

# ***Love's Philosophy: A Multicultural Approach through Song***

**An Honors Thesis (HONR 499)**

**by**

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## **Abstract**

The philosophies of love, like many other philosophies, vary extensively across the fabrics of time and of geographical space. As people question throughout their lives, “What is the truth of love?” it may be difficult to pinpoint how others define it through mere actions. Through the study of various vocal pieces which are culturally different from one another, one can better understand how humanity generally conceives the notion of love, outside of any religious maxims fabricated over the years. The medium of song is one of universal communication, one which can help people understand emotions and conceptions without or in addition to extensive uses of language. Throughout my recital in April of 2021, I performed various sets sandwiched between two pieces titled “Love in the Dictionary” (as to provide a framework of the recital) and “Love’s Philosophy” (to serve as a question-provoking recital closer). What may be defined in the dictionary ultimately cannot dictate how people learn certain concepts, and this is of vital importance as music teachers effectively educate twenty-first century classrooms with diverse student demographics.

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## Artist Statement

The culmination of my solo voice lessons was a recital performed in Sursa Hall on April 30<sup>th</sup>, 2021. To prepare for such an exciting moment, as I had never prepared a solo recital before in my life, I began months ahead in learning some vocally challenging music that varied across elements such as time, language, and applied techniques.

I met with my professor Yoko Shimazaki-Kilburn in December of 2020 to discuss my recital topic in the coming semester, and I informed her that I would like to have a theme that aligned with the title of my final piece, “Love’s Philosophy.” With so much misinformation that spreads through modern technology in the form of social media posts and through the Internet, part of which is the blurred distinction of love and lust, I think it is important to ask what it means to truly love something. I have been a practicing Catholic my whole life, and, though I had known that Jesus wants us to love something with all our being—Saint Paul tells us the same in his plethora of letters, the love being the greatest of the theological virtues of “faith, hope, and charity”—I never knew *exactly* what it meant to love something. Differing minds have pinpointed the definition of “love” very well: “To love means to lavish... Love is sacrifice...” etc. From my own personal perspective, the two above pair well not only as a dichotomy but as synonyms. It is easy to do something good and easy—perhaps mindless and not physically nor mentally taxing—for someone whom one may not love with his/her full being, but it is incredibly arduous to do something, for this same person, which is inconvenient, time-consuming, and mentally/physically difficult, in the form of a sacrifice. Historically, that is what Jesus came on earth to do: to love Creation in the form of sacrificing Himself in the most brutal form of an execution: Crucifixion (not to mention the previous scourging, the immense thirst, the

shoulder wound, etc.). To lavish something means to sacrifice something. Life is chock-full of paradoxes, but this maxim is where we glean the beauty of it.

With this mental framework in mind, I was curious to see how differing composers (in race, ethnicity, etc.) in various time periods depicted the notion of love through song. When Western music flourished in the early Baroque Era, much of the music was about ornamentation and “lavishing” the decorating of time, especially in vocal music through the implementation of melisma, trills, etc. Likewise, the themes and subtle innuendos of love in solo vocal literature correspond with these decorations as love refers to fleeting pleasures of the body one may initially feel in loving something—that is, the physical goodness that comes out of it, even in loving a deity such as the Christian God, though these varying notions of love would make a whole other debate amongst the varying Christian denominations. This is evident in pieces such as “Mein Gläubiges Herze” by J.S. Bach (my audition piece for the school of music), in which the vocalist’s heart leaps for joy, knowing that God has come to redeem man. Henceforth from the Baroque Era, such notions of love—the euphoric physicality of it as opposed to the sacrifice which inherently comes in any relationship with another person, even if not a romantic pursuit—prevailed throughout western literature, and I desired to highlight this to pose a dichotomy with my personal conceptions of love and what love means in a Catholic perspective.

