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Zoë Pollock

November 16, 2015

Senior Honors Vocal Recital

by

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2015

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An abstract of  
a thesis submitted to the Faculty of Emory College of Arts and Sciences  
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2015

Abstract

Senior Honors Vocal Recital

By Zoë Pollock

On November 8<sup>th</sup>, 2015 I performed in a 60-minute vocal recital accompanied by Dr. Elena Cholakova on piano at the Schwartz Center for Performing Arts.

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## Acknowledgements

I would like to thank the Emory Friends of Music for their grant supporting my honors recital.

I would also like to thank Eduardo Cordero for accompanying me on Flute. Working with him was a pleasure and an honor.

I would like to extend a very special thank you to my voice teacher and Bradley Howard and my coach and accompanist Elena Cholakova. I am endlessly grateful to be able to call both of these wonderful musicians my mentors and my friends. Their extraordinary inspiration and expert guidance these past four years will have a lifelong impact and are appreciated with the most heartfelt gratitude and abiding affection.

I also want to extend the warmest thanks to my committee members, Dr. Kevin Karnes and Prof. José Luis Boigues who made my honors recital possible through their encouragement, flexibility, and support.

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EMORY

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# MUSIC AT EMORY CONCERT SERIES

2015–2016 SEASON

**ZOË POLLOCK, SOPRANO**

**SENIOR HONORS RECITAL**

(in partial fulfillment for the degree of the  
bachelor of arts in music with honors)

ELENA CHOLAKOVA, PIANO

EDUARDO CORDERO, FLUTE

**SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 8, 2015, 5:00 P.M.**

This recital is supported in part by the Friends of Music.

**EMERSON CONCERT HALL  
SCHWARTZ CENTER FOR PERFORMING ARTS**



## PROGRAM

"Nel dolce dell'oblio" from <i>Pensieri notturni de Filli</i>	George Friedrich Handel (1685–1759)
<i>Les nuits d'été</i> <i>Villanelle</i> <i>Absence</i> <i>Le spectre de la rose</i>	Hector Berlioz (1803–1869)
<i>Goethe-Lieder</i> <i>Blumengruß</i> <i>Gleich und Gleich</i> <i>Die Spröde</i> <i>Die Bekehrte</i> <i>Frühling übers Jahr</i>	Hugo Wolf (1860–1903)
"Quando men vo" from <i>La Bohème</i>	Giacomo Puccini (1858–1924)

## —INTERMISSION—

<i>Canciones clásicas españolas</i> <i>Al amor</i> <i>Chiquitita la novia</i> <i>Con amores la mi madre</i> <i>Cabello más sutil</i>	Fernando Obradors (1897–1945)
<i>Hermit Songs</i> II. <i>Church Bell at Night</i> V. <i>The Crucifixion</i> VII. <i>Promiscuity</i> VIII. <i>The Monk and His Cat</i> X. <i>The Desire for Hermitage</i>	Samuel Barber (1910–1981)
"Steal Me, Sweet Thief" from <i>The Old Maid and the Thief</i>	Gian-Carlo Menotti (1911–2007)

Please join us for a reception in the Chace Upper Lobby following the recital.

## PROGRAM NOTES

### “Nel dolce dell’oblio”

The cantata *Pensieri notturni de Filli* (Phyllis's nightly thoughts), alternately titled *Nel dolce dell’oblio*, was one of twenty-eight secular cantatas composed by George Friedrich Handel when he lived and worked in Italy from 1706 to 1710. This cantata was originally intended for soprano, treble recorder, and basso continuo, and was Handel's only composition intended for this combination. The jovial piece in F and C major tells the tale of young Phyllis daydreaming of her beloved while she attempts to fall asleep.

### Selections from Berlioz's *Les nuits d'été*

One of Hector Berlioz's most famous works, *Les nuits d'été* is a setting of six poems by Théophile Gautier, a neighbor and friend. Berlioz completed the song cycle in 1841 for voice and piano, and by 1856 had composed full orchestra scores for all six songs. The cycle in its entirety follows a progression of love from innocent infatuation to loss and, finally, renewal. The selections performed today are representative of these themes. The first piece, *Villanelle*, expresses young love in its truest sense. Two lovers travel through a forest, observing the wildlife and discussing their love in the spring. The second piece, *Absence*, which appears fourth in Berlioz's original cycle, deals with loss as the poet begs for love's return. The final piece of the set, *Le spectre de la rose*, is traditionally the second piece of *Les nuits d'été*, but this aria-like composition closes the selected set in a dramatic and uplifting fashion. The narrator in this song is a young rose plucked by its love and worn on his lapel at a ball. In the piece, the dead rose's spirit vows to haunt the man at his bedside, not in a vengeful manner, but rather because her love for him is so strong.

