

Dido: Through Love and Loss

The graduate recital of

Dana Kephart, mezzo-soprano

Sunday, May 3rd, 2015
2:00pm

Pickman Hall
Longy School of Music of Bard College

Dido: Through Love and Loss

Dana Kephart, mezzo-soprano

With:

Yi-Li Chang, harpsichord and baroque violin

Menglin Gao, theorbo

Elijah Hopkin, tenor

Laurie Monahan, mezzo-soprano

Christien Beeuwkes, vielle

Thomas Bowers, harpsichord

Oliver Weston, baroque cello

Doug Freundlich, lute

David Hunt, viola da gamba

Weronika Balewski, baroque flute

Dido is a widowed queen who fled from Tyre after her husband's murder, and then founded Carthage.

Aeneas, a leader of the Trojans, lands in Carthage on his route to Italy, where he is to build a new city by divine charge. He and his men have fled Troy following defeat in a war with the Greeks.

Not only has Dido heard of Aeneas and his heroism; Cupid has struck Dido with love for Aeneas, to guarantee Aeneas the queen's protection.

Dido hesitates to give in to her love for Aeneas, because she made a vow to never remarry...

**Cuore che reprime alla lingua di manifestare il nome
della sua cara** (op. 3 no 1, 1651)

Barbara Strozzi (1619-1677)

Yi-Li Chang, harpsichord

Menglin Gao, theorbo

...but she is counseled to proceed, as a union with the Trojans would strengthen Carthage.

**Ochi dolenti mie
Gram piant' agli occhi
L'antica fiamma
Per allegrezza**

Francesco degli Organi (aka Landini) (1325-1397)

Elijah Hopkin, tenor

Laurie Monahan, mezzo-soprano

Christien Beeuwkes, vielle

Juno, queen of the Gods and protector of Carthage, plots to keep Dido and Aeneas together despite Aeneas' duty in Italy. While the court is out hunting, Juno conjures a storm that brings the two of

them into a cave, where they spend an intimate night together. Even without ceremony, Dido considers the union to be a marriage.

Dolc' è pur d'amor l'affanno (HWV 109b, c.1715-1718)

George Frideric Handel (1685-1759)

Aria: Dolc'è pur d'amor l'affanno

Recit: Il viver sempre in pene...

Aria: Se più non t'amo, non ti doler

Thomas Bowers, harpsichord

Oliver Weston, baroque cello

The king of the Gods sends a messenger to remind Aeneas of his duty in Italy; he must leave at once. Unhappy but obedient, he prepares for departure secretly, but Dido discovers him and accuses him of stealing her honor.

Praise blindness, eyes

John Dowland (1563-1626)

Disdain me still

If floods of tears

Flow my tears

Doug Freundlich, lute

David Hunt, viola da gamba

Dido tells her sister to build a large fire so she can burn all mementos of Aeneas' time in Carthage. She secretly plans to make the fire into her own funeral pyre. When Dido sees Aeneas' ships departing, she runs to the fire and climbs upon the pyre. She unsheaths a Trojan sword and throws herself upon the blade, cursing her fate.

Didon

André Campra (1660-1744)

Recit: Quel tumulte...

Air: Suffit-il d'être Amant aimé

Recit: Mais, j'aperçois Didon...

Air: Cruel, tu croyois me tromper

Recit: Ah! du moins...

Air: Que les vents déchainiez...

Recit: Enée, à ce tendre discours...

Ariette: En ce moment, il part

Recit: Didon avec transport...

Air: halez-vous de me venger

Recit: Mais, où m'emporte ma douleur

Thomas Bowers, harpsichord

David Hunt, viola da gamba

Yi-Li Chang, baroque violin

Weronika Balewski, baroque flute

Notes and Translations

My experience at Longy started with a remarkable experience performing the role of Dido in Purcell/Tate's *Dido and Aeneas*. Last year, Dr. Doug Freundlich suggested to me the idea of performing a Dido-themed recital, and that kick-started what I have put together for today's program. Instead of simply choosing a program of music that was written specifically about Dido (and there is no shortage of that repertoire), I chose to explore the character from the inside out and re-tell the story in a new way, expanding upon the character analysis work that was necessary to portray Dido in Purcell's opera. "Becoming" Dido in the opera meant having a real sense of identity as that character, and understanding emotions as Dido would feel them throughout each scene in the story. I've taken those emotions and some of those that I believe Aeneas would feel, and I have chosen music with texts that express them.