I should elaborate on personal experience with the idea of love before delving further into the artistic process itself: I grew up in a divorced family of bitterness, of anger, of ceaseless resentment. I do not attribute this to religion itself but rather to the lack of practice of the Catholic religion in my family, since my family adheres to ideas of Catholicism posed during or after the Second Vatican Council, the council which statistically resulted in a tepid, lukewarm faith of nominal Catholics all over the world. I also am aware that many students today are

apathetic towards religion, despite many of their practices that, in essence, align with, for example, the Catholic religion itself (abstaining from meat for ethical reasons, frequent meditation, consulting a therapist, etc.). The practical solution to this problem itself is not by yelling at the Scramble Light, as many religious fanatics have demonstrated, “God loves you and wants to know you personally!” but rather initiating and engaging in a philosophical discussion and thought-provoking interactions regarding what it means to exist. In short, I argue that, to truly exist, we need to love and sacrifice for the community around us because that is what humans were made to do and what humans have done since the inception of the species itself. I also pose that moral relativism—as is especially prevalent in modern United States—is no viable solution to a worldwide problem of conflict and strife which roots from the free will humans possess.

We cannot have this important discussion without first acknowledging the multicultural fabric of the contemporary United States. Diversity is necessary for society to function; we cannot have our current commodities without the different jobs and functions that people must execute to realize our desires. However, the opposite is true for human community: People cannot truly love nor appreciate others if they fervently disagree on a topic/ideology held personally close in either party; superficial acts of kindness are not to what I am referring here, but love in the form of willingness to sacrifice for someone else. Many schools encourage diverse curricula in classrooms today, and this is beneficial for thought-provoking discussions and for (thought to a limited extent) understanding the particular backgrounds of peers who are learning alongside a student. However, if students fervently disagree on something and the rest of class time is spent in a negative kind of argument, as may be the case in an English class, this only corroborates the maxim stated above: For community to authentically foster, there must be

philosophical unity before humans implement diverse functions or tend to different (and lesser) matters.

As I considered my experiences and personal conceptions while discussing with my professor regarding pieces to perform, we agreed on a set of pieces—I am not well versed in vocal literature with explicit themes of love, so she at large suggested pieces to me—that adhered to one another in the common theme of love and relationships yet distinguished by individualistic traits that gave each piece/set its respective cultural color, both in musical traits and in the words spoken. Each piece (or set of pieces) provides an interesting point-of-view on what love may mean, and this is of utmost importance to consider, especially for me, a future music teacher who will teach a diverse student body that represents a multitude of cultures and philosophies of life.

I first decided on “Love’s Philosophy” by Roger Quilter as an ending piece, because love is a philosophy of life, and philosophy dictates mostly everything that we do, to the extent that we humans are aware of our own philosophy and actively or passively think about it. However, the specific idea of love depicted in the piece largely detracts from the definition of love I posited above, and I wanted this to be the case, because it still poses a question at the end that provokes the audience to think about what love truly means. My professor also suggested “Love in the Dictionary” by Celius Dougherty of its objective (the debate of what is objective is beyond the point of the artist statement, though this alone could make for a whole statement itself) framework through which to view my recital. One could peruse the definitions outlined in the piece to think about how different Western cultures portray love in the other pieces on my recital program and what factors of unity/diversity may connect or distinguish each cultural flare

from/with one another—to the extent that we may extract and formulate an ideology out of a certain scenario without explicit definitions—in its respective notions of love.

Since my voice professor has a Spanish degree, and because she knew that I had previous experience with speaking Spanish in my high school, she decided on a selection of pieces titled “La maja dolorosa” from *Tonadillas* by the Spanish composer Enrique Granados. This is a more sorrowful and dolorous selection that sets the stage for more hope to unfurl later in my recital. I chose this as my first multicultural (in this context, multicultural means a part of the non-English selections) set after my first piece. It helps to set the dichotomy for the positive side of love to display; a maja had just lost her beloved majo, and she passionately portrays her disquietude and her consternation at such a loss, with the sheathed question of, “Can one ever move past such an instance of tragedy, or will my life be like this forever?” The set closes with the maja setting her eyes on someone else, thus rekindling an interest for love and for the passion which implicitly accompanies the Spanish lifestyle.

