***Try Me, Good King***

***Last Words of the Wives of Henry VIII***

**Katherine of Aragon (1485-1536)**

**Queen from June 1509 to May 1533**

*Katherine of Aragon, formerly Queen of England, to King Henry VIII, 7 January 1536*

My most dear Lord, King, and Husband,

The hour of my death now drawing on, the tender love I owe you forces me…to commend myself unto you and to put you in remembrance of the health and welfare of your soul. …You have cast me into many calamities and yourself into many troubles. For my part, I pardon you everything, and I wish to devoutly pray God that He will pardon you also. For the rest, I commend unto you our daughter, Mary, beseeching you to be a good father unto her. ...Lastly, I make this vow, that my eyes desire you above all things…

**Anne Boleyn (1501/1507-1536)**

**Queen from May 1533 to May 1536**

*Letter from Anne Boleyn, Queen of England, to Henry VIII, 6 May 1536;*

*Excerpts from two letters from Henry VIII to Anne Boleyn;*

*Anne Boleyn's speech at her execution, 19 May 1536*

Try me, good king, …and let me have a lawful trial, and let not my...enemies sit as my accusers and judges. ...Let me receive an open trial for my truth shall fear no open shame. ...Never a prince had a wife more loyal in all duty, ...in all true affection, than you have ever found in Anne Bulen ...You have chosen me from low estate to be your wife and companion. ...Do you not remember the words of your own hand? "My own darling…I would you were in my arms for think it long since I kissed you. My mistress and friend…" Try me good king. ...If ever I have found favor in your sight ‒if ever the name of Anne Bulen has been pleasing to your ears‒ then let me obtain this request...and my innocence shall be…known and…cleared.

Good Christian People, I come hither to die, …and by the law I am judged to die. ... I pray God save the King. I hear the executioner's good, and my neck is so little…

**Jane Seymour (c.1508-1537)**

**Queen from May 1536 to October 1537**

*Jane Seymour, Queen of England, to the Council, 12 October 1537;*

*"Tudor rose" (Anonymous)*

Right trusty and Well-Beloved, we greet you well...for as much as be the inestimable goodness...of Almighty God, we be delivered...of a prince,...

I love the rose both red and white.

To hear of them is my delight!

Joyed may we be,

Our prince to see,

And roses three!

**Anne of Cleves (1515-1557)**

**Queen from January 1540 to July 1540**

*Anne of Cleves, Queen of England, to Henry VIII, 1 July 1540*

I have been informed…by certain lords...of the doubts and questions which have been...found in our marriage. …It may please your majesty to know that, though this case...be most hard…and sorrowful…I have and do accept [the clergy] for my judges. So now, ...the clergy hath…given their sentence, I...approve....I neither can nor will repute myself for your grace's wife yet it will please your highness to take me for your sister, for which I most humbly thank you. Your majesty's most humble sister, Anne, daughter of Cleaves

**Katherine Howard (1521-1542)**

**Queen from July 1540 to November 1541**

*Recorded at her execution by an unknown Spaniard, 13 February 1542*

God have mercy on my soul. Good People, I beg you pray for me. By the journey upon which I am bound, brothers, I have not wronged the King. But it is true that long before the King took me, I loved [Thomas] Culpeper. …I wish to God I had done as Culpeper wished me, for at the time the King wanted...me, [Culpeper] urged me to say that I was pledged to him. If I had done as he wished me I should not die this death, nor would he… God have mercy on my soul. Good People, I beg you pray for me. …I die a Queen, but I would rather die the wife of Culpeper.

 When preparing this set for my recital I spoke to my friend Justin, a History major who graciously shared his Tudor

knowledge with me. One of the first things he asked me was “Where is Katherine Paar?!” Libby Larsen provides the answer

to this in her own program note:

*Henry's sixth wife, Katherine Parr, outlived him and brought some domestic and spiritual peace into Henry's*

*immediate family. Although her written devotions are numerous, her role in the story of the Henry's wives is that of*

*peaceful catalyst. In these songs I chose to focus on the intimate crises of the heart that affected Henry's first five*

*wives. In a sense, this group of songs is a monodrama of anguish and power.*

As I was listening to these Queens’ stories, and tales about who they are, the people around them, and how they

ended up as they did, the music for each woman made more sense. Katherine of Aragon is the most regal of all of Henry’s

wives, she is poised and graceful and consistently so. She was also married to Henry the longest—24 years. Her music

reflects this constancy, as throughout her piece the pulse is kept in the left hand of the piano part in repeating 16th F notes.

