

SSUSA NEWSLETTER

SCHUBERT SOCIETY OF THE USA

Vol. 4, No. 3, 2006

Dear Members and Friends,

This is the final newsletter number for 2006 and time to announce that starting in 2007 the newsletter will be available in an electronic version. Members will be given the option to choose to receive the electronic PDF version by e-mail or the hard copy (print) version via postal mail. You can read, download and print the online version of the newsletter using the Adobe Acrobat Reader which can be installed free by going to www.adobe.com/products/acrobat/readstep2.html -- an easy step-by-step process. The two versions are identical newsletters. By going to an electronic newsletter we will be able to save substantially on costs for print production and postage. These savings can be applied to more and better benefits for the members and to support programs such as music in the schools. With the electronic version we can anticipate achieving the goal of quarterly publication and put time-sensitive news items out faster. The new 2007 Membership Form provides a place where you can indicate your preference.

In our last newsletter, I noted that we had a new member, Thomas Meglioranza, whose interview appears in this issue. He told me in an e-mail that he found us by an online search. I discovered before this issue went to production that he had listed the Schubert Society as a music link on his blog back in July 2004, long before we knew of him. Links to our web site are a wonderful way to provide wider exposure to the SSUSA and for our members and readers to learn about sites of interest to Schubertians. Please feel free to write with links suggestions to our webmaster, Charles Moss, at webmaster@schubertsocietyusa.org.

I am happy to receive submissions from members and readers of short articles and essays, book and CD reviews and names of potential subjects for an interview to be published in the newsletter. The interviewee can be anyone with a significant Schubert-related story that will be of interest to our members and readers. We hope to be able to add graphics to the newsletter. Suggestions, comments and letters to the editor are quite welcome.

On August 3, the great German-born soprano Elisabeth Schwarzkopf died at age 90 in Austria. Her 1952 Schubert Lieder album with pianist Edwin Fischer has long been a collector's item although the singer herself was not terribly happy with it. I'd like to hear from collectors of Schubertiana of all kinds about their collections and special favorites.

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ADVISORY BOARD NEWS

L. MICHAEL GRIFFEL has an article “Der Tod und die Forelle: New Thoughts on Schubert’s Quintet” in the 40th anniversary issue of *Current Musicology* (nos.79 & 80, 2005) published by Columbia University.

CRAWFORD HOWIE presented his paper “Bruckner in England - a Foreign Composer in a Strange Land” at the Fifth Music in Nineteenth-Century Britain Conference, Nottingham, July 7-10, 2005.

SUSAN KAGAN is teaching an undergraduate course “Schubert and Brahms” at Hunter College of CUNY for the Fall 2006 semester. Her Raptus Records CD of the two piano sonatas (Op.1) of Ferdinand Ries continues to win plaudits in reviews. The CD is available online at <www.musicalrarities.com>.

R. LARRY TODD gave the keynote address “On Constructions of Mendelssohn and Britishness” at the Fifth Music in Nineteenth-Century Britain Conference, Nottingham, July 7-10, 2005.

MEMBERSHIP NEWS

THOMAS MEGLIORANZA had a fine turnout of local fans and other New York visitors on July 24 for his Summer Stars recital at Pace University’s Schimmel Center for the Arts under the sponsorship of the River to River Festival. His program began with six Schubert Lieder followed by songs of Debussy, Babbitt, Kernis, Berberian, Fauré, Bermel and Blitzstein.

GEORGIA S. WRIGHT was the speaker at the October 14-15 symposium for the Metropolitan Museum of Art exhibition “Set in Stone: The Face in Medieval Sculpture” and led a tour of the exhibit on October 20. The sculptures are a grouping of heads that were violently broken away from their bodies in centuries past, and the exhibition and symposium revealed the detective work involved in “reconnecting” them by using nuclear technology to determine the provenance of the heads. She is co-director of the Limestone Sculpture Provenance Project which created and used the nuclear dating techniques and is a contributor to the exhibition catalogue.

NEWS ITEMS

Unfortunately, we received the program of the 2006 *Internationales Schubert Festival Steyr* too late for our earlier newsletter. The program’s events went through the month of May; at this writing the 2006 festival is history. Readers interested in the 2007 festival are urged to get on the festival’s mailing list at <www.schubertfestivalsteyr.at> or by writing to <info@schubertfestivalsteyr.at>. In addition to its festival, Steyr has a very important historical connection to Schubert’s visits to the city where many of his friends and supporters welcomed him. Schubert composed several works in Steyr and the city is justly proud of its connection to its Viennese visitor.

