

*The School of Music
presents the 48th program of the 1989-90 season*

Music from Terezín

A Special Event in Collaboration with the
Terezín Music Memorial Project
David Bloch, Director

B6
1990
2-13

School
of
Music

University
of
Washington

Works By

**Pavel Haas
Gideon Klein
Martin Roman
Carlo S. Tauber
Viktor Ullman
Ilse Weber**

Guest Artists

**David Bloch, piano
Bernard Shapiro, oboe
Leon Lishner, bass**

Faculty Guest Artists

**Emilie Berendsen, mezzo-soprano
Steven Novacek, guitar**

*February 13, 1990
Meany Theater*

DAT # 11,589

CASS # 11,590

Program

Cass side A

Ich Wandere Durch Theresienstadt ILSE WEBER
(1907-1944, Auschwitz)

Wiegenlied (arr. 1943) GIDEON KLEIN
Words: Emmanuel Ha-Russi (1919-1945, Fürstengrab)
Melody: Shalom Charitonov

Ein Jüdisches Kind (1942; Erika Taube) CARLO S.TAUBE
(1897-1944, Auschwitz)

Sonata (1943) GIDEON KLEIN
Allegro
Adagio
Allegro vivace

Ctyri písne na slova čínské poezie (1944) PAVEL HAAS
(Four songs to texts of Chinese poetry) (1899-1944, Auschwitz)
Czech translation by Bohumil Mathesius

Zaslech jsem divoké husy (Wej Jing-wu)
(I heard wild geese)

V bambusovém háji (Wang Wej)
(Bamboo grove)

Daleko měsíc je domova (Chang Tiou-lin)
(The moon is far from home)

Probdená noc (Chan I)
(Sleepless night)

Intermission

Cass side B

Suite (1939) PAVEL HAAS
Furioso
Con fuoco
Moderato

Der Frühling (1943; Friedrich Hölderlin) VIKTOR ULLMANN
(1898-1944, Auschwitz)

Abendphantasie (1943; Friedrich Hölderlin)

Immer inmitten (from Solo Cantata; H. G. Adler)

The Little Cakewalk (1943; from Chansons des Enfants francais)

from the cabaret Karussell (1944) MARTIN ROMAN (b.1909)

Wir Reiten Auf Hoelzernen Pferden (Manfred Greiffenhagen)

Wiegala ILSE WEBER

All the works are Seattle premieres, with the exception of the first three songs by Viktor Ullmann.

Program Notes

From 1941 to 1945 the Czechoslovakian town of Terezín (Theresienstadt), some 60 kilometers north of Prague, served as a transit camp for 140,000 Jews, staying for varying lengths of time until being transported to the death camps in the East, chiefly Auschwitz. Terezín, built in 1780 by Franz Josef II in honor of his mother, Maria Theresa, was ideally situated for the forced imprisonment of its temporary inhabitants (after the evacuation of its Czech population). Isolated in their ghetto, the unwilling residents suffered horrific conditions of overcrowding, hunger, disease, and often death. While hardly the "model town" the Nazis succeeded to masquerade before a visiting delegation of the International Red Cross in 1944, Terezín nevertheless was the scene of a most extraordinary cultural life. With a constant inflow of thousands of European Jews, including representation of the highest academic and artistic levels, and despite an equally steady exodus as the transports relentlessly removed both adults and children alike, an initially secret and dangerous cultural expression eventually flourished with the support of Terezín's Council of Jewish Elders and that of the Germans as well. If the musical life of the ghetto, including light music (coffee house and cabaret), recitals, chamber, orchestral and choral concerts, as well as operas, appeared to mirror that in more normal circumstances, in Terezín the precious opportunity to immerse oneself in music became a courageous symbol, affording the culture starved inmates a welcome respite from the pressures of daily existence in the face of the most foreboding prospects.

Ilse Weber, born in Ostrava in 1907, was a poet, writer of children's books and produced programs for the radio in Prague. She succeeded in sending her eldest son, Hanus, to Sweden in a children's transport before the war. Transported in 1942 to Terezín with her younger son and her husband, Ilse was put in charge of the children's infirmary. An amateur musician, she often accompanied herself on the guitar, singing her poems to original melodies. *Ich Wandere Durch Theresienstadt* and *Wiegala* are simple, folk-like songs, but deeply felt. Hanus Weber, today a television director in Stockholm, characterized his mother's *Wiegala* as a "final caress for the children, on their way to

the death camps." Ilse voluntarily joined her husband when he left for Auschwitz, where she and Tommy perished in 1944.

