Saturday, January 14, 2012, 8pm  
Zellerbach Hall

**Susan Graham, mezzo-soprano**  
**Malcolm Martineau, piano**

**PROGRAM**

- **Henry Purcell (1659–1695)**  
The Blessed Virgin’s Expostulation  
(Tell Me, Some Pitying Angel), Z. 196

- **Hector Berlioz (1803–1869)**  
La Mort d’Ophélie

**Six Songs on Texts from Goethe’s Wilhelm Meister**

- **Franz Schubert (1797–1828)**  
Heiss mich nicht reden (Mignon II), D. 877, No. 2

- **Robert Schumann (1810–1856)**  
So lasst mich scheinen, Op. 98a, No. 9

- **Franz Liszt (1811–1886)**  
Kennen du das Land, wo die Zitronen blühn

- **Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky (1840–1893)**  
Nyet, toloko tot, kto snal, Op. 6, No. 6

- **Henri Duparc (1848–1933)**  
Romance de Mignon, Op. 2, No. 3

- **Hugo Wolf (1860–1903)**  
Kennen du das Land, wo die Zitronen blühn

**INTERMISSION**

- **Joseph Horovitz (b. 1926)**  
Lady Macbeth

- **Francis Poulenc (1899–1963)**  
Fiancailles pour rire

  - I. La dame d’André
  - II. Dans l’herbe
  - III. Il vole
  - IV. Mon cadavre est doux comme un gant
  - V. Violon
  - VI. Fleurs

**More Songs about “Ladies,” to be announced from stage**

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sovereign power of an art which overleapt barriers and which, so far from excluding contrast of genres, positively revealed in it.” The initial impact of Shakespeare on Berlioz is even more extraordinary because he did not understand a word of English in 1827 (he took a night class in 1828 and became a proficient reader), and was familiar with the text of the English-language presentations only in translation. “The power of the acting, especially that of Juliet herself, the rapid flow of the scenes, the play of expression and voice and gesture,” he wrote, “possessed me with the ideas and passions of the original as the words of my pale and garbled translation could never have done.” With their rich and varied emotions, nobility of language and heightened expression, the dramas of Shakespeare were an integral part of the Romantic sensibility.

Berlioz returned to the works of Shakespeare for inspiration and subject matter throughout his career: concert overtures inspired by *The Tempest* (1830) and *King Lear* (1831); the monumental “dramatic symphony” *Romeo and Juliet* for vocal soloists, chorus and orchestra (1839); a song evoking The Death of Ophelia (1842); a Funeral March for the Last Scene of “Hamlet” (1848); and the opéra-comique Beatrice and Benedict, based on Much Ado About Nothing (1862, his last composition). Berlioz composed *La Mort d’Ophélie* for mezzo-soprano and piano in May 1842 on a French paraphrase of Queen Gertrude’s speech in *Hamlet* that begins “There is a willow grows aslant a brook” by his friend Ernest Legouvé, who was close enough to the composer that he had loaned him sufficient money four years before to put aside his taxing duties as a music critic long enough to finish the opera *Benvenuto Cellini*. Six years later Berlioz orchestrated the piece and arranged the vocal part for women’s chorus, and included it as the second movement of his triptych *Tristia* (“Sorrow”), where it is framed by a *Méditation Religieuse* on a text by Louise Belloc and the *Funeral March for the Last Scene of Hamlet*.

In his gentle, aquatically undulant setting of *La Mort d’Ophélie*, Berlioz captured both the poignancy and the manner of the death of Ophelia, deprived of her reason by her doomed love for Prince Hamlet and the death of her father at Hamlet’s hand: Ophelia “fell in the weeping brook” while gathering “fantastic garlands” along the “glassy stream,” the Queen recounts. “Her clothes spread wide, And mermaid-like a while they bore her up. Which time she chanted snatches of old lauds As one incapable of her own distress... But long it could not be Till that her garments, heavy with their drink, Pulled the poor wretch from her melodious lay To muddy death.”

