Spanish composer, Fernando Obradors was a conductor and pianist whose love of music was instilled in him by his mother. Although he was a largely self-taught composer, he eventually ended up in Paris to continue his music study. He wrote in a variety of genres but vocal music is among his most well-known. *Canciones clásicas españolas* are settings of seven Spanish poems spanning multiple centuries and multiple poets. The overarching theme of this cycle is love, whether it is a romantic interest, family member, or friend. The influence of Spanish dances, flamenco, and Spanish guitar are highlighted through specific melodic flourishes, harmonic textures, and dance-like rhythms throughout the set.

*La mi sola, Laureola* is inspired by a 16th century Spanish song (solmization *villancico*) wherein the text corresponds to solfege syllables (la mi sol la). The melody and harmony highlight the melancholic words of Leriano, who longs for Laureola.

```
La mi sola, Laureola.
Yo el cautivo Leriano
aunque mucho estoy ufano
Herido de aquella mano
Que en el mundo es una sola.
```

```
My only, Laureola.
I the captive Leriano
Although I am very proud
Wounded from that hand
That in the world there is only one.
```

*Al amor* provides a sharp energetic contrast to *La mi sola, Laureola*. The poet for these lyrics is 17th century poet, Cristobal de Castillejo, a staunch advocate for the use of traditional Spanish poetic form over that of the Italian. The accompaniment imitates the excited heartbeat of infatuation. Skittering flourishes in the melody evoke a heart skipping a beat in anticipation. The dancing rhythms emulate the passion of a new relationship.

```
Dame amor, besos sin cuento
Asido de mis cabellos
Y mil y ciento tras ellos
Y tras ellos mil y ciento
Y despues...de muchos millares, tres!
Y porque nadie lo sienta
Desbaratamos la cuenta
Y...contemos al revés.
```

```
Give me love, kisses without count
Grabbing my hair
And 1000 and 100 after them
And after them 1000 and 100
And after...of many thousands, three.
And why no one feels it
Let's forget the count
And...count backwards.
```

*¿Corazón, porqué pasáis?* narrates the worries and uncertainties of a young lover's perception of her beloved. Rapid rhythms in the accompaniment mirrors the staccato of an unsure heart. also Dissonant harmonies also create uncomfortable feelings of uncertainty. A chromatic melody and mixed meter further embody the riddle that is an undetermined love story.

```
¿Corazón, porqué pasáis
Las noches de amor despierto
Si vuestro dueño descansa
En los brazos de otro dueño?
```

```
Heart, why do you pass
The nights of love awake
If your owner rests
In the arms of another?
```

```
Ah!
```

```
Ah!
```

Kalli Sonnenburg, MM Recital
University of North Dakota
Program Notes & Translations
April 11, 2021
The anonymous 18th century lyrics of *El majo celoso* describe a young lover’s jealousy and the attempts of the beloved to quell those jealous emotions. Hurried, staccato articulations of the accompaniment indicate the beloved’s anxiety as they try to instill a level of trust in their partner. Shifting tonalities and articulations capture the different tactics she attempts.

**Del majo que me enamora**

*Of the nice guy that make me fall in love*

**He aprendido la queja**

*I have learned the complaint*

**Que una y mil veces suspira**

*That one and 1000 times sighs*

**Noche tras noche en mi reja**

*Night after night in my window.*

**Lindezas, me muero de amor loco y fiero**

*Darling, I am dying of love crazy and wild*

**Quisiera olvidarte mas quiero y no puedo!**

*I want to forget you but I want to and I cannot!*

**Le han dicho que en la Pradera**

*They have told him that in the meadow*

**Me han visto con un chispero**

*They have seen me with another*

**Desas de malla de seda y chupa de terciopelo.**

*One of silk garments and velvet jackets.*

**Malezas, te quiero, no creas que muero**

*Darling, I love you, you don’t know that I’m dying of love helpless for another.***

**De amores perdida por ese chispero.**

*De amores perdida por ese chispero.*

**Con amores, la mi madre**

*Con amores, la mi madre*

**Con amores me dormí;**

*Con amores me dormí;*

**Así dormida soñaba**

*Así dormida soñaba*

**lo que el corazón velaba.**

*of what the heart watched.*

**Que el amor me consolaba**

*That love consoled me*

**Con más bien que merecí;**

*With more good than I deserved;*

**Adormeciéme el favor**

*The aid lulled me to sleep*

**que amor me dio con amor**

*What love gave me with love*

**Dio descanso a mi dolor**

*Give rest to my pain*

**La fe con que le servi.**

*The faith with which I served*

**Con amores, la mi madre,**

*With love, my mother*

**Con amores me dormí.**

*With love I fall asleep.*

The lyrics of *Del cabello más sutil* originate from a traditional Spanish folk song. Obradors’ delicate setting evokes the beloved being drawn closer by the braids in her hair. She daydreams that she is the cup that “kisses his lips” every time he takes a drink. The flowing arpeggios of the piano provide a fluid stream of sound to surround the delicate vocal line and envelop the tenderness of the poetry.