The set which comes after this set in the recital is from *Frauenliebe und -leben*, “A Woman’s Life and Love” by renowned composer Robert Schumann. “Seit ich ihn gesehen,” my first piece of the set, somewhat leads off of the last piece of “La maja dolorosa no. 3,” as one is blind in the sense that (s)he can only fixate his/her mind on the newly-beloved and nothing else; it is similar to a vivid flower blooming, all of the colors of love unsheathing and unleashing their potencies into the human mind. This helps to reinforce the idea that the mind lavishes in love (or, in this case, one can argue that a lustful desire is at hand), that love in its full form is either there or it is not; there is no such thing as in-between. This is the step of loving something in which the lover forgets about the self in pursuit of the other person; selflessness (at least, a passive selflessness) is a necessary part of the first step. The piece following the first is titled “Er, der

Herrlichste von Allen” (He, the most wonderful of all) is now hyper-focused on the specific qualities of the beloved and not on the obliteration of one’s normal perception of his/her surrounding environment. In fact, the lover in this case might deem him/herself unworthy of the beloved, which may also be integral in many Western notions of love: a perceived unworthiness of the beloved. The narrator of this selection recognizes this and the fact that she may not be able to pursue the one on whom her eyes are glued and eternally fixed. This is a part of human psychology as a way to cope with expectations: Set the standards low so that one will not be disappointed later. Though love is the most complex idea there is, this maxim still applies here as the woman is trying to avoid heartbreak later by admitting her lowliness to herself. Thankfully, the following piece is titled “Ich kanns nicht fassen nicht glauben” (“I cannot believe???”). In this piece, the lover knows that the feelings are mutual, and she cannot help but partake in an ecstasy of embrace, feeling as if she is in a dream and outside of reality. The lavishing aspect of love is now realized physically, since the beloved feels the same way. Like the Spanish set, true love has a particular passion and fixation which is unbreakable (at least, should not be consciously broken) between the two parties.

The final set of my “multicultural middle” is *La Regata Veneziana* by renowned Italian composer Gioachino Rossini. Anzoleta, the voice behind the scenes, is watching her significant other, Momolo, compete in a Venetian gondola race. Throughout the entirety of the race, her heart is palpitating, her breathing heavy, her eyes wide, all a physical manifestation of worry. The real question here, though, is, what is the real worrying for? In traditional instances of marriage, the female parties attempted to marry the richest men in town, and this was not limited to material possessions but also in terms of reputation and status. If Momolo were to win the race, Anzoleta would have herself a true prize of a potential husband, so one could infer that she



worries her own reputation will fall severely if he were to lose the race. This makes sense, even outside of the lock of marriage, since, in Rossini's time, women were still viewed as subordinate to men.

Though aforementioned and already briefly outlined, my closing piece of the recital was "Love's Philosophy" by Roger Quilter, but more elaboration is necessary as to why this is the ending piece and why this was the theme of my recital. In this piece, one recognizes how every physical element on earth is in some sort of divine connection with one another, either directly or indirectly. The vocalist uses this analogy to speak of the potential mingling with a significant other: "Why not I with thine?... What are all of these kissings [of the earth] worth, if thou kiss not me?" This particular notion of love first springs from ideas which are empirically evident in the workings of nature. "Fountains mingle with the river... the moonbeams kiss the sea... [etc.]" are all physical manifestations and tangible symbols of how humans naturally behave towards one another.

With this in mind, the real question is the following: Is this necessary mingling of things a result of Divine Creation or is this a chance result of macroevolution? To word this differently, the very question that stands out to me is, "What is this all worth?" It is apt that the audience leaves on such a question, thinking about what music and beauty and life and existence are all worth, though the question may be preposterous to some. In the end, though the question is a discomforting one upon initial encounter, it is necessary for humans to extricate the sempiternal truth behind all things. Especially as an artist, I see that life is a gift, a chance to create beauty and all that is inherently good for the human spirit. In terms of creating music, since music engages the whole brain at once, according to neuroscience studies, I see art as both a cultivator of the logical faculties and as a medium of expressions and a vehicle of sentiments which written

language may not communicate. Music is the subject in high school in which I made my close group of friends, in which I was truly engaged with the subject matter, in which I was able to truly formulate what life means to me and why. Music is a complex synthesis of experience and of knowledge, and I hope that I was able to touch my audience with my selections in this way.