Strozzi's "Cuore che reprime..." is a very early form of cantata, being clearly in the monody tradition but having a relatively large and sectionalized form. It is a highly dramatic monologue, expressing the inner struggle and the crazed but repressed energy of one who cannot let go of unrequited or forbidden love. Strozzi's compositional style is wonderfully unique, and with her colorful bass lines and the harmonies they create, she is able to create a feeling of twisting, turning unease as the piece draws to an eerie close.

Cuore che reprime alla lingua di manifestare il nome della sua cara

Prima Parte

Ardo in tacito foco
Neppure m'è concesso
Dal geloso cor mio
Far palese a me stesso
Il nome di colei ch'è'l mio desio,
Ma nel carcer del seno
Racchiuso tien l'ardore,
Carcerier di se stesso, il proprio core.
E appena sia contento
Con aliti e sospiri
Far palese alla lingua I suoi martiri.

Seconda Parte

Se pur per mio ristoro
Con tributi di pianto
Mostrar voglio con fede
A quella ch'amo tanto
Che son d'amor le lagrime mercede,
Ecco'l cor ch'essalando
Di più sospiri il vento,
Assorbe il pianto e quell'umor n'ha spento
E con mio duol m'addita
Che gl'occhi lagrimanti
Sono mutole lingue negli amanti

Terza Parte

Qual sia l'aspro mio stato
Ridir nol ponno I venti,
Neppur le selve o l'onde
Udiro i miei lamenti,
Ma solo il duol entro al mio cor s'asconde
E quale in chiuso specchio

The Heart that prevents the tongue from expressing the beloved's name

Translation: Gail Archer and Stefano Mengozzi

Part 1

I burn in silent fire and my jealous heart does not even allow me to reveal the name of she who is my desire, but in the prison of my breast the heart—its own guardian—keeps the passion enclosed, and it contents itself to disclose to the tongue its sufferings with sighs and breaths.

Part 2

Even if, for my own consolation, with offerings of tears I want faithfully to show to she whom I adore that these tears are the recompense of love, the heart, exhaling sighs, absorbs the tears and extinguishes my cry, and to the pain it shows that these weeping eyes are the mute tongues of the lovers.

Part 3

The winds cannot convey the bitterness of my state, and neither the woods nor the waves heard my laments. The pain alone enters and is hidden within my heart. So as a stone melts in the fire under a concave mirror, so I turn into ashes little by little, and if for others the tongue

Disfassi pietra al foco,
Tal io m'incenerisco a poco a poco
E s'ad altri la lingua
É scorta alla lor sorte,
A me la lingua è sol cagion di morte.

helps them to their destiny, for me the tongue is only a
reason of death.

Francesco degli Organi is popularly known as **Francesco Landini**. However, recent research shows that the name Landini was not associated with the composer during his lifetime. The music of the Trecento falls within the “courtly love” tradition in poetry. In a large majority of this poetry, there is an unattainable woman being sought after. This creates tension that seems at times melancholic; however, those who experience the unrequited-love struggle are regarded as virtuous.

Ochi dolenti mie

Ochi dolenti mie, che pur piangete,
po che vedete,
che sol per honestà non vi contento.

Non a diviso la mente'l disio
con voi che tante lagrime versate,
perche da voi si cela el viso pio,
il qual privato m'a da libertate.

Gran virtù è rafrenar volontate
per honestate,
che seguir donna è sofferir tormento.

My sorrowing eyes

Translation: Lucy E. Cross

My sorrowing eyes, ever weeping,
you can see
that I cannot satisfy you with honesty alone.

My heart has not shared its desire
with you, who shed so many tears,
because her divine face which robs me of my liberty
is hidden away from you.

It is a great virtue to subdue the will
through honesty.
for to love a lady is to suffer torment.

Gram piant' agli ochi

Gram piant' agli ochi, greve dogli al core
Abonda senpre l'anima, si more.

Per quest'amar' ed aspra dipartita;
Chiamo la mort' e non mi vuol udire.

Chontra mia voglia dura questa vita,
Che mille morti mi convien sentire.

Ma bench'i' viva, ma' non vo' seguire
Se non vo', chiara stella et dolçe amore.

So many tears come to my eyes

Translation: Lucy E. Cross

Great tears in my eyes, deep sorrow in my heart,
still overcome my spirit, so that it dies.

Because of this bitter, harsh separation,
I call upon Death who will not hear me.

my lifes goes on against my will,
for I suffer a thousand deaths.