As we are all aware, 2006 is Mozart’s 250th birth anniversary. Schubert joined the birthday party with his Lieder at *Aston Magna at Bard’s* July 14 festival concert “Mozart, Schubert, and Goethe: A Lyrical Feast of Song and Sonata.” The summer festival, in Great Barrington, Massachusetts, is affiliated with the Aston Magna Academy, founded in 1978 under the directorship of SSUSA Advisory Board member **RAYMOND ERICKSON**; see <www.astonmagna.org/astonmfa.html>.

“Take the manuscript of the Schubert impromptu for piano, among the items I examined at the Morgan. For all the tales of Schubert’s grinding life of economic hardship and despair, his notation is confident and thoroughly professional, though filled with handy shortcuts, like symbols to indicate that some riff or accompaniment figure is to be repeated.” So says **Anthony Tommasini** in his June 25 New York Times article, “*Composers’ Autograph Manuscripts at the Morgan Museum.*” Reviewing the newly renovated Morgan Library and its two-story security vault in which the music autographs, among other precious holdings, are stored, Tommasini also tells how tenor Ian

Bostridge spent hours studying Schubert's manuscript of *Winterreise* in preparation for his recording the song cycle and also that of *Schwanengesang*. Three Schubert autographs, *Winterreise*, *Schwanengesang* and the uncompleted String Quartet in D minor (D810) were planned to be on public display at the Morgan Library from April 29 to September 3 as part of the Library's program of rotating the display of their precious holdings. You can go directly to the Morgan Library's catalogue at <http://corsair.morganlibrary.org/>.

Of some interest to Schubertians is the discovery by this editor of *December Songs* by American composer-lyricist **Maury Yeston**, originally commissioned by Carnegie Hall for its centenary season and introduced by the American cabaret artist Andrea Marcovicci at Carnegie's Weill Recital Hall on April 16, 1991. Yeston's ten-song cycle was inspired by Schubert's *Winterreise*, of which Yeston wrote in 1991: "Winterreise is the greatest song cycle ever written. It has a contemporaneity that never goes away, and what I hope to do is to create a modern equivalent, to paraphrase the ethos of *Winterreise*, with its ambivalence, its major/minor duality, and its natural images that are metaphors of the character's internal state." In Schubert's *Winterreise*, a lonely young man wanders through a winter-blasted forest while in Yeston's *December Songs* a modern young woman walks alone in New York's snowy Central Park. The original piano-vocal version was recorded the month following the premiere. In 2002, *December Songs* was reconceived as a ballet by Lynn Taylor Corbett and presented at The Carolina Ballet. *December Songs* received premieres in 2004 in the United Kingdom, Germany and France. Following its introduction in Paris by the French singer Isabelle Georges, a new orchestrated version by Larry Hochman of *December Songs* was recorded and released with dual tracks in French and English. There is also a German version of Yeston's work. He has been nominated for and won numerous Tonys, Drama Desks and Olivier (London) awards for his Broadway music and lyrics. Yeston, who has a Ph.D. from Yale University where he was Associate Professor and Director of Undergraduate Music Studies for eight years, continues to compose classical music.

Thanks to reader Arnold Simmel, we have news of the **Amateur Chamber Music Players**, which they describe as a "non-profit association that facilitates informal playing and singing by people of all ages and nationalities, beginners to professionals. Our 5,400 members come from every corner of the earth and share one interest: the love of making music with others." See www.acmp.net/.

New York Times music critic **Matthew Gurewitsch** wrote a fascinating and informative review of Hyperion Records' most recent Schubert-related CDs in "Schubert's Contemporaries Get Their Due in New Collection" (June 4, 2006). There is high praise for Graham Johnson, the keen musical mind who created the 37-CD set for Hyperion, completed in 1999, of all of Schubert's Lieder as well as the author of the Lieder Edition's scholarly liner notes. Johnson is also the creator of the recently released 3-CD anthology, revised from the Lieder edition, of eighty-one songs by forty composers from Banck to Zumsteeg. As with the Lieder Edition, Johnson is the piano accompanist for all the songs as well as the commentator in the accompanying notes.

