



ERIN WAGNER | Mezzo-Soprano

REPRESENTED BY
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TO COME BACK

Returning to Gustav Mahler's Rückert Lieder in the context of the world we live in today has brought so much clarity and solace to me and has reaffirmed the importance of community, love, and understanding of self. Reimagining Mahler's iconic score for chamber ensemble, Shawn Chang has unearthed his own understanding of each of these songs in a way that stays true to Mahler and Rückert while rejuvenating the sound world and emotional depth of this piece. Rückert Lieder guides us through the experiences and emotions which make us human: love, longing, joy, hopelessness, and relinquishment.

Dominick Argento's Pulitzer Prize winning cycle "From the Diary of Virginia Woolf" explores Woolf's life through her diary entries, spanning 22 years from her first entry to her last. Woolf's views of the world around her often thwart her as she desperately tries to avoid introspection; looking within herself provokes unsettling thoughts which threaten her happiness and livelihood.

Her first entry in 1919 teems with excitement and hope for all of the possibilities her diary could hold. "Anxiety" crashes in as panic and confusion invade her mind, opening up questions that seem to have no answers. "Fancy", the only entry that is unedited by Argento, reads nearly like an outline for a future novel and marvels at the creative freedom she feels. "Hardy's Funeral" harkens to a funeral in which Woolf sarcastically questions the frivolity of the ceremony and yet she is somehow drawn into thoughts of her own mortality and the emptiness she feels. "Rome" begins taking in the music and surroundings of Rome, however she soon witnesses the deep class divisions present in the city. She expresses deep empathy for the women clothed in worn out black clothing traversing the same plaza as those clothed in expensive coats. "War" depicts World War II as an all consuming and unbeatable presence in Woolf's mind, the piano replicates the sounds of weapons firing off as Woolf spirals, ultimately deciding that neither she nor the world will exist a year from now. "Parents" catches Woolf reflecting on the beauty of her parents' relationship in that it was never unclear, she goes past the point of reflection into brooding and immediately tries to pull herself out.

"Last Entry", written mere weeks before her death, depicts Woolf as she desperately tries to avoid letting her thoughts overwhelm her. She attempts to occupy herself, she attempts to be observant and present, and yet her attempts fail and she eventually gives in to introspection letting it consume her. Argento infuses the last entry with themes from previous entries to convey her memories and emotions persisting despite her efforts, finally bringing back the music from the first entry as Woolf fades away.



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GUSTAV MAHLER

Rückert Lieder (arranged by Shawn Chang)

- I. Ich atmet' einen linden Duft
- II. Liebste du um Schönheit
- III. Blicke mir nicht in die Lieder
- IV. Ich bin der Welt abhanden gekommen
- V. Um Mitternacht

DOMINICK ARGENTO

From the Diary of Virginia Woolf

- I. The Diary (April, 1919)
- II. Anxiety (October, 1920)
- III. Fancy (February, 1927)
- IV. Hardy's Funeral (January, 1928)
- V. Rome (May, 1935)
- VI. War (June, 1940)
- VII. Parents (December, 1940)
- VIII. Last Entry (March, 1941)