Whenever I learned new solo vocal repertoire, my professor would first practice the diction with me, so that I would never practice it incorrectly. This is so important for singers who only speak one native language; the false pronunciation of a foreign language can be offensive to someone who may natively speak the language. The language that I needed to practice the most, of my Italian, German, Spanish, and English pieces, was German given its unique nuances and my own unfamiliarity with the language, though the German set was my favorite of the three different sets sandwiched in between the English pieces. In conjunction with learning the pronunciation of each piece, I learned the English translations and the flow of the text since it helped me memorize languages that do not really flow together in my mind like English does. I reviewed the texts while I was learning the music so that memorization would happen sooner and not later. I learn music most quickly when I read through it frequently, since this practice helps to imprint a photographic memory in my head, but intermittent glances at the stanzaic form of the text itself with its adjacent translations help very much in this process, and I needed to frequently practice this way with my German and Italian selections, especially, since I already possessed some knowledge of Spanish.

I spent much of my free time learning music and memorizing the repertoire in front of me, since a recital is not a recitation as much as it is a performance; the music must be enlivened with interpretive gestures and must not be monotonous at all as is when one is trying to ensure that he/she just has it memorized. Thus, I spent much time in a practice room ensuring that the

notes I hit not only existed but were given individual flares according to the varying emotional backdrops. I chose the gestures and facial expressions at my discretion since many but not all of the dynamics and articulations were already written in the music or refined in my voice lessons with my instructor. I practiced in the evenings when I did not have class or homework due that night or on Friday/Saturday nights. I noticed that this process is similar to exercising the physical body; the more frequently one exercises is more important than the intensity (not meaning that intensity is not important), since the body will acclimate itself to the physical rhythms of exercise and will tone according to its demands. Likewise, the more frequently I rehearsed my music, though practice sessions were not always gruelingly taxing and long, the more automatic I could generate the music in my head and the more authentically and naturally I could perform it over time. The maxim of “Practice makes permanent [not perfect,]” however, still applied, and I kept this in mind as I practiced in shorter intervals.

The dress rehearsals—I had two full runs of my recital before performance day—helped me immensely prepare for the recital, since I had in no other point of my life sung any other set of memorized pieces as solos. I must admit, this was utterly nerve-wracking, since I had never sung by myself for thirty minutes straight before; to emphasize, I was the only one singing, so there was no hiding a voice crack nor a cough. Though performing my own recital in Sursa Hall was extremely riveting on one hand, I was also completely vulnerable under the bright lights on the other hand. After my first dress rehearsal, I could then truly appreciate how much mental and physical energy frequent recitalists exert into a performance and how much more it requires to polish it and make it presentable; previously, as a mere viewer of recitals, I could never understand the requirements of a recital fully. After one full cycle of singing, my voice was tired, and I was mentally drained; such an undertaking truly requires one’s full attention to execute

well. I, thankfully, had another full recital run-through the following Wednesday in Sursa Hall, and this run-through felt very natural, almost as if I was preparing for a choir concert. I discovered that the key was knowing that my hard work was going to pay off and that my performance would be best presented with the mindset of pure, unadulterated positivity and confidence.

The whole day of my recital was spent mentally and physically preparing myself for my performance. Though one might be nervous upon first thoughts of, “It is recital day,” I could not help but exude excitement, since my family and significant other were traveling from far away to Muncie to watch me perform; if I am being honest, it almost felt like prom day, since the near end of the semester was approaching and I was dressing up and preparing to sing “my heart out.” From the moment I woke up, I went to have my hair and makeup done; by the time I had come back and eaten something, it was time to dress and to head to my warm-up session. At this point, all the music and the routine of the sets were very automatic to me as was breathing and walking, especially after much mental rehearsing (i.e., performing the music in one’s head); I did not notice any remnant of worry or anxiety because I knew that I had prepared well. Admittedly, I had talked quite a bit the night before—not a wise choice on my end, but it was out of excitement for the following day—so I was worried that some vocal fatigue would be evident in my voice that day. Luckily, it did not show, and all my hard work culminated in the successful execution of my recital. To know that I did a recital as a music education major while in the Honors Program is something I will always remember, since it was no simple feat during the second semester of my junior year. Looking back on this simultaneously-arduous-and-enjoyable journey, I have learned heaps of new knowledge and have gained much experience that I can

transfer into my singing career and to my students in the future, so that they might consider how to love something with their whole hearts.