On June 22, The New York Times announced the death of American conductor and composer **Howard Shanet** who should be remembered by Schubertians for commissioning Chester Kallman to write an English libretto of Schubert's opera *Die Zwillingbrüder* (The Twin Brothers).

Looking for a way to spend those short-of-daylight January afternoons (and evenings) in Manhattan? On January 8, 2007, the **Jupiter Symphony Chamber Players** will offer a 2pm and 7:30pm performance of Schubert's Octet in F Major for String and Wind Instruments (D803) on its program for winds. This is one of Schubert's more cheerful compositions, truly a divertimento to brighten a winter day. And since the Octet was composed in February (1824), these two season-appropriate January performances will raise the wattage at Good Shepherd Church, the concert venue. For more information, go to www.jupitersymphony.com.

PUBLICATIONS AND PAPERS

SUSAN YOUENS's paper "Songs Known and Unknown," presented at the American Pianists Association, Fellowships Awards, April 28, 2006 provided pointed food for thought. Noting the "density of nuance" inherent to

poetry, Youens introduced her main theme with the observation that this poetic nuance informs, sometimes even creates, the musical structure and finer details of song. Noting that the Lied is an “amalgam of poetry and music,” Youens made a two-fold call to pianists and performers of the Lied. “Be adventurous,” was her request when it comes to choosing concert repertoire. There are literally thousands of unsung songs. True, there are some that may best remain forgotten, but, as Youens pointed out, there are still many gems yet lying in wait of rediscovery. Case in point: Franz Lachner’s setting “Wasserfahrt” from *Sängerfahrt*, Op. 33. The psychological-musical intensity of this Lied, as Youens described it, provoked a breath-taking expression of an “exploration of subjectivity brought to the brink of dissolution.” Youens’s second plea: context, context, context; knowledge of all contextual aspects informs the performance and is essential to the interpretation of the Lied. With context in mind, the ineffectuality of performing Wolf’s “Gebet” as a devotional Lied in a church setting becomes apparent as it clashes violently with the poet’s (Eduard Mörike) relationship with religion. Still chuckling over Youens’s frequent humorous quips, attendees left the presentation with much to ponder over before their next performance.

Lisa Hooper

Tina Frühauf, “Schubert and the Draisine: An Odd Couple in the *Archiv des menschlichen Unsinnns*,” *Music in Art: International Journal for Music Iconography*, vol. XXX/1-2, 2005.

Scott Messing, *Schubert in the European Imagination: Volume 1: The Romantic and Victorian Eras* (Boydell & Brewer, 2006).

Thanks to the July 2006 issue of *The Schubertian*, published by sister society Schubert Institute UK, we read that Fernando Pérez Cárceles has translated Schubert’s complete Lieder into Spanish, and just published by [Ediciones Hiperión](#) to wide praise in the Spanish media. While it is not known how long the translation project took until it reached completion, it is a monumental effort that deserves wider recognition. Information about the three-volume work is on Pérez Cárceles’s blog at <www.losliederdeschubert.blogspot.com>.

INTERVIEW: THOMAS MEGLIORANZA

By Lisa Hooper, April 29, 2006.

The Indiana Historical Society recently hosted the American Pianists Association Fellowship Awards conference “Classical Music, Modern Genius... Discovery” (April 23–29, 2006). Nearing the end of a week of performances and discussion, the penultimate competition took place Friday evening in the Frank and Katrina Basile Theatre of the Indiana Historical Society building in downtown Indianapolis. In a novel approach to performance competitions, the audience was invited to a Lieder recital, with each of the competition finalists accompanying Thomas Meglioranza and Mary Ann Hart. Before introducing Mr. Meglioranza, I must pause to recognize first the wonderful performances of each of the finalists and in particular the lovely rendition of Schubert’s “Die Götter Griechenlands” (D. 677) by Ms. Hart.

Mr. Meglioranza has sung to rave reviews noting his versatility and wide vocal range. In a 2002 concert review, Darrell Rosenbluth wrote “His sound is full, rich, and easily projected. The top range has that ineffable beauty associated with Irish tenors, the low reaches have remarkable core and pitch. Happily, the mid-range waxes glorious, serving him without fail.” In my own, less poetic words, hearing Mr. Meglioranza sing Friday evening was like chocolate mousse for the ears (I hope he will forgive the metaphor). It was his self-proclaimed obsession with Schubert and witty words on his website that brought him to our attention and led to the following interview, which ranged over topics as various as Mr. Meglioranza’s repertoire, from Bach to today’s youngest composers. We began by exploring Mr. Meglioranza’s introduction to Schubert:

LH - Tell us how you came to Schubert’s Lieder.