Six Songs on Texts from Goethe’s *Wilhelm Meister*

Franz Schubert (1797–1828)
Robert Schumann (1810–1856)
Franz Liszt (1811–1886)
Pyotr Il’yich Tchaikovsky (1840–1893)
Henri Duparc (1848–1933)
Hugo Wolf (1860–1903)

Goethe’s well-known novel of 1796, *Wilhelm Meister*, tells of the plight of Mignon, a young woman stolen by Gypsies from her Italian home when she was a child. During the Gypsies’ wanderings in Germany, Mignon meets Lothario, a nobleman searching across the Continent for his abducted daughter, and Wilhelm Meister, a student who buys her freedom from the Gypsies. Mignon overcomes her jealousy of Wilhelm’s love for the actress Philine, and wins him for herself by the story’s end, which also shows her reconciliation with Lothario, who turns out to be her father. In January 1826, Franz Schubert made four settings of passages from *Wilhelm Meister*, including Mignon’s poignant song about her mysterious past, *Heis’ mich nicht reden, heis’ mich Schweigen* (“Don’t ask me to speak; ask me to be silent,” D. 877, No. 2), which Schubert had set as an independent song (D. 726) five years before.

In 1849, the centenary of Goethe’s birth, Robert Schumann made settings of nine passages from his novel as *Lieder und Gesänge aus Wilhelm Meister*, Op. 98a. The text for the last song of the set—*So lässt mich scheinen, bis ich werde* (“Let me seem to be an angel until I become one”—comes from near the end of the book, when Mignon, dressed as an angel, is chosen to distribute Christmas presents to a group of children. When one of the children asks her if she is really an angel, Mignon, ill and near death, sings Goethe’s touching lyric.

In 1841, Franz Liszt leased an isolated isollet in the Rhine called Nonnenwerth, south of Bonn, as a retreat from the rigors of touring. The following year at Nonnenwerth, he set Mignon’s Lied from *Wilhelm Meister—Kennst du das Land?* (“Do you know the land?”)—which had already been used by Beethoven and Schubert and which would inspire Schumann, Wolf, Tchaikovsky and others to wrap it with music in later years. The deeply expressive song captures perfectly the bittersweet beauty of Goethe’s words.

Pyotr Il’yich Tchaikovsky composed *None But the Lonely Heart* in November and December 1869, immediately after the first version of *Romeo and Juliet* was completed, as the last of the Six Romances, Op. 6, his earliest published set of songs. The text is a Russian adaptation by Lev Mey of *Nur wer die Sehnsucht kennt*, Mignon’s song from Goethe’s *Wilhelm Meister* about the agony of love in separation, a well-known poem of which Beethoven attempted no fewer than four settings and Schubert, six. *None But the Lonely Heart* was introduced in Moscow on March 26, 1870, by the contralto Elizaveta Lavrovskaia, a faculty colleague of the composer at the Moscow Conservatory, at a chamber concert that Tchaikovsky staged of his works to promote his growing reputation. The piece gained an immediate popularity, and has remained his best-loved song.

Troubled in spirit and in health and sufficiently self-critical to destroy much of what he composed, Henri Duparc left a tiny musical legacy to posterity: two tone poems (*Léonore* and *Aux étouffes*), a suite of waltzes for orchestra, a half-dozen pieces for piano, a cello sonata, one vocal duet, a motet for three voices, a few arrangements of organ works by Bach and Franck, and sixteen songs. He is remembered almost entirely for his handful of songs, but what songs they are—exquisite, fluid, precisely inflected musical wrappings of voluptrously beautiful verse that count among the greatest contributions to the French vocal repertory. In 1868, Duparc published his setting of Mignon’s song of longing for her homeland—*Kennst du das Land?*, rendered into French by Victor Wilder as *Le connais-tu ce radieux pays* (“Do You Know That Radiant Land?”)—but later withdrew the *Romance de Mignon* and two other songs from the Op. 2 set. They survived, however, and were re-issued after his death.

Hugo Wolf’s career was marked by periods of intense creativity separated by bouts of despondency: between February and September 1888, he set 53 verses by Eduard Mörike; a book of 20 songs to Joseph Eichendorff’s poems followed before the end of October; and Goethe’s writings provided the texts for 50 more songs by February 1889. Among the dozens of songs that Goethe’s poetry inspired from Wolf were settings of four of Mignon’s lyrics in December 1888, the last of which is his own treatment of *Kennst du das Land*.