But although I live, I do not wish to pursue anyone
but you, clear star and sweet love.

L'antica Fiamma

L'antica fiamma,
e'l dolce disio ognor s'accresce, donna, nel cor mio.
Quanto mie vita più verso lo stremo
Trepas'e fuggie, allora più s'accende,
Ond'io per dolglia sospirando temo
Dell'amorosa fiamma che m'offende,
Veggendo, ch'a mie prieghi non discende
L'angelica figura e'l viso pio.

Per allegreçça

Per allegreçça del parlar d'amore
s'accese fiamma rilulcent' e chiara,
che non si sente avara
A dar letiçia nel suo grand' ardore.

Quest' allegreça, se Saturno turba,
a te, Cupido, la vendetta resta.
Fa ch'al presente nella sacra turba
la dolce fede ti sia manifesta,

Sì che ciascuna nel parlar sia presta
s'a questo servo è stato tolto'l core,
dieglisi con gran festa
quel di colei ch'egli ama a tant' onore.

Within the context of my Dido exploration, **Handel's** *Dolc'è pur d'amor l'affanno* provides crucial pivot points in the story. In the first aria and the recitative, I see Dido's justification for giving into her desires (or, alternatively, Aeneas' suave persuasion of Dido to give in). In the last aria "Se più non t'amo..." I imagine Aeneas' voice admitting that he is leaving Dido as he continues on to Italy. Especially in Purcell/Tate's version of the Dido story, Aeneas tends to be played as a villain who is detached and uncaring; however, viewing this piece through Aeneas' eyes has given me a way to flesh out a slightly more rounded version of his character.

Dolce pur d'amor l'affanno

Aria:
Dolc'è pur d'amor l'affanno
se, compagno del tormento
il contento viene ancor.

Se le pene unite vanno
con la speme e con l'affetto,
il diletto è poi maggior.

The Ancient Flame

Translation: Danilo Bonina

The ancient flame,
and the sweet desire ever more grow in my heart, lady.
The more my life approaches its end
The more the flame burns, and makes me suffer increasingly.
As I sigh because of the pain
I fear that this loving flame will hurt me,
Seeing that your angelic figure and lovable face
Do not yield to my prayers.

Joyful with the discourse

Translation: Lucy E. Cross

Joyful with the discourse of Love,
a brilliant, clear flame kindled
that did not fail to spread happiness
with its bright burning.

If this happiness should offend Saturn,
then you, Cupid, must be the one to take vengeance:
cause your sweet faith
to be manifest now in this sacred gathering.

Let every lady be quick to grant,
with great rejoicing, her favors to that servant
who has lost his heart
loving her honorably.

Even the anguish of love is sweet

Translation: Ellen Harris

Aria:
Even the anguish of love is sweet
if, along with the pain,
pleasure comes too.

If the sufferings go together
with hope and tenderness,
then the pleasure is even greater.

Recit:

Il viver sempre in pene
stanca i desir d'amore,
e il viver lieto sempre
piace ma sazia il core.
Dolci ripulse e graziosi sdegni,
certe sventure inaspettate e lievi,
danno tormento, è ver,
ma fan talora più soave piacer,
quanto più brevi.

Aria:

Se più non t'amo,
non ti doler,
ch'amarti, o bella,
io più non so.

Ma da te bramo
caro piacer
se tu sei quella
che mi piagò.

Recit:

Living always in pain
wearies the desires of love,
and living always happy
pleases but satiates the heart.
Sweet denials and gracious disdains,
certain unexpected and slight misfortunes,
give torment, it is true,
but sometimes make the pleasures sweeter
although briefer.

Aria:

If I no longer love you,
do not grieve,
for to love you, O beauteous one,
I no longer know how.

But from you I crave
sweet pleasure,
if you are the one
who wounded me.

A note on pronunciation in the **Dowland** set: Among many of us, there is an association between the time and literature of Shakespeare and a high, aristocratic pronunciation of English. Contrary to popular use of the language in films and theater, however, the sound of the "Early Modern English" of Shakespeare and Dowland was far from refined. There is no absolutely unified set of rules for this pronunciation, since there was no universal pronunciation in the 16th and 17th centuries (just as, for example, there are countless ways to pronounce English even within a small region of the US). However, certain sounds are generally agreed upon, such as a hard "r" and a somewhat guttural diphthong in words such as "I," "light," "mine," etc. One of the most persuasive arguments for using this type of English pronunciation for Dowland and contemporaries is the clarity it creates with rhyming lines. While a good number of apparently rhyming lines within Dowland's songs do not sound alike when using modern English, they do in fact rhyme when using Early Modern English.