[Amber Grooms Junior Honors Recital](#)

# Amber Grooms' Junior Recital

## Program notes, texts, and translations

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### **“Love in the Dictionary”**

**Celius Dougherty (1902-1986)**

**Text from *Funk and Wagnall's Students' Standard Dictionary***

“Love in the Dictionary” is a musical setting of the technical definitions of “love” as outlined in the aforementioned dictionary. Interestingly enough, though a dictionary is supposed to arbitrarily dictate what a word means in a single or few essences, the variations of “love” seem to be infinite even in a dictionary. Of course, that may be because the different cultural outlooks on the concept of love vary widely, though some may claim “love” to be a universal feeling. However, one may ask, “Is it really a feeling?” I hope to use this as a comprehensive framework for my recital, providing a “concrete” basis with which to evaluate the following pieces.

Love: A strong, complex emotion or feeling of personal attachment,  
causing one to appreciate, delight in, or crave the presence  
or possession of the object, and to please and promote the welfare  
of that object;  
devoted affection or attachment;  
specifically, the feeling between husband and wife;  
brother and sister;  
or lover and sweetheart;  
One who is beloved;  
a sweetheart;  
animal passion;  
the personification of the love-passion;  
Cupid;  
in some games, as tennis, nothing.

## Selections from *11 Tonadillas*

**Enrique Granados (1867-1916)**

**Text by Fernando Periquet (1873-1940)**

These selections from *11 Tonadillas* indicate Granados' interest in eighteenth-century compositional styles for the solo voice. A *tonadilla* highlights characters of everyday life and illuminates emotional and characteristic attributes through satirical and exaggerated portrayals; such a character that Granados employed was a *maja dolorosa* ("sorrowful woman"). *Majos* and *majas* were Spanish people of the lower classes in the section of Madrid called "Lavapies" in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, characterized by their elaborate dress and their unusual behavior. In these pieces, Granados paints a passionate and disquieting display of a distraught young woman who has lost her beloved *majo*. Throughout these three selections, one can observe her experiencing three different stages of grief, her emotions abating and outlook clearing more and more as each note of the music passes. By the end, she may have even encountered a potential new *majo* who may rekindle the passion that is integral in Spanish notions of love.

### **La maja dolorosa no. 1**

¡Oh muerte cruel! ¿Por qué tú, a traición,

Mi majo arrebataste a mi pasión?

¡No quiero vivir sin él,

porque es morir, así vivir!

Oh, cruel Death! Why have you, pitilessly,

Stolen my love away from me?

I don't want to live without him,

Because it is death, to live this way!

No es posible ya sentir más dolor:

En lágrimas deshecha mi alma está.

¡Oh Dios! Torna mi amor,

Porque es morir así vivir.

It is impossible to feel more pain:

My spirit is dissolved in tears.

Oh, God! Return my love,

Because it is death to live this way.

## La maja dolorosa no. 2

¡Ay majo de mi vida, no, no, tú no has  
muerto!

¿Acaso yo existiese si fuera eso cierto?

¡Quiero loca besar tu boca!

Quiero segura gozar más de tu ventura,

¡Ay!, de tu ventura.

Mas, ¡Ay!, deliro, sueño: mi majo no existe.

En torno mío el mundo lloroso está y triste.

¡A mi duelo no hallo consuelo!

Más muerto y frío,

Siempre el majo será mío. ¡Ay! Siempre  
mío.

Ah, man of my life, no, no - you haven't  
died!

How could I continue to exist if this were  
true?

I want, irrationally, to kiss your mouth!

I want, truly, to cast my lot with yours,

Ah, with yours!

Ah! Still I rant and dream; my man no  
longer exists.

All about me the world is weeping and sad.

For my sorrow there is no consolation!

Even dead and cold,

My man will be mine. Ah, always mine.



### La maja dolorosa no. 3

De aquel majo amante que fué mi gloria

Guardo anhelante dichosa memoria.