### Goethe-Lieder

Austrian composer Hugo Wolf is best known for his expressive late-nineteenth century lieder. His thoughtful contemplation of each poem's meaning emerges clearly in his setting of poems by Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, a late-eighteenth century writer and philosopher. Goethe's poetry inspired dozens of Classical and Romantic composers including Mozart, Beethoven, Berlioz, and Liszt. Three of the songs in this set feature Goethe's poems about nature: *Blumengruß*, *Gleich und Gleich*, and *Frühling übers Jahr*. Wolf's delicate and simple settings of these three poems mimic the feelings of love and the joy of spring. The two middle pieces, *Die Spröde* and *Die Bekehrte*, form a subset in that they follow similar poetic frameworks despite their distinct tempos and keys. *Die Spröde* tells the story of a young shepherdess who, while skipping and singing through the forest, ignores the advances of several young men. Despite their offers of sheep and ribbons, she continues to coyly skip and sing. The second piece, *Die Bekehrte*, follows a similar melodic pattern, but in a minor key. This time, the narrator is a young woman who accepted the advances of Damon and is now haunted by the old tune of his flute. The joy of the shepherdess is replaced by slow, somber repentance.

## **“Quando men vo” from *La Bohème***

One of the most frequently performed operas worldwide, *La Bohème* by Giacomo Puccini has enchanted audiences for well over a century. Set in Paris around 1830, the opera follows six bohemians, Marcello, Schaunard, Colline, Rodolfo, Mimi, and Musetta, as they navigate love, poverty, heartbreak, and death. In the aria “Quando men vo,” Musetta, formerly Marcello’s sweetheart, arrives at the Café Momus where the other five friends dine. At the opening of the second act, she enters the café with her rich and elderly admirer, Alcindoro. Musetta sings the risqué aria in an attempt to reclaim Marcello’s attention while simultaneously alienating Alcindoro. As she basks in the attention of the onlookers, Musetta sings of her many admirers and the thrill of being so desired when she merely walks down the street.

## ***Canciones clásicas españolas***

Fernando Obradors was a self-taught twentieth-century Spanish composer, pianist, and conductor. He is most famous for his *Canciones clásicas españolas*, four volumes of arrangements of classic Spanish poetry composed between 1921 and 1941. These settings capture the spirit of Catalan folk song and the traditional Spanish guitar in both the voice and piano. The selected songs in this set all center around love. The first and last pieces, *Al amor* and *De cabello más sutil*, are love songs for the narrator’s sweetheart. *Chiquitita la novia* expresses the narrator’s hope for marriage and excitement to be a “tiny bride.” The song *Con amores, la mi madre*, takes on a more melancholy tone. In this piece the narrator addresses her mother as she reminisces about a past love.

## ***Hermit Songs***

One of the most influential American composers of the twentieth century, Samuel Barber explored the various meanings of Irish texts written by “pious” monks between the eighth and thirteenth centuries in his song cycle *Hermit Songs*. Fascinated by Irish culture, Barber combined Romantic lyricism with a contemporary harmonic language to highlight the straightforward, often droll, poems found in the margins of ancient manuscripts. Though these texts spanned centuries, they share monastic origins and express similar observations and desires. The first selection, and the second of the full cycle, *Church Bell at Night*, is one monk’s preference for the sound of the church bell over the company of a “light and foolish woman.” *The Crucifixion* explores the more earthly implications of the death of Christ, the mother’s feeling of loss at the death of her son. Seventh in the full set, *Promiscuity* follows as a short spurt of mischievous gossip about a man named Edan. *The Monk and his Cat*, the most popular of this Barber opus, is set in a compound ternary form, highlighting the playful nature of the poem written by a monk to his cat, Pangur. In the accompaniment, Barber illustrates the cat slinking up and down the keys of the piano. The final song of the cycle, *The Desire for Hermitage*, is an appropriate closing piece for Barber, as he was a notoriously private person, perfectly content “to be all alone.”