Joseph Horovitz (b. 1926)

Lady Macbeth, A Scena for Mezzo-Soprano and Piano


In his inimitable edition (the eighth, 1992) of *Baker’s Biographical Dictionary of Musicians*, Nicolas Slonimsky, the self-styled “legendary Russian-born American musicologist of manifold endeavors,” characterized the music of Joseph Horovitz as “modernistic without solemnity, appealing without crudity and often cachinnogenic [provoking laughter],” Horovitz was born in Vienna in 1926, studied music as a boy, and escaped the Nazi Anschluss in Austria when the family moved to England in 1938. He earned bachelor’s and master’s degrees in music and modern languages at New College, Oxford and then undertook advanced studies in composition with Gordon Jacob at the Royal College of Music in London and privately with Nadia
that produced pieces he deemed best suited to the male voice, Poulenc cast about for some verses more appropriate for women singers. One day at the home of the Countess Marie-Blanche de Polignac—daughter of the celebrated couturier Jeanne Lanvin, talented singer (who participated in Nadia Boulanger's first-ever recording of music by Monteverdi which helped to rekindle interest in that early–17th-century master’s nearly forgotten genius), and hostess of one of Paris' most elegant musical salons—Poulenc discovered a book of poems by Louise de Vilmorin. “What joy for me when I read Aux Officiers de la Garde Blanche,” Poulenc recalled. “The poems of Louise de Vilmorin provided material for truly feminine songs. I was enchanted by that. I found in her poetry a kind of sensitive audacity, of wantonness, of avidity which could be extended into song. Since I like to group several songs together, I begged Louise for more poems. During the summer of 1936, she wrote for me Le garçon de Liège and Eau-de-vie! Au-delà! on a visit to the country home of Marie-Blanche at Kerbastic.” Poulenc set these Trois poèmes de Louise de Vilmorin the following year, and then paid tribute to their author: “Few people move to rekindle interest in that early–17th-century masterpiece of general universal mingling of whimsy and sadness, Poulenc wrote that the last two songs also carried a special association for him in regard to their author: “I composed Violon with a Hungarian restaurant, on the Champs-Elysées, in my mind, for which Louise’s husband, Count Palfy, had engaged a Gypsy orchestra from Budapest. I have tried to suggest the local color only distantly, because the hand that wrote the poem is French. The composer similarly transposes this rhythm of the Danube into our own atmosphere.” Of Fleurs, which provides the touching close for the cycle, Poulenc said, “I believe that there is in this song a melancholy so irredeemable that the listener will assign to it, after the first bars, its role of cadence. It must be sung humbly, its lyricism coming from within.”

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Ms. Graham is a leader in the international Christoph Gluck opera revival. She has sung the title role of Iphigénie en Tauride in a new production staged for her by the Metropolitan Opera and at the Royal Opera House, Covent Garden. At home and abroad, Susan Graham has sung leading roles from the 17th to 20th centuries in the great opera houses of the world, including Milan’s La Scala, the Royal Opera House, Covent Garden, Vienna State Opera, Opéra National de Paris, Dresden’s Semperoper and the Salzburg Festival, and she has appeared with many of the world’s leading conductors and orchestras.

Ms. Graham created the part of Sister Helen Prejean in Jake Heggie’s Dead Man Walking for San Francisco Opera, and created leading roles in two Metropolitan Opera world premieres: An American Tragedy by Tobias Picker and The Great Gatsby by John Harbison.

Three seasons ago, Ms. Graham expanded her distinguished discography with two recordings: Un frisson français with pianist Malcolm Martineau, a survey of a century of French song; and her interpretation of Berlioz’s Romance in B flat, recorded with the Berlin Philharmonic and Sir Simon Rattle and released by EMI Classics. Earlier solo CDs include Poèmes de l’amour, with Ravel’s Shéhérazade and Chausson’s Poème de l’amour et de la mer. Her disc of Charles Ives songs with Pierre-Laurent Aimard won a Grammy, and she received both a Grammy nomination and France’s Maria Callas award for her Dido in Purcell’s Dido and Aeneas.

Ms. Graham is represented by IMG Artists.