Anne Boleyn was a fiery woman. She knew who she was, and what she was worth, and she was not afraid to speak her mind.

This is evident right away in her music as she makes her first demand before the piano sounds a note. There is a declamatory

feel throughout her entire piece, even facing her execution. Jane Seymour was the daughter of a Knight, and very

conservative. She was a true homemaker and died very soon after giving birth to Edward, the prince. Her music reflects her

role as a new expectant mother, her music having the feel of a lullaby with its gentle lilt. Anne of Cleves is making the best

out of the situation that she has found herself in. Coming to a new place from her home in Germany, and being rejected by

the King, she doesn’t fight against any of this and gladly accepts her fate to live as the king’s legal sister. Her vocal line is

very matter-of-fact and there is even a cheerful affect to her music, as she gets to spend the rest of her life in a castle,

enjoying a certain degree of independence. Katherine Howard was very young when she married Henry VII. She grew up

away from her parents and was left to her own devices and those of the other young people she was growing up with. She did not spend her childhood preparing to be Queen, so when she was thrust into that position she used her youth and beauty to make the best of her situation without really understanding the consequences. She had no one to watch out for her and you can hear her fear in her piece. There is an urgency in the piano part that fuels the desperation heard in her vocal line.

***An die ferne Geliebte***

***Alois Jeitteles (1794-1858)***

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| **Auf dem Hügel sitz ich spähend**Auf dem Hügel sitz ich spähendIn das blaue Nebelland,Nach den fernen Triften sehend,Wo ich dich, Geliebte, fand.Weit bin ich von dir geschieden,Trennend liegen Berg und TalZwischen uns und unserm Frieden,Unserm Glück und unsrer Qual.Ach, den Blick kannst du nicht sehen,Der zu dir so glühend eilt,Und die Seufzer, sie verwehenIn dem Raume, der uns teilt.Will denn nichts mehr zu dir dringen,Nichts der Liebe Bote sein?Singen will ich, Lieder singen,Die dir klagen meine Pein!Denn vor Liebesklang entweichetJeder Raum und jede Zeit,Und ein liebend Herz erreichetWas ein liebend Herz geweiht! | **I sit on the hill, gazing**I sit on the hill, gazingInto the misty blue countryside,Towards the distant meadowsWhere, my love, I first found you.Now I’m far away from you,Mountain and valley interveneBetween us and our peace,Our happiness and our pain.Ah, you cannot see the fiery gazeThat wings its way towards you,And my sighs are lostIn the space that comes between us.Will nothing ever reach you again?Will nothing be love’s messenger?I shall sing, sing songsThat speak to you of my distress!For sounds of singing put to flightAll space and all time;And a loving heart is reachedBy what a loving heart has hallowed! |
| **Wo die Berge so blau**Wo die Berge so blauAus dem nebligen GrauSchauen herein,Wo die Sonne verglüht,Wo die Wolke umzieht,Möchte ich sein!Dort im ruhigen TalSchweigen Schmerzen und Qual.Wo im GesteinStill die Primel dort sinnt,Weht so leise der Wind,Möchte ich sein!Hin zum sinnigen WaldDrängt mich Liebesgewalt,Innere Pein.Ach, mich zög’s nicht von hier,Könnt ich, Traute, bei dirEwiglich sein! | **Where the blue mountains**Where the blue mountainsFrom the misty greyLook out towards me,Where the sun’s glow fades,Where the clouds scud by –There would I be!There, in the peaceful valley,Pain and torment cease.Where among the rocksThe primrose meditates in silence,And the wind blows so softly –There would I be!I am driven to the musing woodBy the power of love,Inner pain.Ah, nothing could tempt me from here,If I were able, my love,To be with you eternally! |
| **Leichte Segler in den Höhen**Leichte Segler in den Höhen,Und du, Bächlein klein und schmal,Könnt mein Liebchen ihr erspähen,Grüßt sie mir viel tausendmal.Seht ihr, Wolken, sie dann gehenSinnend in dem stillen Tal,Laßt mein Bild vor ihr entstehenIn dem luft’gen Himmelssaal.Wird sie an den Büschen stehen,Die nun herbstlich falb und kahl.Klagt ihr, wie mir ist geschehen,Klagt ihr, Vöglein, meine Qual.Stille Weste, bringt im WehenHin zu meiner HerzenswahlMeine Seufzer, die vergehenWie der Sonne letzter Strahl.Flüstr’ ihr zu mein Liebesflehen,Laß sie, Bächlein klein und schmal,Treu in deinen Wogen sehenMeine Tränen ohne Zahl! | **Light clouds sailing on high,**Light clouds sailing on high,And you, narrow little brook,If you catch sight of my love,Greet her a thousand times.If, clouds, you see her walkingThoughtful in the silent valley,Let my image loom before herIn the airy vaults of heaven.If she be standing by the bushesAutumn has turned fallow and bare,Pour out to her my fate,Pour out, you birds, my torment.Soft west winds, waft my sighsTo her my heart has chosen –Sighs that fade awayLike the sun’s last ray.Whisper to her my entreaties,Let her, narrow little brook,Truly see in your ripplesMy never-ending tears! |