TM - For as long as I can remember, I’ve always sung. As a child I constantly sang along with the radio, and although I remember thinking that I sounded pretty good, neither of my parents had a musical background, so they probably didn’t think much of it, and they weren’t the type of parents you see today who would have immediately

enrolled me in some accelerated music program for infants or something like that. My last year of high school, I joined the choir, sang in the school musical, formed a little band with some friends. Singing was a fun pastime and a good way to socialize. At Grinnell College I continued singing in a choir and had my first voice lessons. I was told that I had a nice voice, but didn't really think much of it. The summer after freshman year, in order to follow my singing girlfriend at the time, I applied and was accepted to a summer stock musical theater program on Cape Cod (College Light Opera Company). There, I met lots of singers my age from Juilliard and Eastman, and I thought that even though I came from a non-music school in the middle of Iowa, I sounded pretty good in comparison. Sophomore year, I started reading through songs with our college choir director. He would assign me songs, give me the score and a recording (since I couldn't read music well enough to learn the song off the page), and we'd read through lots and lots of repertoire. Some of the songs interested me more than others. I was particularly attracted to the recordings of Fischer-Dieskau, and it was his 1972 *Winterreise* recording that made me realize that music could be so beautiful and express such profound things. I was obsessed with it. I memorized it. I was 19 years old, I could barely read music, I didn't speak a word of German, but somehow it was clear to me that I wanted to be a Lieder singer.

Although at the time I begged my parents to let me transfer to a conservatory, Grinnell ended up being the ideal place for me because there was nobody there to tell me that my dream of becoming a Lieder singer was insane. I found nothing but encouragement and support there. I sang at the music department's student recitals several times a month. I gave big recitals of my own my junior and senior years, hacking my way through *Winterreise*, *Dichterliebe*, etc. Up until that point in my life, I had been a pretty indifferent student, but once I had discovered Lieder I finally had a purpose. I spent endless hours in the library absorbing as much song repertoire as I could because I was convinced that since I wasn't at a music school and had so little training, I was hopelessly far behind.

LH - So, it seems from earlier conversation that you started out with relatively little practical training. Is context (historical or personal) something that you're coming to slowly; do you use it to inform your performances?

TM - Yes. I could barely read music until I got through my first year of graduate school. I guess because when I started singing Schubert I had practically zero knowledge of the songs' historical or musical context, my approach to both choosing and performing repertoire has always been a very personal one: Do I like the music? Does the poem speak to me? Would this group of songs hold my interest? I am a very easily bored audience member, so I feel like I have to come up with something that I myself would enjoy sitting through before I can feel comfortable asking an audience to sit through it.

LH - So unless you could create that...

TM - If I could specialize in Lieder--if I thought that calling myself a "Lieder specialist" would cause my calendar to fill up with Lieder recitals, I'd do it in a second, but it's just not realistic. You have to diversify.

LH - [Friday evening's performance began with Mr. Meglioranza singing the Lieder of Beethoven, Wolf, Schumann, and Berg]. How do you get from Beethoven to Schumann to Berg all in a single performance?

TM - From a vocal point of view, I don't consciously have a different approach for each composer. The poems Berg set are very eerie and dark compared to the sunnier Beethoven, so of course that, plus the music, suggests a different vocal color. But of course there are eerie Beethoven songs out there and sunnier Berg songs.

For *An die ferne Geliebte*, one of the things I've been trying to keep in mind lately is that this piece comes pretty early in the history of the Lieder tradition. I often hear performances that sound too sophisticated, or somehow 'aware' of the great repertoire that was to come. When I sing the Beethoven, I try to imagine that I've never heard a song by Berg or Wolf, or even Schubert, so that I can allow myself to experience Beethoven's music in a way that's fresh and surprising to me, as it was to the people who heard it for the first time.