**Del cabello más sutil**

*Of the most subtle hair*

**Que tienes en tu trenzado**

*That you have in your braids*

**He de hacer una cadena**

*I have to make a chain*

**para traerte a mi lado.**

*To bring you to my side*

**Una alcabaza en tu casa,**

*A carcass in your house*

**Chiquilla, quisiera ser,**

*Little girl, I would like you to be*

**Para besarte en la boca**

*To kiss you on the mouth*

**Cuando fueras a beber. Ah!**

*When you went to drink. Ah!*

**Con amores, la mi madre,**

*With love, my mother*

**Con amores me dormí.**

*With love I fall asleep.*

*Con amores, la mi madre,*

*With love, my mother*

*Con amores me dormí.*

*With love I fall asleep.*

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Kalli Sonnenburg, MM Recital
University of North Dakota
Program Notes & Translations
April 11, 2021
Chiquitita la novia begins with extravagant bravado followed by a flashy vocal cadenza. There is no sense of subtlety in its musical setting or language; a sharp contrast to the previous song. A flamenco influence is readily apparent in the vivid accompaniment imitating the rhythmic flourishes of a Spanish guitar. The lyrics were taken from an unspecified Spanish songbook and describe a wedding: the bride, the bridegroom, and a bed. What happens after is left up to the imagination. The song ends in the same way it began, holding nothing back.

Ah!
Chiquitita la novia, chiquito el novio,
Chiquitita la sala u el dormitorio.
Por eso yo quiero chiquitita la cama
Y el mosquitero.
Ah!

Ah!
Little girlfriend, little boyfriend
Little room and the bedroom.
That's why I want the tiny bed
And the mosquito net.
Ah!

Translations © Kalli Sonnenburg, 2020

A Suite O’Bairnsangs (1953)  Thea Musgrave (b. 1928)

Scottish composer and conductor, Thea Musgrave, studied at the Paris conservatory with Nadia Boulanger, a highly sought after musical mind. A Suite O Bairnsangs was commissioned for the Scottish Festival at Braemar while Musgrave was still a student of Boulanger’s. Musgrave’s musical language and texture has been described as rich and powerful with a strong sense of drama. Her works span many genres, including vocal solos, operas, and orchestral works. This particular set is of five poems and nursery rhymes by Maurice Lindsay, an award-winning Scottish broadcaster, writer, and poet. The songs are witty and childlike with contrasting moods to draw the listener in. Each song reveals a child’s perception of the world with curiosities about God or a higher power, who they are, and how their actions affect the world.

The Man-in-the-Mune is a curious opening number filled with pointillistic articulations that bring out a childlike character in an otherwise harmonically complex setting.

The man in the mune’s got a cleikintheback
An he wllna come oot tae play.
He sits by himsel on a shimmer o Heaven
An hears what the starnies say,
But his cheeks gae back.
He purls his brow
an his auld heid shaks wi’ rage
Thru the reengan clouds that jostle the yirth,
Whan God’s on the rampage.

The man in the moon’s got a crick in his back
So he will not come out to play.
He sits by himself on a crossbar of heaven
And hears what the stars say,
But his cheeks go black
He furls his brow
And his old head shakes with rage
Through the bustling clouds that jostle the earth when God’s on the rampage.
The use of the Locrian mode in *Daffins* (Daffodils) paints a mysterious atmosphere for a beautiful and lyrical melody. The unwavering and dissonant piano arpeggios create an unsettling stream of sound. Lyrics and music come together to evoke the image of a deity that controls the weather and affects nature.

The wind that blew yestreen,
Gar't trees aa rear their heids
An warssslie i the dark as gin
It socht tae steal their cleeds.
It maun hae shogged the sun
Birlan abune the warld,
For off his flaman fiery baa,
A few bricht gairs it harled
Syne drapt them roun' the fruits
O ilk forfochen tree.
Cool lauchan pools o yalla licht
Daffins maist blyth tae see.

The wind that blew last night,
Made trees rear up their heads
And wrestle as it tried to steal
The clothes from off their beds.
It must have shaken the sun
Birling around the world
For off his flaming fiery ball
A few bright sparks it hurled
And dropped them round the roots
Of every breathless tree.
Cool laughing pools of yellow light
Daffins most fair to see.