| **Diese Wolken in den Höhen**Diese Wolken in den Höhen,Dieser Vöglein muntrer Zug,Werden dich, o Huldin, sehen.Nehmt mich mit im leichten Flug!Diese Weste werden spielenScherzend dir um Wang’ und Brust,In den seidnen Locken wühlen. –Teilt ich mit euch diese Lust!Hin zu dir von jenen HügelnEmsig dieses Bächlein eilt.Wird ihr Bild sich in dir spiegeln,Fließ zurück dann unverweilt! | **These clouds on high**These clouds on high,This cheerful flight of birdsWill see you, O gracious one.Take me lightly winging too!These west winds will playfullyBlow about your cheeks and breast,Will ruffle your silken tresses. –Would I might share that joy!This brooklet hastens eagerlyTo you from those hills.If she’s reflected in you,Flows directly back to me! |
| **Es kehret der Maien, Es blühet die Au**Es kehret der Maien, Es blühet die Au,Die Lüfte, sie wehen So milde, so lau,Geschwätzig die Bäche nun rinnen.Die Schwalbe, die kehret Zum wirtlichen Dach,Sie baut sich so emsig Ihr bräutlich Gemach,Die Liebe soll wohnen da drinnen.Sie bringt sich geschäftig Von kreuz und von QuerManch weicheres Stück Zu dem Brautbett hieher,Manch wärmendes Stück für die Kleinen.Nun wohnen die Gatten Beisammen so treu,Was Winter geschieden, Verband nun der Mai,Was liebet, das weiß er zu einen.Es kehret der Maien, Es blühet die Au.Die Lüfte, sie wehen So milde, so lau;Nur ich kann nicht ziehen von hinnen.Wenn alles, was liebet, Der Frühling vereint,Nur unserer Liebe Kein Frühling erscheint,Und Tränen sind all ihr Gewinnen. | **May returns, The meadow blooms.**May returns, The meadow blooms.The breezes blow So gentle, so mild,The babbling brooks flow again,The swallow returns To its rooftop home,And eagerly builds Her bridal chamber,Where love shall dwell.She busily brings From every directionMany soft scraps For the bridal bed,Many warm scraps for her young.Now the pair lives Faithfully together,What winter parted, May has joined,For May can unite all who love.May returns, The meadow blooms.The breezes blow So gentle, so mild;I alone cannot move on.When spring unites All lovers,Our love alone Knows no spring,And tears are its only gain. |
| **Nimm sie hin denn, diese Lieder**Nimm sie hin denn, diese Lieder,Die ich dir, Geliebte, sang,Singe sie dann abends wiederZu der Laute süßem Klang!Wenn das Dämmrungsrot dann ziehetNach dem stillen blauen See,Und sein letzter Strahl verglühetHinter jener Bergeshöh;Und du singst, was ich gesungen,Was mir aus der vollen BrustOhne Kunstgepräng erklungen,Nur der Sehnsucht sich bewußt:Dann vor diesen Liedern weichetWas geschieden uns so weit,Und ein liebend Herz erreichetWas ein liebend Herz geweiht! | **Accept, then, these songs**Accept, then, these songsI sang for you, beloved;Sing them again at eveningTo the lute’s sweet sound!As the red light of evening drawsTowards the calm blue lake,And its last rays fadeBehind those mountain heights;And you sing what I sangFrom a full heartWith no display of art,Aware only of longing:Then, at these songs,The distance that parted us shall recede,And a loving heart be reachedBy what a loving heart has hallowed! |

 For those who do not know, I am deaf in my left ear. About six years ago I received a Bone Anchored Hearing Aid

that changed my life. This hearing aid has essentially made my hearing loss journey the opposite of Beethoven’s. Whereas he

gradually lost his hearing over the course of his life, I gained my hearing. I feel that my own experience with hearing loss

puts me in a unique position as a musician who has the opportunity to interpret Beethoven’s compositions. There is a part of

his life that I have a deeper understanding and connection to than most musicians. I have loved *An die ferne Geliebte* since I

heard it, and though it is usually performed by a tenor, I think Beethoven would forgive me for being a soprano. Beethoven

was never married. There were different women in his life that he loved, but none of those relationships were long-lasting.