For the Berg, since I'm not an expert on this sort of expressionist poetry, nor do I fully grasp all the twelve-tone things going on in the music, I try to be as straightforward with the song as possible. Sing the correct pitches and rhythms and carefully observe all the many dynamic and expressive markings, and most of the work is done for you

by the composer. There are many recordings of this repertoire out there--even by great artists--who pour on the expressivity and play up the bizarreness of this music, but who are a complete mess when it comes to singing what is actually on the page. I guess they figure that the music is so weird, nobody will be able to tell if they're singing wrong notes. It's only relatively recently that performers' abilities have been catching up to the demands of the music, and it's revealing a world of gorgeous and subtle harmonies and composers' extremely nuanced responses to the poetry, and hopefully rescuing this music from the blanket perception that it's all just a freak show of random noise.

LH - In your blog you note that you perform a lot of pieces by contemporary composers. I imagine that must pose a whole new set of difficulties as opposed to Berg and Schubert.

TM – The main difference with the new music is that I spend a lot more time just learning the notes. Most Schubert songs you can sight read because the difficulty is not necessarily in the pitches and rhythms; whereas with the modern stuff you just have to spend more time wood shedding. But once you get past that, you know, it's all just singing, and telling stories.

One thing about programming recitals that's often frustrating is that I'll get booked for a concert and then my manager will say, 'I spoke to the presenter and he says the audience is very conservative. So just do your Schubert, Beethoven and Debussy.' And other times my manager will say, 'OK, I spoke to the presenter and he told me the audience is very conservative so just do your English stuff.' And at other times they'll say, 'The audience is very conservative, just be sure to sing lots of opera arias.' What is conservative? Is the presenter projecting his own prejudices? And when you've gone to the trouble of coming up with a really great program, and you get a request to stick the "Toreador Song" or "Old Man River" in there somewhere, well that can be frustrating.

Once they're in their seats I'm confident that I can entertain an audience and make them glad they came, but until the day when I achieve the sort of name-recognition that will draw an audience no matter what I'm singing, I spend a lot of effort coming up with programs that look appealing in the publicity materials so that people will come in the first place. And that's tricky; because there are programs, like my "Schoenberg and his Disciples" cabaret concert from earlier this season, which sounds interesting to the music press and other well-versed music lovers, and is actually a highly entertaining and accessible evening no matter what your level of musical experience, but which would have very limited drawing power outside of the venue where I sang it (a museum for 20th century German and Austrian art). And there are things that, you know, might be very appealing to a general audience, like a varied program of well-known songs, ending with opera arias and show tunes, but that wouldn't be seen as very newsworthy by the music press, and, frankly, are of limited interest to me as well. Often I end up doing edgier, more interesting programs in New York City, and offering a more traditional program to take on the road. But that means learning a lot of extra music.

I'm particularly happy with my most recent program of "Italian Songs and Arias" because it's sort of a 'stealth' program. It has familiar names - Schubert, Fauré, Schumann, Rossini - and everybody has a clear idea of what Italian music is supposed to be. But the program goes to some really weird places. The three Ives songs on 15th century Italian poetry are hardly ever done because they're so bizarre. There are some very unusual and sardonic Busoni songs. I also perform Cathy Berberian's "Stripsody" which is basically six minutes of a cappella sound effects from comic strips, which at first I worried that people would boo or walk out, but so far people seem to get a huge kick out of. And I sing a set of very witty songs by the young American composer Derek Bermel (who studied in Italy) that the audiences seem to really love. If they knew beforehand that I would be singing so much unfamiliar music, they might have stayed away, but I think they enjoy it, and it leaves them more open to musically adventurous experiences in the future.

LH - You also made some really interesting comments about labels, which it seems you've managed to avoid rather successfully. I've made the general assumption that people come to a specialization because that's what they feel their voice is best suited to. So, I guess you just like to sing what you're interested in?

TM - When I first got out of grad school and started doing opera auditions, I was told that my voice was difficult to categorize. When I sang high, I sounded like a tenor. When I sang low, I sounded like a bass. I didn't have that even, monochromatic sound all through my range like a typical baritone. Listening obsessively to singers like Fischer-Dieskau, Souzay, Sanford Sylvan, etc., probably affected the way I thought a baritone should sound. And I was always more interested in song anyway, so I just gravitated away from opera and towards areas like song, Baroque music and new music where having an individual sound wasn't so much of an issue. Still, I try not to put myself out there as a specialist in any one thing because, at least in the states, there isn't enough of a demand in any of those individual areas to make a career out of it.