Gideon Klein was born in Prerov, Moravia, in 1919. An exceptionally gifted young man, studying musicology and philosophy at the Charles University in Prague, he was a superb pianist, performing under an assumed name after the racist Nuremberg laws forbade the appearance of Jewish artists in public. Active in Terezín's musical life, Klein repaired a grand piano before other instruments were brought, arranged practice schedules, accompanied opera and oratorio performances, participated in chamber music concerts, and flourished as a composer. He produced a number of choral pieces, including arrangements of old Czech poetry and Hebrew songs, among them *Schav B'ni* (Wiegenlied), for voice and piano, with a particularly rich harmonic and contrapuntal accompaniment. The very handsome Gidi, as he was fondly called by his many admiring friends, was sent to Fürstengrab in January 1945, where he was liquidated by the S.S. along with his unfortunate fellow inmates.

Although Carlo S. Taube, born in 1897 in Galicia, was a concert virtuoso, he mostly worked as a nightclub pianist between the wars. He conducted the Taube Orchestra in Terezín and composed a number of works, now lost. His only surviving composition is a song written to a text by his wife. *Ein Jüdische Kind* is a poignant reminder that their child's normality is marred by his lack of a home. Quite Jewish in style, with a vocal line echoing cantorial phrases and some keyboard inflections of a similar nature, the song is eloquently simple. In 1944 the Taubes and their child were murdered in Auschwitz.

Klein wrote two major instrumental works in Terezín, a *String Trio* in 1944 and a *Piano Sonata* in 1943. While the trio is folkloristic, strongly evocative of Bartok and Janáček, the sonata markedly resembles that of Alban Berg. According to Klein's sister, however, for whom he wrote it, he was more influenced by certain harmonic procedures in the piano music of Josef Suk, notably his *Life and Dreams*. Originally planned in four movements, Klein managed only to write a few measures of the finale. The third movement, as now played, was an intended scherzo. While aggressively expressionistic and often stridently dissonant, it projects much lyricism as well.

Pavel Haas, born 1899 in Brno, was one of the most talented pupils of Janáček, from whom he inherited a strong admiration of Moravian folk music, the spirit of which infuses much of his work. Composer of songs, chamber and orchestral music, works for chorus, for solo piano, and an opera, in the 30s, Haas was anti-fascist already in the 1930s. After the Germans occupied Czechoslovakia in 1939 he wrote a solo cantata, for voice and piano, expressive of his feelings through a provocative text of his own. Fear of its discovery, however, led to his destroying it and delegating the performance of the solo part to an oboe instead. The melodic line of the resultant *Suite*, while obviously vocally conceived, nevertheless well suits the oboe's intensity, while the effectively written piano part makes rich use of the composer's penchant for adding sharp dissonances to otherwise tonally oriented harmonies. Especially dominant in this work is the use of motives from the Hussite choral, *You Who Are God's Warriors*, and the St. Wenceslaus hymn, which saturate much of the musical fabric. In a resonant hope for an ultimate victory, the sonority of bells is suggested in the final movement. A tour-de-force for the oboe, one can imagine the truly heroic impact of the piece had it been sung by a tenor or soprano.

Among Haas's Terezín compositions is a cycle of *Four Songs to Texts by Chinese Composers*, written in 1944 at the request of Karel Berman, bass, for

his solo recital in April of that year. Haas set his music to poetry suffused with longing for home. Songs one and three make use of the St. Wenceslaus chorale, as in the earlier oboe suite. Viktor Ullmann, after praising Berman's performance, expressed an "enthusiastic thanks also to Pavel Haas for his beautiful gift: his *Four Songs* . . . Once one has heard them, one would not want to miss Haas' topical songs so full of life, and live with them in intimate relationship."* Haas went to the gas chamber in Auschwitz in 1944. *(Quoted in Joza Karás, *Music in Terezín 1941-1945*, New York, 1985, an excellent and indispensable study of this subject, and to which the author of these notes is indebted.)