Praise blindness, eyes

Praise blindness, eyes, for seeing is deceit.
Be dumb, vain tongue, words are but flattering winds.
Break, heart, and bleed, for there is no receipt
To purge inconstancy from most men's minds.

And if thine ears, false heralds to thy heart,
Convey into thy head hopes to obtain,
Then tell thy hearing thou art deaf by art,
Now love is art that wanted to be plain.

Now none is bald except they see his brains;
Affection is not known till one be dead;
Reward for love are labours for his pains;
Love's quiver made of gold, his shafts of lead.

And so I waked amazed and could not move;
I know my dream was true, and yet I love.

Disdain me still

Disdain me still, that I may ever love;
For who his love enjoys can love no more.
The war once past, with ease men cowards prove;
And ships returned do rot upon the shore.
And though thou frown I'll say thou art most fair,
and still I'll love, though still I must despair.

As heat to life, so is desire to love;
And these once quenched, both life and love are
gone.

Let not my sighs nor tears thy virtue move;
Like baser metals, do not melt too soon.
Laugh at my woes although I ever mourn.
Love surfeits with rewards, his nurse is ever scorn.

If floods of tears

If floods of tears could cleanse my follies past,
And smokes of sighs might sacrifice for sin;
If groaning cries might salve my fault at last,
Or endless moan for error pardon win,
Then would I cry, weep, sigh, and ever moan,
Mine errors, faults, sins, follies, past and gone.

I see my hopes must wither in their bud;
I see my favours are no lasting flowers;
I see that words will breed no better good
Than loss of time, and lightening but at hours.
Thus when I see, then thus I say therefore
That favours, hopes, and words can blind no more.

Flow, my tears

Flow, my tears, fall from your springs!
Exiled for ever let me mourn;
Where night's black bird her sad infamy sings,

There let me live forlorn.

Down, vain lights, shine you no more!
No nights are dark enough for those
That in despair their lost fortunes deplore.
Light doth but shame disclose.

Never may my woes be relieved,
Since pity is fled;
And tears and sighs and groans my weary days
Of all joys have deprived.

From the highest spire of contentment
My fortune is thrown;
And fear and grief and pain for my deserts
Are my hopes, since hope is gone.

Hark! you shadows that in darkness dwell,
Learn to contemn light.
Happy, happy they that in hell
Feel not the world's despite.

French Baroque cantatas are notorious for their opera-like nature, and **Camppra's *Didon*** is no exception. It is a highly dramatic work, utilizing the voices of a narrator, Dido herself, and even Aeneas for a brief moment. A common component in French cantatas is a first-movement summary or a setup for the story that will be told in subsequent movements. Here, in the first movement of *Didon*, we have a narrative that throws us into the height of the drama in the Dido story: Aeneas' impending departure.

A note on pronunciation: Baroque French is different from modern French in a few key ways, the most apparent of which are: 1. The letter combination "oi" is pronounced with an open "E" instead of an "ah" sound. 2. Some ending consonants that would be silent in modern French are pronounced. 3. Nasalization is not fully present. Generally, for vowels that would be nasalized in modern French, slight nasalization comes in at the very end of the vowel (as if pronouncing the "n" with an "ng").

Didon

Recit:
Quel tumulte:
Quel bruit s'élève jusqu'aux Cieux:
Qui peut troubler ainsi Cartage?
Quel peuple court vers le rivage?
C'est le chef des Troyens qui va quitter ses lieux.
Ce prince que Didon a sauvé du naufrage,
Qu'elle a comblé de ses bienfaits
se prépare à la fuir, & trompant ses souhaits,
va payer son amour du plus cruel outrage.

Air:
Suffit-il d'être Amant aimé,
Pour devenir volage?
Amour, dans un coeur enflâmé,
Pourquoy détrui-tu ton ouvrage?
Par tes rigeurs il est charmé,
Par tes faveurs il se dégage.

Dido

Recit:
What tumult:
What noise rises up to the heavens:
Who can thus disturb Carthage?
Which people run towards the shore?
This is the chief of the Trojans who will leave this place.
This prince who Dido has saved from shipwreck,
Who she filled with her kindness,
prepares to flee, and cheating her wishes,
in return will pay his love with the most cruel insult.

Aria:
Is it enough to be beloved,
To become unfaithful?
Cupid, in a heart all aflame,
Why destroy your work?
By your rigors he is charmed,
By your favor he is disengaged.