LH – Related to programming, one of the things that came up in conversation last night is that there are rarely any good Lieder recitals. It seems there are people who want to attend them and people who perhaps want to perform them but it seems like there's a disconnection between the two.

TM - Yes. In New York, the only people who seem able to do straight Lieder recitals are singers brought in from Europe, singing mainly Lieder's Greatest Hits. The local song scene seems very concerned with jazzing up the song recital, trying to make it more relevant and approachable. It's a very populist approach all around, which is fine, but I think there ought to be room somewhere for a more challenging audience experience.

LH - In regards to performance: In my imagination the Schubert Lieder were intended for smaller halls and smaller audiences, but what we had last night was in a rather large-sized hall. Do you have a preference for singing in large-sized halls ones like last night or smaller halls for Schubert?

TM - That hall was kind of on the larger side of my ideal. It was still nice. I like small halls, I like small audiences if the hall is small. If it's a big hall with a small audience then that looks a little disheartening from the stage. Smaller spaces allow for a much more intimate and detailed experience.

LH - How do you communicate Schubert? He's so complicated.

TM - Schubert is challenging to me because his songs are so great that I find it easy to fall into the trap of worshiping them rather than singing them. They contain so much inherent profundity beneath a beautiful and seemingly artless exterior that you can drive yourself crazy worrying about whether or not you have uncovered every last layer of meaning. When I prepare, I find it helpful to delve as deeply as I can into the poems and the music through analysis, research, etc. But then in performance I try to let that information recede into my subconscious, and just sing the songs with clarity and simplicity, trusting that the layers will take care of themselves. It's harder than it sounds, and I will probably always fall short of my ideal performance of any Schubert song, but that's why I never get tired of coming back to it.

LH - When Schubert composes, in a lot of his Lieder there are multiple characters, most obviously in 'Erlkönig.' Schubert gives us lots and lots of clues musically; as a performer how do you jump between all four characters: the narrator, Erlkönig, the father and son?

TM - For those sorts of songs, I try to avoid doing too much of a funny voice for each character. It's a delicate balance. If you do too much of a weird voice, then you remove the obligation from the listeners to use their imaginations. If you don't do enough, then the point of the song is lost. So I try to create the characters from the inside out, conjuring them very vividly in my mind and then I hope that whatever shows up externally when I'm singing ends up being more compelling and honest than if I had assigned each character a different funny voice.

LH - Do you think you would vary your performance of that song for a live audience as opposed to a recording? I particularly had in mind Fischer Dieskau's, one of his many recordings of that song, where he makes a very dramatic sounding difference.

TM - In the studio or in a live recording?

LH - Studio.

TM – Well, being in a studio instead of in front of a live audience might make you decide to make more extreme choices with vocal color because your audience can't see you.

LH - Do you have thoughts in particular on performance practice of the Schwanengesang songs?

TM - I haven't settled on a favorite way. The Rellstab and Heine songs do seem like two distinct groups, but apart from that, I like juggling the order around because different arrangements shed different light on the songs and create different dramatic arcs. I also find that Schwanengesang can be a convenient and practical programming choice because it can be split into at least two pieces. If a presenter doesn't want the whole thing, then just offer a section of it.

LH - [Given earlier comments relating to programming for presenters, audiences and critics]: So, when you do programming then it's for the commercial value of it? Or is that just wrong? I mean besides the enjoyment...

TM - Well, I can't ignore the commercial aspect of it because if I can't convince a presenter that an audience will come hear me sing a given program, then I will probably lose the booking. If I want to do a more adventurous program, then that often means I have to get the presenter excited about the program idea so that he or she will make an effort to promote the concert in an informed and passionate way, which is great when it happens.

Sometimes though, despite all this talk about interesting programming, I get tired of looking for clever ways to package and present these songs, which are already so great in and of themselves. I long to do single-composer programs with no clever theme or birth or death anniversary tie-in. Just a program of great songs. Period.

LH - Also in one of the posts on your blog you mentioned that it's so nice to finally be able to sing something in English. It's nice for you to be able to sing in a language that not only you are most accustomed to but also it's good for your audience because they can relate to it a little bit more easily perhaps. I was wondering if you have any thoughts on what that might mean for the Schubert Lieder.