Viktor Ullmann, of course, was a composer in his own right. Born in Tesin (Silesia) in 1898, he grew up in Vienna, studied in Schoenberg's advanced courses in 1918-19, and was one of Alexander von Zemlinsky's conducting assistants at the New German Opera in Prague in the 1920s. An active member of the Schoenberg circle in that city, Ullmann was also an devoted follower of Rudolf Steiner's anthroposophical movement. In the 1930s he composed, taught and wrote articles for German musical publications in Prague. Failing to find work in London or South Africa, he was trapped after the German invasion in March 1939 and deported to Terezín in 1942, where he served as music critic, organized concerts for the Studio for New Music, which he founded, and continued to compose. Ullmann's own musical roots lay in the Second Viennese School, and in his admiration for Mahler; both of these influences are particularly felt in many of his numerous songs. In those written before Terezín, he evidenced a broad literary taste, setting poems by Ricarda Huch, Elizabeth Barret-Browning, Louise Labé and others, and in the ghetto on verses by Kraus, Novalis, Goethe, Trakl, Wedekind, C.F. Meyer, and Friedrich Hölderlin. Of the latter, *Der Frühling* and *Abendphantasie* have richly chromatic piano parts, in the tradition of the late Romantic Lieder composers, as well as early Schoenberg and Zemlinsky. He also set Terezín verses by his friend Dr. H.G. Adler. Adler's poem, *Immer inmitten*, is the desperate cry of a continually suffering soul, with no idea of what tomorrow may bring. Ullmann's music matches the obsessiveness of the text with appropriate harmonies and figurations in the piano. In *The Little Cakewalk*, from his *Songs of French Children*, as in much of his Terezín opera, *The Emperor of Atlantis*, Ullmann shows his adeptness in the cabaret style.

In this lighter vein we come finally to several songs by Martin Roman (b. 1909), from the German cabaret *Karussell*, produced by Kurt Gerron (well-known for his role in the film, *The Blue Angel*) in 1944 at the order of Gustav Rahm, the Nazi Commandant of Terezín. Roman and Gerron, both from Berlin, had worked together previously, and the successful cabaret had lyrics written in the ghetto. The style of the music, similar to the repertoire of the Terezín jazz band, the *Ghetto Swingers*, is appropriately darkened by the critical verses, reminding more soberly of the social tensions in Terezín, born of both the hardships of the terrible reality as well as the universal vagaries of human nature.

Ullmann himself, killed in Auschwitz in 1944, expressed a personal evaluation of the meaning of the Terezín experience, writing that ". . . it must be emphasized that Theresienstadt has served to enhance, not impede, my musical activities, that by no means did we sit weeping on the bank of the waters of Babylon, and that our endeavor with respect to Art was commensurate with our will to live." (quoted in Max Bloch, "Viktor Ullmann: A Brief Biography and Appreciation," *Journal of the Arnold Schoenberg Institute*, October, 1979)

— David Bloch

Song Texts

I Wander Through Theresienstadt

ILSE WEBER

I wander through Theresienstadt,
My heart as heavy as lead.
When suddenly my path ends,
There, close to the bastian.

I stand there on the bridge
And look into the valley below.
I want so much to go farther,
I want so much to go home.

"Home" - you wonderful word,
You make my heart so heavy.
My home was taken away from me,
Now I have no more.

I turn away grieving and weak,
So heavy am I besides:
Theresienstadt, Theresienstadt,
When will this suffering end,
When will we be free once more?

Lullaby (Lie Down, My Son)

EMMANUEL HA-RUSSI

Lie down, my son,
Lie down restfully.
Do not weep bitterly,
Your mother sits next to you
And guards you from all evil.

The jackal howls outside,
The wind is blowing there,
But you my little son,
Sleep, sleep, sleep.

The shade of the night
Will quickly fly away.
One must not be lazy,
Tomorrow one must work.

Tomorrow father goes to plough,
He will go in the furrows.
Soon you will also be big and
Raise your head and you shall
Both go to the field together.

Soon you shall grow in the land
Of Israel, towards joy, labor.
Like your father you will be a
Worker.

Then you shall sow in tears
And you will reap in joy.*
But now listen to your mother,
Sleep, sleep.

*Psalm 137

A Jewish Child

ERIKA TAUBE

You are a child like children the world over
Like all the others who played
But you are different from the other children
You are a child who lacks a homeland
You are a stranger in all the cities
As long as you are homeless
You are free [in all the world]

Four Songs to Texts of Chinese Poetry

No. 1 *I heard wild geese...*
(Wej Jing-Wu)

Home is there, distant there,
You ought to go home, lost heart!
On a strange night, in autumn
rain, when the mourning of the

No. 2 *In the bamboo grove*
(Wang Wej)

In bamboo there are no people,
In bamboo I sit alone here
playing the lute quietly
here I whistle to myself.

cold breeze made me shiver the
most; in my high house I heard
wild geese scream. They have just
flown in.

No. 3 *The moon is far from home*
(Chang Tiou-lin)

The moon grows from a dark sea.
Blossoming now in a distant land.
Love is mourning its lost dream
waiting for delayed evening.

