the news of George’s death. The telegram part is then followed by an epilogue: “My heart, my mind, my soul is yours—Love me—Love me—I adore you—Love me, too. My best to everyone... Must run now, my sweet—Gotta run now baby.. Love, George.” This epilogue leaves the listeners the feeling that George is still alive somewhere, waiting to come home to Evelyn. Even after almost 70 years later, the words in George’s letters still resonate through this song-cycle by Alan Smith.

Prologue:
Dearest... Darling...

Dec. ’42 England
I had seen fire go through the young pines in drought season. But it was no more swift than passion’s blaze through us. Our hearts were rejoined and we were in each other’s arms. We were pitiful in the bliss and pain of it—so lavish were our loves so strong our need and right for each other and so vigorous and sentient our years. You will remember, won’t you?

6 April ’44 England
Good morning, darling...
The sun has just come up. It’s a beautiful morning. The grassy downs are sparkling like myriads of diamonds. Sheep are placidly grazing around my tent, satisfied with the prospect of getting both food and drink in the same mouthful and displaying their wooly youngsters with great pride. From the top of our hill, the great sea is as quiet as a lake. The anchored hulls of all the cargo ships are quietly swaying to and from keeping rhythm with gentle swells that do not end in surf. This morning my heart goes out to you.

Mar. 18, ’45 Germany [Along the Rhine, 6 days before his death; taken from a letter to Evelyn’s mother]
I am still the busiest guy in the seven armies and the days and nights run together and melt away with alarming speed. Still, each one that passes, brings closer that time when my purgatory on earth shall be ended and I can enter into my heaven through the portals of your two lovely arms.
Mar. 21st, '45 [three days before his death]
...the build up for the big push rapidly being completed.

March 10, '44 [in the middle of the Channel for three days]
I am the only officer aboard from my outfit—the boys are at a high pitch and primed for action. I am not the big chap that you may have imagined... right now I feel very small and unfit, unequal to the task that is awaiting for me just beyond the horizon and I am guilty of hiding a great loneliness and not a little fear behind a demeanor of official bravado and I confess feeling very smug in your love. Shouldn't I feel more proud of attaining you that if I were the big, brave, invincible knight of your dreams?

France July 2nd '44
Downpour of rain—bombers—fighters—mud—shattered dwellings—dead livestock—uprooted trees—etc.

France 14 Oct. '44
The order of the day is mud—mud—Thin slippery mud, thick sticky mud, French mud, German mud— The rain is continuing unabated and the channel is pounding at its cliff confines as though it were possessed of the devil himself.

France Nov. 22 '44
It is still inconceivable to me that you have chosen to share your life with me...a love which has given me new life, a new goal and a new approach to heaven.

Telegram
WESTERN UNION 1945 APR 2 PM 6 24 .TA84 TWA291 31 GOVT=WASHINGTON DC 2 753P [MRS EVELYN HONTS- 141 VINE ST RENO NEV-] THE SECRETARY OF WAR DESIRES TO EXPRESS HIS DEEP REGRET THAT YOUR HUSBAND 1LT HONTS GEORGE W WAS KILLED IN ACTION IN GERMANY 25 MAR 45 CONFIRMING LETTER FOLLOWS= A JULIO THE ADJUTANT GENERAL

Épilogue
My heart, my mind, my soul is yours—Love me—Love me—I adore you—Love me, too. My best to everyone... Must run now, my sweet—Gotta run now baby.. Love, George.

UPCOMING EVENTS

- **Saturday, October 24, 2015:**
  University and Chamber Choirs, Jonathan Talberg and Olga Spriggs, directors 8:00pm Daniel Recital Hall Free $10/7

- **Saturday, November 7, 2015 @ 8:00pm & Sunday, November 8, 2015 @ 4:00pm:**
  Opera Masterpieces, David Anglin, director Daniel Recital Hall $10/7

- **Friday, November 20, 2015:**
  Pacific Standard Time and Jazz & Tonic, Christine Guter and Loren Battley, directors 8:00pm Daniel Recital Hall $10/7

- **Saturday, November 21, 2015:**
  Opera Scenes, Brian Farrell, director 8:00pm Daniel Recital Hall $10/7

- **Saturday, December 5, 2015 @ 4:00pm + 8:00pm & Sunday, December 6, 2015 @ 4:00pm:**
  Winter Festival Concert, Jonathan Talberg, Olga Spriggs, Christine Guter, Stacy Oh and Regan MacNay, conductors First Congregational Church of Long Beach, Tickets $25/15/8
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