TM - I probably wrote that when the pendulum was swinging back from having sung a lot of non-English stuff and it was just great to return to my mother tongue for a while. And now that I've been singing in English for the past few months, I'm feeling the opposite way; I'm ready to go back to German.

I've never tried performing Schubert in English, but a lot of old scores have these quaint rhyming English translations printed underneath the original German. They're usually very unintentionally funny.

I often speak from the stage in recitals and I'll talk about the songs in English, of course. I once had a presenter who, due to some technical difficulty, didn't print out the translations. So before every song I had to translate, or at least summarize, every poem. It was great in some ways because it broke down the wall of formality that a foreign language can erect between a singer and the audience, and the audience seemed extra engaged in the performance of the songs after I talked about each one. So I enjoyed it, but it wasn't an ideal approach. It made the recital about 50 percent longer, and going back and forth between speaking and singing all evening is very tiring.

LH - The whole concept of English music, or music being sung in English because it's easier for the audience to understand and relate to. But, does that mean that Jessica Simpson and Brittany Spears are great composers of the 21st century?

TM - Yes [sarcastically].

LH - ... unfortunately. U-2 might be more appropriate. There are some radio stations that play out of the mainstream pop music. It tends to be not only more musically challenging, but also more intellectual and politically aware than perhaps the expected pop music.

TM - That's encouraging. I think that's probably where, if Schubert had been born today, he may have gravitated towards. Because he was born at an ideal time for what he ended up doing.

Our time together proved that Mr. Meglioranza's modestly stated thoughts on music were as rich and varied as his singing. We look forward to future performances by Mr. Meglioranza (a complete schedule may be found at his official website: www.meglioranza.com) and a future recording. You can learn more of Mr. Meglioranza's thoughts at his blog page<tomness.blogspot.com>.

Lisa Hooper has a master's degree in musicology from the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign. Her MM thesis is "Schubert's Rellstab-Heine Settings of 1828: Narrative Approaches to Analysis." She presented her paper "Expressions of Power and Meaning in *Jacob et Rachel* by Jacquet de la Guerre," at the April 2006 Spring meeting of the American Musicological Society Midwest Chapter, and her article "Under the Influence: Schubert and Public Expectation" appeared in the *SSUSA Newsletter*, vol.4, no. 1 (2006). She presented a paper "Themes of Exile and Enlightenment in the Music and Public and Private Writings of Arnold Schoenberg, 1930-1945," at the Trinity College (Connecticut) Conference "Exile and Travel: Exploring Displacement, Crossing Boundaries, and the Traveler/Stranger in German Exile Arts and Writings 1933-1945," September 14-17, 2006.). In the fall of 2006 she will continue musical and library studies at Indiana University.

POETRY

From time to time we will publish poems and song lyrics of varying length about Schubert in the *SSUSA Newsletter*. The decision to add them to the newsletter arises from the editor's ongoing research on the subject of Franz Schubert in poetry and popular song.

UNFINISHED

The Symphony in C that is Unfinished
would, if completed, surely be diminished;
and so let thou and I remain like Schubert,
a work in progress, being Martin Bubered.
Gershon Hepner

Gershon Hepner is a physician, born in Germany in 1938, educated in England and living in Los Angeles. In addition to poetry, he is a scholar of the Hebrew Bible and has written a book due to be published in the fall of 2006, called *Legal Friction: Interplay Between Biblical Laws and Narratives*. He is collecting a selection of his biblical poems that he hopes to publish at the end of 2006.

WHY SCHUBERT IS PERHAPS AT LEAST AS GOOD AS BEETHOVEN

The music of Schubert with complex warmth is woven;
More so than Beethoven.
David Mitchell

David Mitchell is a young Englishman, born in 1988, who attended Colchester Royal Grammar School, studying English, French, Latin, and Music. He loves languages and playing the piano and cello.

EVERYTHING STOPS FOR TEA

On a web site dedicated to tea, the avid Schubertian will find the lyrics for *Everything Stops for Tea* from the 1935 British musical comedy film *Come Out of the Pantry*. One stanza is:

Now I know just why Franz Schubert
Didn't finish his unfinished symphony
He might have written more but the clock struck four
And everything stopped for tea.

The film is barely remembered (and deservedly so) only because one of the leading roles was played by Fay Wray who reached cinematic blonde immortality as the great love of the original *King Kong* (1933).