There was one love letter found after Beethoven died, and no one knows for sure who it was truly written for, but she is

known today as the immortal beloved. I bring her up because it is speculated that Beethoven wrote *An die ferne Geliebte* for

her, though this is not confirmed. That being said, the text for this song cycle was written for Beethoven by Alois Jeitteles

who was not only a poet but also a medical student. In preparing this piece, I picked up Maynard Solomon’s Beethoven

Biography to see what he wrote about this song cycle. There was one line that I read and must share with you all, found on

pages 389-390:

*It seems safe to say that [An die ferne Geliebte] bids farewell to his marriage project, to romantic pretense, to heroic grandiosity, to youth itself. It is a work that accepts loss without piteous outcry, for it preserves intact the memory of the past and refuses to acknowledge the finality of bereavement.*

***Liederkreis Op. 39***

***Joseph von Eichendorff (1788-1857)***

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| **In der Fremde**Aus der Heimat hinter den Blitzen rotDa kommen die Wolken her,Aber Vater und Mutter sind lange tot,Es kennt mich dort keiner mehr.Wie bald, ach wie bald kommt die stille Zeit,Da ruhe ich auch, und über mirRauscht die schöne Waldeinsamkeit,Und keiner kennt mich mehr hier. | **In a Foreign Land**From my homeland, beyond the red lightning,The clouds come drifting in,But father and mother have long been dead,Now no one knows me there.How soon, ah! how soon till that quiet timeWhen I too shall restBeneath the sweet murmur of lonely woods,Forgotten here as well |
| **Intermezzo**Dein Bildnis wunderseligHab’ ich im Herzensgrund,Das sieht so frisch und fröhlichMich an zu jeder Stund’.Mein Herz still in sich singetEin altes, schönes Lied,Das in die Luft sich schwingetUnd zu dir eilig zieht | **Intermezzo**Dein Bildnis wunderseligHab’ ich im Herzensgrund,Das sieht so frisch und fröhlichMich an zu jeder Stund’.Mein Herz still in sich singetEin altes, schönes Lied,Das in die Luft sich schwingetUnd zu dir eilig zieht |
| **Waldesgespräch**Es ist schon spät, es ist schon kalt,Was reit’st du einsam durch den Wald?Der Wald ist lang, du bist allein,Du schöne Braut! Ich führ’ dich heim!„Groß ist der Männer Trug und List,Vor Schmerz mein Herz gebrochen ist,Wohl irrt das Waldhorn her und hin,O flieh! Du weißt nicht, wer ich bin.“So reich geschmückt ist Roß und Weib,So wunderschön der junge Leib,Jetzt kenn’ ich dich—Gott steh’ mir bei!Du bist die Hexe Loreley.„Du kennst mich wohl—von hohem SteinSchaut still mein Schloß tief in den Rhein.Es ist schon spät, es ist schon kalt,Kommst nimmermehr aus diesem Wald!“ | **A Forest Dialogue**It is already late, already cold,Why ride lonely through the forest?The forest is long, you are alone,You lovely bride! I’ll lead you home!‘Great is the deceit and cunning of men,My heart is broken with grief,The hunting horn echoes here and there,O flee! You do not know who I am.’So richly adorned are steed and lady,So wondrous fair her youthful form,Now I know you—may God protect me!You are the enchantress Lorelei.‘You know me well—from its towering rockMy castle looks silently into the Rhine.It is already late, already cold,You shall never leave this forest again!’ |
| **Die Stille**Es weiß und rät es doch Keiner,Wie mir so wohl ist, so wohl!Ach, wüßt’ es nur Einer, nur Einer,Kein Mensch es sonst wissen soll!So still ist’s nicht draußen im Schnee,So stumm und verschwiegen sindDie Sterne nicht in der Höh’,Als meine Gedanken sind.Ich wünscht’, ich wär’ ein VögleinUnd zöge über das Meer,Wohl über das Meer und weiter,Bis daß ich im Himmel wär’! | **Silence**No one knows and no one can guessHow happy I am, how happy!If only one, just one person knew,No one else ever should!The snow outside is not so silent,Nor are the stars on highSo still and taciturnAs my own thoughts.I wish I were a little bird,And could fly across the sea,Across the sea and further,Until I were in heaven! |