El me adoraba vehemente y fiel

Yo mi vida entera di a él,

Y otras mil diera si él quisiera,

Que en hondos amores

Martirios son flores.

Y al recordar mi majo amado

Vam resurgiendo ensueños

De un tiempo pasado.

Ni en el Mentidero ni en la Florida

Majo más majo paseó en la vida.

Bajo el chambergo sus ojos vi

Con toda el alma puestos en mí

Que á quien miraban enamoraban,

Pues no hallé en el mundo

Mirar más profundo.

Y al recordar mi majo amado

Vam resurgiendo ensueños

De un tiempo pasado.

Of that handsome lover that was once my  
joy

I ardently keep sweet memories.

He adored me fervently and loyally.

My whole life I gave to him,

And a thousand more would I give, if he  
wished it,

For in deep love

Agony is sweet.

And when I think of my beloved majo,

Dreams of a time gone by

Are rekindled.

Neither in the Mentidero, nor in the Florida,

A more handsome man ever roamed.

Under the rim of his hat I saw his eyes

Fixed upon me with all his soul.

They bewitched all those whom they beheld,

And in this world I never found a gaze

So profound.

And when I think of my beloved majo,

Dreams of a time gone by

Are rekindled.

***Frauenliebe und -leben***

**Robert Schumann (1810-1856)**

**Text by Adelbert von Chamisso (1781-1838)**

*Frauenliebe und -leben* (“A Woman’s Life and Love”) is a song cycle that outlines how a particular nineteenth-century Western woman may emotionally evolve in a relationship—in this case, love that may not be characteristic in arranged marriages, as has been the norm in Europe for hundreds of years prior. This particular song cycle also highlights the humility that women were expected to display in their relationships, regardless of social status, given that women were considered inferior to the authority of man. Robert Schumann was a composer who was profoundly affected by the norms of Romantic-era literature, and these selections from the song cycle not only highlight a woman’s perspective of love but also Schumann’s own musical conveyance of a topic that is naturally evocative at its core.

**1: Seit ich ihn gesehen**

Seit ich ihn gesehen,  
Glaub' ich blind zu sein;  
Wo ich hin nur Blicke,  
Seh' ich ihn allein;  
Wie im wachen Traume  
Schwebt sein Bild mir vor,  
Taucht aus tiefstem Dunkel,  
Heller nur empor.

Sonst ist licht- und farblos  
Alles um mich her,  
Nach der Schwestern Spiele  
Nicht begehrt' ich mehr,  
Möchte lieber weinen,  
Still im Kämmerlein;  
Seit ich ihn gesehen,  
Glaub' ich blind zu sein.

**1: Since I Saw Him**

Since I saw him  
I believe myself to be blind,  
where I but cast my gaze,  
I see him alone.  
as in waking dreams  
his image floats before me,  
dipped from deepest darkness,  
brighter in ascent.

All else dark and colorless  
everywhere around me,  
for the games of my sisters  
I no longer yearn,  
I would rather weep,  
silently in my little chamber,  
since I saw him,  
I believe myself to be blind.

**2: Er, der Herrlichste von allen**

Er, der Herrlichste von allen,  
Wie so milde, wie so gut!  
Holde Lippen, klares Auge,  
Heller Sinn und fester Mut.

So wie dort in blauer Tiefe,  
Hell und herrlich, jener Stern,  
Also er an meinem Himmel,  
Hell und herrlich, hehr und fern.

Wandle, wandle deine Bahnen;  
Nur betrachten deinen Schein,  
Nur in Demut ihn betrachten,  
Selig nur und traurig sein!

Höre nicht mein stilles Beten,  
Deinem Glücke nur geweiht;  
Darfst mich niedre Magd nicht kennen,  
Hoher Stern der Herrlichkeit!

Nur die Würdigste von allen  
Darf beglücken deine Wahl,  
Und ich will die Hohe segnen,  
Viele tausendmal.

Will mich freuen dann und weinen,  
Selig, selig bin ich dann,  
Sollte mir das Herz auch brechen,  
Brich, o Herz, was liegt daran?

**2: He, the most glorious of all**

He, the most glorious of all,  
O how mild, so good!  
lovely lips, clear eyes,  
bright mind and steadfast courage.