Recit:

Mais, j'aperçois Didon qui suit cet inconstant,
Elle offre à ses regards sa douleur & ses craintes:
Et frémissant déjà du destin qui l'attend,
son cœur avec effort pousse ces tristes plaintes.

Air:

Cruel, tu croyais me tromper,
tu me livrais, Barbare, à ma douleur mortelle.
Ton cœur n'est point touché de mon amour fidelle,
Le coup affreux dont tu m'allois frapper,
Ne pouvoit retarder ta fuite criminelle.

Recit:

Ah! du moins, si mes pleurs ne peuvent t'émouvoir,
Si malgré ma mort trop certaine, Perfide,
Ton injuste haine ne me permet aucun espoir:

Air :

Que les vents déchainent, que les flots en colère,
Dont la fureur t'annonce un naufrage certain;
Fasse sur ton cœur inhumain,
ce que mon amour n'a pu faire.

Recit:

Enée, à ce tendre discours, sent realumer sa flamme:
'Princesse,' lui dit-il, 'n'accablez point mon âme;
J'attachois à vous voir le bonheur de mes jours,
le ciel qui nous sépare en veut finir le cours.'

Ariette:

En ce moment, il part;
Il vole, il est déjà sur ses vaisseaux.
Au gré de Neptune & d'Eole
Il fend les airs & les eaux.

Recit :

Didon avec transport, le suit jusqu'au rivage,
Exhalant par ces mots sa douleur & sa rage,
Poursui, Cruel, poursui ton funeste dessein;
Mais du moins en partant, immole une victime,
Il ne te manque plus qu'un crime; Acheve,
viens plonger un poignard dans mon sein.
Mais...
Il ne m'entend plus que sert un vain murmure ?

Recit:

But, I see Dido who pursues this faithless one,
She offers to his glances her pain and her fears:
And trembling already from the fate that awaits her,
Her heart struggles to put forward these sad complaints.

Air:

Cruel one, you thought you wronged me; in fact, you
delivered me, Savage, to my mortal pain.
Your heart is not a bit touched by my faithful love;
The frightful blow which you have dealt me
Could not delay your criminal flight.

Recit:

Ah! At least, if my tears cannot move you,
If despite my too certain death, deceitful one,
Your unjust hate allows me no hope:

Aria:

May the unleashed winds, and the angry waves,
Whose fury announces an impending shipwreck;
Inflict unto your merciless heart,
what my love could not achieve.

Recit:

Aeneas, with this tender speech, feels his flame rekindle:
"Princess," he says to her, "do not so overwhelm my soul;
I associate you with all the happiness of my days,
the heavens that separate us send me to finish out my days."

Arietta:

At this moment, he leaves,
He flies, he is already on his ship.
At the will of Neptune and Aeolus,
He splits the air and the waters.

Recit:

With transport, Dido follows him to the shore,
Exhaling through these words her pain and her fury,
Go on, cruel man, go on with your fatal design;
But at least in parting, sacrifice a victim,
The only thing missing here is a crime; Finish it off,
come plunge a dagger into my breast.
But...
He does not hear me; what good is a vain whisper?

Air :

Hatez-vous, hatez-vous de me venger.
Justes Dieux! témoins de mon injure,
Offrez par tout aux yeux de ce Parjure,
L'horreur & le danger.
Accourez, Dieu des vents,
accourez, dieu des ondes,
Preparez des efforts nouveaux;
ouvrez-luy mille tombeaux,
Dans vos cavernes profondes.

Recit:

Mais, où m'emporte ma douleur,
Quand je puis me venger moy-même?
ma main peut seule assouvir ma fureur,
mourons...Dieux! C'en est fait...
Epargnez ce que j'aime,
mon sang qui coule efface ses forfaits;
Apprenez-luy, grands Dieux, mon desespoir extrême...
Mais, ne l'en punissez jamais.

Aria:

Haste, haste to avenge me.
Righteous Gods! witness to my affront,
Give sight of his perjury to all eyes,
the horror and the danger of it.
Hasten, God of the winds,
Hasten, God of the waves,
Prepare your efforts anew;
open a thousand tombs to him,
In your deep caves.

Recit:

But, where does my pain thus carry me away to,
When I can avenge myself?
My hand alone can appease my fury.
Let us Perish...Gods! It is over...
Spare him whom I love,
my blood which flows redeems his crimes;
Tell him, great Gods, my extreme despair...
But, never punish him.