| **Mondnacht**Es war, als hätt’ der Himmel,Die Erde still geküßt,Daß sie im BlütenschimmerVon ihm nun träumen müßt’.Die Luft ging durch die Felder,Die Ähren wogten sacht,Es rauschten leis die Wälder,So sternklar war die Nacht.Und meine Seele spannteWeit ihre Flügel aus,Flog durch die stillen Lande,Als flöge sie nach Haus. | **Moonlit Night**It was as though HeavenHad softly kissed the Earth,So that she in a gleam of blossomHad only to dream of him.The breeze passed through the fields,The corn swayed gently to and fro,The forests murmured softly,The night was so clear with stars.And my soul spreadHer wings out wide,Flew across the silent land,As though flying home. |
| **Schöne Fremde**Es rauschen die Wipfel und schauern,Als machten zu dieser Stund’Um die halb versunkenen MauernDie alten Götter die Rund’.Hier hinter den MyrtenbäumenIn heimlich dämmernder Pracht,Was sprichst du wirr, wie in Träumen,Zu mir, phantastische Nacht?Es funkeln auf mich alle SterneMit glühendem Liebesblick,Es redet trunken die FerneWie von künftigem großen Glück! | **A beautiful foreign land**The tree-tops rustle and shudderAs if at this very hourThe ancient godsWere pacing these half-sunken walls.Here beyond the myrtle treesIn secret twilit splendour,What are you saying, fantastic night,Obscurely, as in a dream?The glittering stars gaze down on me,Fierily and full of love,The distant horizon speaks with raptureOf some great happiness to come! |
| **Auf einer Burg**Eingeschlafen auf der LauerOben ist der alte Ritter;Drüben gehen Regenschauer,Und der Wald rauscht durch das Gitter.Eingewachsen Bart und Haare,Und versteinert Brust und Krause,Sitzt er viele hundert JahreOben in der stillen Klause.Draußen ist es still und friedlich,Alle sind in’s Tal gezogen,Waldesvögel einsam singenIn den leeren Fensterbogen.Eine Hochzeit fährt da untenAuf dem Rhein im Sonnenscheine,Musikanten spielen munter,Und die schöne Braut, die weinet. | **In a Castle**Up there at his look-outThe old knight has fallen asleep;Rain-storms pass overhead,And the wood stirs through the portcullis.Beard and hair matted together,Ruff and breast turned to stone,For centuries he’s sat up thereIn his silent cell.Outside it’s quiet and peaceful,All have gone down to the valley,Forest birds sing lonely songsIn the empty window-arches.Down there on the sunlit RhineA wedding-party’s sailing by,Musicians strike up merrily,And the lovely bride—weeps. |
| **In der Fremde**Ich hör’ die Bächlein rauschenIm Walde her und hin,Im Walde, in dem RauschenIch weiß nicht, wo ich bin.Die Nachtigallen schlagenHier in der Einsamkeit,Als wollten sie was sagenVon der alten, schönen Zeit.Die Mondesschimmer fliegen,Als säh’ ich unter mirDas Schloß im Tale liegen,Und ist doch so weit von hier!Als müßte in dem GartenVoll Rosen weiß und rot,Meine Liebste auf mich warten,Und ist doch so lange tot. | **In a Foreign Land**I hear the brooklets murmuringThrough the forest, here and there,In the forest, in the murmuringI do not know where I am.Nightingales are singingHere in the solitude,As though they wished to tellOf lovely days now past.The moonlight flickers,As though I saw below meThe castle in the valley,Yet it lies so far from here!As though in the garden,Full of roses, white and red,My love were waiting for me,Yet she died so long ago. |
| **Wehmut**Ich kann wohl manchmal singen,Als ob ich fröhlich sei,Doch heimlich Tränen dringen,Da wird das Herz mir frei.Es lassen Nachtigallen,Spielt draußen Frühlingsluft,Der Sehnsucht Lied erschallenAus ihres Kerkers Gruft.Da lauschen alle Herzen,Und alles ist erfreut,Doch keiner fühlt die Schmerzen,Im Lied das tiefe Leid. | **Melancholy**True, I can sometimes singAs though I were content;But secretly tears well up,And my heart is set free.Nightingales, when spring breezesPlay outside, singTheir song of longingFrom their dungeon cell.Then all hearts listenAnd everyone rejoices,Yet no one feels the pain,The deep sorrow in the song. |