Just as yonder in the blue depths,  
bright and glorious, that star,  
so he is in my heavens,  
bright and glorious, lofty and distant.

Meander, meander thy paths,  
but to observe thy gleam,  
but to observe in meekness,  
but to be blissful and sad!

Hear not my silent prayer,  
consecrated only to thy happiness,  
thou mayst not know me, lowly maid,  
lofty star of glory!

Only the worthiest of all  
may make happy thy choice,  
and I will bless her, the lofty one,  
many thousand times.

I will rejoice then and weep,  
blissful, blissful I'll be then;  
if my heart should also break,  
break, O heart, what of it?

**3: Ich kann's nicht fassen, nicht glauben**

Ich kann's nicht fassen, nicht glauben,  
Es hat ein Traum mich berückt;  
Wie hätt er doch unter allen  
Mich Arme erhöht und beglückt?

Mir war's, er habe gesprochen:  
"Ich bin auf ewig dein"—  
Mir war's—ich träume noch immer,  
Es kann ja nimmer so sein.

O laß im Traume mich sterben,  
Gewieget an seiner Brust,  
Den seligen Tod mich schlürfen  
In Tränen unendlicher Lust.

**3: I can't grasp it, nor believe it**

I can't grasp it, nor believe it,  
a dream has bewitched me,  
how should he, among all the others,  
lift up and make happy poor me?

It seemed to me, as if he spoke,  
"I am thine eternally",  
It seemed - I dream on and on,  
It could never be so.

O let me die in this dream,  
cradled on his breast,  
let the most blessed death drink me up  
in tears of infinite bliss.

## *La Regata Veneziana*

**Gioachino Rossini (1792-1868)**

**Text by Count Carlo Pepoli (1796-1881)**

*La Regata Veneziana* (“The Venetian Race”) is an exciting account of a young lady named Anzoleta, watching her Momolo compete in a Venetian gondola race. As this piece is the recounting of a Venetian event, likewise, the language of this piece is in a Venetian dialect to add to the authenticity of the context. Though this was published in Rossini’s leisurely collection of *Les soirees musicales* after his retirement, this particular set highlights an interesting element of a Western relationship: societal status and reputation. Anzoleta is insisting that Momolo rows with “heart and soul” to obtain the red flag of victory, of which “all of Venice will talk.” Not only does Momolo’s status elevate when he obtains the prize, but her status elevates too, given her position as an Italian woman at the time; therefore, one may ask, was her excitement for Momolo or for her own benefit? Emotional attachment matters, but this piece emphasizes that status and material property matter even more (to some), so love, in this case, is really just a gateway to material prosperity.

### **1: Anzoleta avanti la regata**

Là su la machina xe la bandiera,  
varda, la vedistu, vala a ciapar.  
Co que la tornime in qua sta sera,  
o pur a sconderte ti pol andar.  
In pope, Momolo, no te incantar.  
Va, voga d'anema la gondoleta,  
né el primo premio te pol mancar.  
Va là, recordite la to Anzoleta  
che da sto pergolo te sta a vardar.  
In pope, Momolo, no te incantar.  
In pope, Momolo, cori a svolar.

### **1: Anzoleta before the regatta**

There on the "machina" is the flag,  
look, can you see it(?), go for it!  
Come back with it tonight  
or else you can run away and hide.  
Once in the boat, Momolo, don't gawp!  
Row the gondola with heart and soul,  
then you cannot help but win the first prize.  
Go, think of your Anzoleta,  
who's watching you from this balcony.  
Once in the boat, Momolo, don't gawp!  
Once in the boat, Momolo, fly!

## 2: Anzoleta co passa la regata

I xe qua, i xe qua, vardeli, vardeli,  
povereti i ghe da drento,  
ah contrario tira el vento,  
i gha l'acqua in so favor.

El mio Momolo dov'elo?  
ah lo vedo, el xe secondo.  
Ah! che smania! me confondo,  
a tremar me sento el cuor.

Su, coraggio, voga, voga,  
prima d'esser al paletto  
se ti voghi, ghe scometo,  
tutti indrio ti lassarà.