## **“Steal Me, Sweet Thief” from *The Old Maid and the Thief***

A life-long friend of Samuel Barber, Gian-Carlo Menotti was a twentieth-century Italian composer and librettist. His one-act opera *The Old Maid and the Thief* tells the story of Miss Todd, an elderly unmarried woman who lives with her housemaid Laetitia. The two women meet Bob, an escaped convict, and are enamored of his good looks. Laetitia, afraid of becoming an old maid like her employer, quickly believes herself in love with Bob and convinces Miss Todd to let him stay with them. In the aria “Steal Me, Sweet Thief” Laetitia expresses her love for the convict, asking him to steal her away before time withers away her beauty.

### **PERFORMER BIOGRAPHIES**

**Zoë Pollock**, soprano, is a senior at Emory University majoring in vocal performance and Spanish. She has studied voice with Bradley Howard for four years and performs with Emory’s Mastersingers and Concert Choir ensembles. Pollock is a member of the Emory Honor Council and the Alpha Phi Omega community service fraternity. Last summer, she served as volunteer counselor at Camp Kesem, a college-student-run summer camp for children whose parents have or had cancer. She also has served as a hospice volunteer. Her undergraduate education has included summers studying in Salamanca, Spain, and Paris, and a semester at King’s College in London.

Pollock extends her warmest thanks to friends and family who have made her honors recital possible through their endless kindness and enormously generous support. She offers a special thank you to her voice teacher and mentor, Bradley Howard, and her coach and accompanist, Elena Cholakova. Their extraordinary inspiration and expert guidance these past four years will have a lifelong impact and are appreciated with the most heartfelt gratitude and abiding affection.

**Bradley Howard**, director of vocal studies at Emory, enjoys a career performing classical and modern vocal works, solo recitals, and operatic roles. Howard has developed a repertoire of some of opera’s most classic roles, including Mozart’s Tamino in *The Magic Flute* and Ferrando in *Così fan tutte*, Puccini’s Rodolfo in *La Bohème*, Leoncavallo’s Beppe in *I Pagliacci*, Britten’s Peter Quint in *The Turn of the Screw*, and the title roles of *Albert Herring* and *Candide*. Howard’s recent concert engagements include Beethoven’s *Ninth Symphony*, Weill’s *Seven Deadly Sins*, and Haydn’s *Creation*. His solo recitals have been heard across the United States and most recently at Emory. Howard teaches Performance Techniques and directs the annual opera and musical theater workshop production, StageWorks at Emory.

Bulgarian pianist **Elena Cholakova** has appeared as a soloist and chamber musician in Eastern and Western Europe, South America, and the United States. She has given solo recitals at the Liszt Academy and the United States Embassy in Budapest, Hungary; in Bulgaria Hall and at the Sofia Conservatory in Sofia, Bulgaria; in Aosta Concert Hall in Aosta, Italy; at Fellbach Musicschule in Fellbach, Germany; in Fazioli Salon in Chicago; and more. She has collaborated with members of the New York Philharmonic and Atlanta Symphony. Her performances have been broadcasted live on NPR, Atlanta's WABE, Chicago's classical music radio station WFMT, and Bulgarian TV and radio stations.

Cholakova has an MMus and a DMus from Northwestern University. She joined the Emory faculty in 2010.

Flutist **Eduardo L. Cordero** enjoys a successful career as a dynamic and engaging musician. He is working towards a master of music degree in orchestral performance at Georgia State University where he studies flute with Sarah Kruser Ambrose. As an undergraduate student at Emory, Cordero studied under Carl D. Hall of the Atlanta Symphony Orchestra and worked with award-winning orchestra conductor Richard Prior.

As a performer, Cordero enjoys exploring different styles of flute music, ranging from baroque to modern. He is an active freelance artist in the Atlanta area, and he regularly appears with the Latin music ensembles *Serenata* and *Orquesta Taboga*, as well as with the Gwinnett Symphony Jazz Orchestra. As an instructor, he participates with the world-renowned "El Sistema de Orquestas" of Venezuela as a woodwind coordinator, while he also maintains a studio of aspiring young flutists. Cordero also participates with the Atlanta Music Project, a nonprofit organization that provides local, intensive, tuition-free musical education for underserved youth.



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**EVENT AND PROGRAM INFORMATION** Available online at [arts.emory.edu](http://arts.emory.edu).

**BACK COVER PHOTOGRAPHER CREDITS: Top (left to right):** *Barenaked Voices, Emory Photo/Video; Emory Concert Choir: courtesy of Emory Concert Choir; Vega String Quartet, Dorn Brothers.*

**Bottom (left to right):** *Gary Motley, Bill Head; Christopher O'Riley, Wendy Lynch; audience view from stage, courtesy of Emory Concert Choir; Emory University Symphony Orchestra, Tony Benner.*