The jolly and upbeat nature of *Willie Wabster* portrays childlike imagination. The quick tempo and rhythms make a tongue-twister of the text, offering the playfulness of a child's storytelling and questioning. It is the most humorous of the set as Musgrave cleverly captures the playfulness of Lindsay's text. The words suggest that Willie Wabster has control over the movements in the sky: the stars, the sun, and the moon. But who is Willie Wabster?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The wind that blew yestreen,</th>
<th>He runs his fingers through the sky</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Gar't trees aa rear their heids</td>
<td>To keep the stars a moving</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>An warssslie i the dark as gin</td>
<td>When thunder clouds go slowly by,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>It socht tae steal their cleeds.</td>
<td>He gives them each a shoving.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>It maun hae shogged the sun</td>
<td>And when the moon off-ends his sight,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Birlan abune the warld,</td>
<td>He casts it o'er his shoulder;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>For off his flaman fiery baa,</td>
<td>And so's to snuff the sun's bright light</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A few bricht gairs it harled</td>
<td>His winds go swaggering bolder.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Syne drapt them roun' the fruits</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>O ilk forfochen tree.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cool lauchan pools o yalla licht</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Daffins maist blyth tae see.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The wind that blew last night,</th>
<th>He makes the raindrops out of Heaven</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Made trees rear up their heads</td>
<td>Come driving on the town,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>And wrestle as it tried to steal</td>
<td>He drops and dangles down</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The clothes from off their beds.</td>
<td>In ribbons, all the colours seven.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>It must have shaken the sun</td>
<td>Small wonder that I'm often scared</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Birling around the world</td>
<td>For I'm not certain whether</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>For off his flaming fiery ball</td>
<td>He's God, the landlord of the world,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A few bright sparks it hurled</td>
<td>Or just his clerk of weather.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>And dropped them round the roots</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Of every breathless tree.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cool laughing pools of yellow light</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Daffins most fair to see.</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Perhaps the most enchanting song of the set, *A Bairn’s Prayer at Nicht* is also the most simple in melody and harmonic texture. The limited melodic range allows for the sweetness and simplicity of a young child’s voice. The accompaniment’s trance-like quality grounds the words of the prayer in naïve sincerity.

The stars crack the lift tae let light in.  
Sae please may the holes let oot my sin.

The final song of this set, *The Gean (The Cherry Tree)*, embodies nature’s vitality. “Trees dancing in the winds of Spring” are highlighted by Musgrave’s sprightly and syncopated rhythms. The “earworm” of the verse is destabilized by chromatic harmonies when describing the cherry tree who stands “ladylike and proud”. Could the cherry tree be expressing disapproval of the supposed immaturity of the other trees?

Aa the trees are dansan wi the winds  
of spring  
Ilka greenleaf glancan in a hielan fling.  
Abies thunder geantree  
sae ledylk and prood  
Tosht up for aa the lave tae sae  
wi tassels o a cloud.  

All the trees are dancing with the winds  
Of spring  
Every green leaf glancing in a highland fling.  
Except for yonder cherry tree  
so ladylike and proud  
Dressed up for all the rest to see  
With tassels of a cloud.

Translations © Maurice Lindsay, 1950

*The Shape of Love*  
*A cycle conceived by Kalli Sonnenburg*

These songs were chosen to tell a love story. As different genres and decades of music are represented, so are the different stages of a relationship. Our story begins as a womandreams about her perfect love story (*Dream a Little Dream of Me*). She finds herself falling for someone but, because of past hurts, she hesitates to admit it (*If I Loved You*). As their relationship progresses, emotional and physical connections form and deepen. While our protagonist fears getting too emotionally attached she finds herself getting caught up in the physicality of their relationship (*Fever*). She eventually begins to trust him and admits to being “crazy in love” (*How Sweet It Is*). Unfortunately, her insecurities begin to surface and she begins to second guess their relationship. She questions the sincerity of his intentions and worries that another woman could be a better choice than her (*Jolene*). Her lover swears he did nothing wrong and that she shouldn't be worried (*Billie Jean*). However, his reassurances are not enough and she ends the relationship. She feels as though she’s wasted her time wants nothing to do with him (*Don't Speak*). Flash forward to a few years later and the two reconnect but there are still too many unresolved feelings (*With Him*). She leaves him again and mourns, resigning herself to the fact that he was never hers to lose in the first place (*August*). Our love story comes full circle with our protagonist feeling hopeful that she might find love again (*I Wanna Dance With Somebody*).