I put out the light
and the moon shines brighter
into my sorrow. I put on my
nightclothes the dew is cool
My hands, how empty you are, to
tell it all! Sleep, give me a
dream of returning home. Sleep
cannot give a dream: my longing
always wakens me me.

Spring

FRIEDRICH HÖLDERLIN

When in fields new things enrapture one
And when the view once more becomes beautiful
And in the mountains where the trees become green
Clear air lets the clouds be seen.

Oh what joy men have
Lonely people gladly go on the shore
Rest, desire and joy are blooming in health
Friendly laughter is also not far away.

Evening Fantasy

FRIEDRICH HÖLDERLIN

At peace the ploughman sits in the shade outside
His cottage, smoke curls up from his modest hearth.
A traveller hears the bell for vespers
Welcome him into a quiet village.

Now, too, the boatmen make for the harbour pool,
In distant towns the market's gay noise and throng
Subside; a glittering meal awaits the
Friends in the garden's most hidden arbour.

But where shall I go? Does not a mortal live
By work and wages? Balancing toil with rest
All makes him glad. Must I alone then
Find no relief from the thorn that goads me?

A springtime buds high up in the evening sky,
There countless roses bloom, and the golden world

Tell me, people, who knows where
in bamboo I sit alone and in the
East a sickle moon looking
through Bamboo?

No. 4 *Sleepless night*
(Chan I)

The wind swings bamboo
the moon sets on stone.
A shadow of a wild goose
flew to the trembling Milky Way.

I think of our meeting, a dream
is passing my eyelids. While I
sing with pleasure jackdaws
already chirp the day awake.

Seems calm, fulfilled; O there now take me,
Crimson-edged clouds, and up there at last let

My love and sorrow melt into light and air! -
As if that foolish plea had dispersed it, though,
The spell breaks; darkness falls, and lonely
Under the heavens I stand as always. -

Now you come, gentle sleep! for the heart demands
Too much; but youth at last, you the dreamy, wild,
Unquiet, will burn out, and leave me
All my late years for serene contentment.

Ever In The Midst

H. G. ADLER

Ever in the midst, ever in the midst
I stepped through all the areas of wonder
Far from home but near the spring
What has the soul not suffered
Now wandering in the moss
Now the thorn tears it [the soul]
Ever in the midst, ever in the midst.

Ever in the midst, ever in the midst
Between desperation and pleading
I find myself in the defending house.
Slowly he forgets his struggles
When the ghostly turmoil ends
Ever in the midst, ever in the midst.

Ever in the midst, ever in the midst
When the slumbering death is riding into life -
Crackling tune, strangely jingling
No one can say what will be tomorrow.
Ever in the midst, ever in the midst.

The Little Cakewalk

FRENCH NURSERY RHYME)

Monday, Tuesday, holiday,
Wednesday, perhaps
Thursday is St. Nicolas [day]
Friday one doesn't work
Saturday a little trip
Sunday one takes a promenade

Carousel (We Ride on Wooden Horses)

LEO STRAUSS

In the years long, long ago
When we were small children
We had one ideal.
If they wanted silence in the house
Or could we choose a gift as a reward,

All the children shouted quickly:
Merry-go-round, oh please, please, merry-go-round.

We ride on wooden horses
And are rotated in circles.
We are longing to become dizzy
Before the merry-go-round stops.

That's a strange journey,
That's a trip without an aim.
We can not get out of the circle
And still we experience a lot.

People have ambitions
Even when they are in misery
They want to be something better.
Even when nobody has a say
It is a pleasure for everybody
To yell at the poorer.
Do you hear the ghosts-song:
Differentiate, oh please, please, differentiate.

We ride on wooden horses...

Lullaby

ILSE WEBER

Rock, cradle, rock,
The wind plays on the lyre.
It plays so sweet in the green reeds,
The nightingale sings her song.
Rock, cradle, rock,
The wind plays on the lyre.

Rock, cradle, rock,
The moon is the lantern
Above in the dark canopy of heaven
And looks down on the world.
Rock, cradle, rock,
The moon is the lantern.

Rock, cradle, rock,
How still is the world.
No sound disturbs the sweet rest,
Sleep, my little child, sleep,
Rock, cradle, rock,
How still is the world.

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Soni Ventorum; February 23, 8:00 PM, Brechemin Auditorium

Contemporary Group; February 26, 8:00 PM, Meany Theater

University Jazz Combos; February 27, 8:00 PM, Brechemin Auditorium

**Madrigal Singers and Collegium Musicum, February 27, 8:00 PM, Meany
Theater**

**Baroque Chamber Ensemble and Collegium Musicum; March 1, 8:00 PM,
Brechemin Auditorium**