Caro, caro, par che el svola,  
el li magna tuti quanti  
meza barca l'è andà avanti,  
ah capisso, el m'a vardà.

## 2: Anzoleta when the regatta passes

They're coming, they're coming, look, look  
at them,  
the poor things!, they row hard!  
ah, the wind is against them,  
but the tide is running their way.

My Momolo, where is he?  
ah! I see him, he's the second,  
Ah! I'm in a fidget! I get confused,  
I feel my heart trembling.

Come on, row!, row!,  
before you reach the pole,  
if you keep on rowing, I'll lay a bet  
you'll leave all the others behind.

Dear boy, he seems to be flying,  
he's beating the others hollow,  
he's gone half a length ahead,  
ah, I understand: he looked at me.

### **3: Anzoleta dopo la regata**

Ciapa un baso, un altro ancora,  
caro Momolo, de cuor;  
qua destrachite che xe ora  
de sugarte sto sudor.

Ah t'o visto co passando  
su mi l'ocio ti a butà  
e go dito respirando:  
un bel premio el ciaparà,

sì, un bel premio in sta bandiera,  
che xe rossa de color;  
gha parlà Venezia intiera,  
la t'a dito vincitor.

Ciapa un baso, benedeto,  
a vogar nissun te pol,  
de casada, de traghetto  
ti xe el megio barcarol.

### **3: Anzoleta after the regatta**

Have a kiss!, another one!,  
dear Momolo, from my heart;  
rest here, for it's high time  
to dry this sweat.

Ah, I saw you when, as passing,  
you threw a glance at me  
and I said, breathing again:  
he's going to win a good prize,

indeed, the prize of this flag,  
that is the red one;  
the whole Venice spoke:  
she declared you the winner.

Have a kiss, God bless you!,  
no one rows better than you,  
of all the breeds of gondoliers  
you're the best.

## **“Love’s Philosophy”**

**Roger Quilter (1877-1953)**

**Text by Percy Bysshe Shelley (1792-1822)**

“Love’s Philosophy” is a metaphorical poem composed in the Romantic era that emphasizes the notion of free love, commingling what one perceives as divine law to natural emotions. Roger Quilter composed an energetic setting to the text, and one may sense a brisk underlying heartbeat to give the music momentum from the beginning to the end. The height and depth of the accompaniment paint an expansive scenery, in which the singer finds all of the creatures of the world (and elements above, such as the sunlight and moonbeams) in some shared experience with one another. This particular viewpoint highlights human love as an emotional conjoining of two persons, not including material motivations noticed in *La Regata Veneziana*, for example. Therefore, particular *philosophies* of love will deviate from what is defined in a dictionary, and this is inevitable for everyone, given that personal experiences constantly change how we conceive certain ideas and concepts.

The fountains mingle with the river  
And the rivers with the ocean;  
The winds of Heav’n mix for ever  
With a sweet emotion.  
Nothing in the world is single;  
All things, by a law divine,  
In one another's being mingle,—  
Why not I with thine?

See the mountains kiss high Heav’n  
And the waves clasp one another;  
No sister flower would be forgiv’n  
If it disdained its brother.  
And the sunlight clasps the earth  
And the moonbeams kiss the sea,  
What are all these kissings worth,  
If thou kiss not me?



This recital is completed as partial fulfillment of the Honors College requirements, which includes a final capstone project. The namesake theme of the recital, “Love’s Philosophy,” is meant to be a creative comparison of Western notions of love amongst varying solo vocal literature, spanning across several centuries and across a few different countries. Since people claim love to be a universal feeling, it is of paramount importance to understand how love is defined within different cultural contexts; this may include such elements as passion, material property, or just a sense of peace, however that may be portrayed. Moreover, an analysis of elements such as musical form, harmonies, etc. and an insight of the composers’ lives can provide a deeper context of how love is defined amongst certain Western cultures. In a music classroom, students will thrive academically and socially if they feel accepted and welcomed, and comparing societal notions of love can provide insights on how cultures operate, generally speaking, making teachers more informed of different behaviors amongst students. Though music from around the world will be the main context of a public school music classroom, the Western literature for this purpose provides insights that are applicable to other global cultures. I plan to complete the thesis either in the summer or fall of 2021.