Thank you to Mandy Moreno for her excellent musicianship and for her help in co-creating the arrangements for this set.
Dream a Little Dream of Me (1931)
Dreams
This now standard American tune was written by Fabian Andre, Wilbur Schwandt, and Gus Kahn. It became a favorite of many recording artists including Ella Fitzgerald, Louis Armstrong, Doris Day, and Cass Elliot, to name a few. It has also enjoyed success in multiple countries, including the US, UK, South Africa, and Ireland.

If I Loved You from Carousel (1945)
Hesitation
From Roger and Hammerstein's 1945 musical Carousel, this timeless ballad not only highlights the desires of Billy and Julie, but it highlights their fears and reservations as well. This love song is built off of conditions and the word “if” is used quite frequently, so as not to give too much away emotionally. They both are fearful of what the other might think of them and don't want to admit that they are just human. No matter what they say though, it is clear that they care deeply for each other and by the end of the full duet, it is clear that they do love each other.

Fever (1956)
Passion
This sultry song, penned by Otis Blackwell and Eddie Cooley, was originally recorded by the artist Little Willie John but is largely associated with the recording by Peggy Lee in 1958, though her version altered slightly in music and lyrics. Since then, many artists have recorded this song including Elvis Presley, Christina Aguilera, Beyonce, and Madonna. This song is obviously not about an actual fever but is about the physical rush of desire.

How Sweet It Is (1965)
Elation
Originally sung by the American singer Marvin Gaye, this song has been recorded by artists in many genres, including pop, soul, and even country. Writers, Holland and the Dozier brothers, were a songwriting team who defined the “Motown sound.” This joyous song that was supposedly written because a man needed a fantasy world since the woman he loved barely knew he existed. James Taylor’s remake of this chart-topping song enjoyed great success as well.

Jolene (1974)
Insecurity
This is arguably one of Dolly Parton’s most famous and most performed songs, still popular to this day. In fact, it won the 2017 Grammy Award for Best Country Duo/Group Performance for her version with pop a capella group, Pentatonix. Ms. Parton wrote it because she was nervous that her husband would be taken away by a stunning red-headed woman who worked at their bank. Parton needn't have worried. She and her husband have been married since 1966. Rolling Stone magazine includes this song in their list: “The 500 Greatest Songs of All Time.”

Billie Jean (1983)
Defense
This Grammy Award winning song was recorded by Michael Jackson in 1982 and subsequently released in 1983 on his album Thriller, considered to be the best-selling album of all time. True events inspired this song as he was being harassed by a fan who insisted that he was the father of her child. He wrote this to deny her accusations.

Don’t Speak (1995)
Heartbreak
This indie pop/alternative hit by Gwen Stefani and her brother, Eric Stefani, appears on No Doubt’s album, Tragic Kingdom. Originally written as a love song about Gwen and her then boyfriend, it went through several edits and, after their relationship ended, this final draft was the result. The lyrics were Gwen’s way of saying that she doesn’t want to talk about the relationship or why it ended because it hurts too much.
With Him (2019)  
Echo

From the outstanding album *Love Me Love Me Not: The Music of Joey Contreras*, this breathtaking ballad encapsulates the feelings of pain, nostalgia and loss upon seeing a former and realizing how much you still love and miss them despite the passage of time: jealousy you feel over the new relationship they’re in and how fine them seem to be without you in their life and anger at yourself for still feeling so deeply for them even though you know you never were going to be enough for them.

August (2020)  
Healing

From Taylor Swift’s quarantine project “Folklore”, this song is part of a trio that tells the story of a love triangle. The point of view of August is that of the “outsider”. She is remembering the meaningful, yet short-lived relationship she had with the man in August and wishes the relationship could’ve been real and that they could be together. But, in the end she realizes he didn’t feel the same way about her. Swift’s co-writer, Jack Antonoff, is a popular indie pop/rock musician who has worked with names such as Sara Bareilles, Lorde, and Troye Sivan. He has played a significant role in Swift’s music, especially in her most recent albums: *Lover, Folklore,* and *Evermore.*

I Wanna Dance With Somebody (1987)  
Hope

This chart-topping hit recorded by Whitney Houston has become a pop classic. George Merrill and Shannon Rubicam worked together to produce this hit for Ms. Houston after their success with her song “How Will I Know,” in 1985. Rubicam says the song was meant to speak to someone’s wish to dance through life with a special someone. Reportedly, Houston’s label was concerned that the song wasn’t suitable for her however, history has proved them wrong. The songs won the Grammy Award for Best Female Pop Vocal Performance and topped the charts in 13 other countries.