| **Zwielicht**Dämmrung will die Flügel spreiten,Schaurig rühren sich die Bäume,Wolken ziehn wie schwere Träume—Was will dieses Graun bedeuten?Hast ein Reh du lieb vor andern,Laß es nicht alleine grasen,Jäger ziehn im Wald und blasen,Stimmen hin und wieder wandern.Hast du einen Freund hienieden,Trau ihm nicht zu dieser Stunde,Freundlich wohl mit Aug’ und Munde,Sinnt er Krieg im tück’schen Frieden.Was heut gehet müde unter,Hebt sich morgen neugeboren.Manches geht in Nacht verloren—Hüte dich, sei wach und munter! | **Twilight**Dusk is about to spread its wings,The trees now shudder and stir,Clouds drift by like oppressive dreams—What can this dusk and dread imply?If you have a fawn you favour,Do not let her graze alone,Hunters sound their horns through the forest,Voices wander to and fro.If here on earth you have a friend,Do not trust him at this hour,Though his eyes and lips be smiling,In treacherous peace he’s scheming war.That which wearily sets today,Will rise tomorrow, newly born.Much can go lost in the night—Be wary, watchful, on your guard! |
| **Im Walde**Es zog eine Hochzeit den Berg entlang,Ich hörte die Vögel schlagen,Da blitzten viel Reiter, das Waldhorn klang,Das war ein lustiges Jagen!Und eh’ ich’s gedacht, war alles verhallt,Die Nacht bedecket die Runde;Nur von den Bergen noch rauschet der WaldUnd mich schauert’s im Herzensgrund**e.** | **In the Forest**A wedding procession wound over the mountain,I heard the warbling of birds,Riders flashed by, hunting horns peeled,That was a merry chase!And before I knew, all had faded,Darkness covers the land,Only the forest sighs from the mountain,And deep in my heart I quiver with fear. |
| **Frühlingsnacht**Über'm Garten durch die LüfteHört’ ich Wandervögel zieh’n,Das bedeutet Frühlingsdüfte,Unten fängt’s schon an zu blühn.Jauchzen möcht’ ich, möchte weinen,Ist mir’s doch, als könnt’s nicht sein!Alte Wunder wieder scheinenMit dem Mondesglanz herein.Und der Mond, die Sterne sagen’s,Und im Traume rauscht’s der HainUnd die Nachtigallen schlagen’s:Sie ist Deine, sie ist Dein | **Spring Night**Over the garden, through the airI heard birds of passage fly,A sign that spring is in the air,Flowers already bloom below.I could shout for joy, could weep,For it seems to me it cannot be!All the old wonders come flooding back,Gleaming in the moonlight.And the moon and stars say it,And the dreaming forest whispers it,And the nightingales sing it:‘She is yours, is yours!’ |

 When I think of Romantic German Lied, the names that immediately come to mind are Schubert and Schumann.

When I was thinking about what I should sing for this recital, *Liederkreis Op. 39* popped into my head. I have sung selections

from this cycle before with Jordyn Burton for her postgraduate certificate recital in November 2020. Jordyn and I became the

best of friends because of that experience and I knew I wanted her to be one of my collaborators for this recital, so it was the

perfect opportunity to program the entire cycle. Robert Schumann’s “Year of Song” is 1840, the year he composed most of

his songs and song cycles, including this one which was written in May of that year. This had a lot to do with what was going

on in his personal life at the time. He loved Clara Wieck, but her father strongly objected to the match. Schumann did not let

that stop him and later in September of 1840, Clara’s father begrudgingly allowed them to be married. Clara Schumann was a

very talented composer of her own accord as well. In a letter to Clara, Robert Schumann says the following about this work:

*The Eichendorff**cycle is my most romantic music ever, with much of you in it, dearest Clara.*

German song texts: Translation © Richard Stokes, author of: The Book of Lieder (Faber); The Complete Songs of Hugo Wolf (Faber), provided via Oxford International Song Festival (www.oxfordsong.org).