The Pedagogical Value of Art Songs by French-Canadian Composers.

A Selection of Vocal Music by Calixa Lavallée, Lionel Daunais and André Mathieu.

This is the Lecture/Recital Portion of a Thesis Presented to The Faculty of the Department of Music Northeastern Illinois University In Partial Fulfillment Of the Requirements for the Degree Master of Arts In Applied Music Pedagogy By Lorraine Manifold (May 2011)
French-Canadian mélodies are a valuable addition to the repertoire of all students.

Works by 3 composers are featured:

• Calixa Lavallée (1842 - 1891)
• Lionel Daunais (1901 - 1982)
• André Mathieu (1929 - 1968)
Pedagogical Value

French-Canadian mélodies have a lot to offer voice students. The pedagogical value of these songs will help them learn French diction, vowel modification in the French language, breath management, unifying registers, adding more space, energy and depth for ascending pitches, as well as singing legato and with various articulations.
Cultural poverty in Canada before 1867.

- Canadian composers were mostly amateurs
- European influences could not be transplanted into Canada’s “musical wilderness”
- The clergy prevented the rise of secular music
Confederation united the country politically, culturally and economically.
19th century

The coffee house: a musical tradition that did not exist in France: amateurs as well as professionals performed ballads, opera arias, and instrumental music.
From Confederation 1867 to 1920

- Rise of a sense of professionalism in music education, performance and composition
- Large growth of number of native performers and composers
- Development of a Canadian musical style
- Rise of Canadian subjects as sources of inspiration.
- Canada began to export excellent musicians to other countries
CALIXA LAVALLÉE
(1842-1891)

• Learned to play the organ when he was 11 years old
• Studied piano with Antoine Marmontel in Paris
• Elected President of MTNA in 1886
• Played in many concerts with Belgian violinist Frantz Jehin Prune
CALIXA LAVALLÉE

- Important figure in Canadian music
- His works constitute the root of Canadian tradition in musical composition
- Produced more works in various genres than any other Canadian composer of the period
- Dedicated his life to the musical life in Canada
- Organized the first opera performance in Canada
• First written for SATB chorus
• Text by Judge Adolphe-Basile Routhier
• Was first played on 24 June 1880
• Gained immediate popularity among French Canadians
• Was not widely accepted throughout Canada until 1908, with the English text by Robert Stanley Weir
• Officially approved as national anthem by the Canadian Parliament in 1967.
• Original key: G Major
• Can be sung a cappella
• Fluid melody that often moves by steps
• Soprano Range: G₄ to G₅
• French, English or a bilingual version
• Vowel modification might be required
• Excellent for learning French diction and rules
Liaisons and Elisions:

• French liaison:
  Examples: ton histoire, brillants exploits

• French elision:
  Example: ton histoire est
Diphthong versus monophthong vowels:

• French monophthong vowel: /e/
  Examples: épée, porter

• English diphthong vowel: /ɛ : ɪ/
  Example: say
• Composed in 1886
• Published the same year by White-Smith
• Text by Gertrude Hall (1863-1961) nicknamed Kittie
• Comfortable song for beginners
• Gentle swaying piece meant to be sung in salons
• Melodic line is gentle and flowing,
• Only English song in this selection
• Original key: D flat Major (key analyzed: B flat Major)
• The tempo is waltz-like in 3/4 meter
• Range from D₄ to F₅
• Tessitura F₄ to D₅, good for lower voices
• Melody moves by step or small intervals of (3rds or 4ths)
• Pedagogical values: ascending leaps, unification of registers, singing legato phrases, breath control, and vowel modification
Keeping Timbre Consistent

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To my love that Spring-time resembles

46
Learning to sing legato phrases, especially in areas where there are ascending and descending intervals.

Clasps the earth in her tender arms
Piano accompaniment helps the singer think legato:

In comparison to

or
• *Summer Night* composed in 1880
• Published the same year by Lavigne
• Poem by Napoléon Legendre (1841-1907)
• Strophic form
• Piano accompaniment suggests the warmth of a summer night.
Original key: A Major (key analyzed: F Major)

Range: C₄ to E₅

Tessitura: between F₄ and D₅

Melodic line is predominantly stepwise with a few leaps of 4ths or 6ths

Consonant harmonies, though some chromaticisms appear in the melody.

Pedagogical values: singing legato on repeated notes, *messa di voce*, elisions, and possibly vowel modification.
Messa di voce
for intermediate students

Voi-ci la nuit, tout est silence,
After World War I

- Changed social conditions
- Women worked during the war
- Schools were developing
- Influx of immigrants
- Move from rural to urban areas
- Shift towards Francophone identity in Quebec
Music in Canada

• European trends not widely spread in Canada before 1939
• Search for a Canadian identity
• Canadian League of Composers in Toronto in 1951.
• Creation of CBC radio (1930s) helped disseminate compositions by Canadian artists.
• Increase of art songs & song cycles
• Born into a family of musicians
• Began singing lessons at 19 years old
• Won 1st prize in the Montreal Musical Festival 2 years later
• Won the Prix d’Europe himself (in singing) at age 24
• Multi-faceted career as singer, composer, lyricist, stage director and producer, writer and broadcaster.
LIONEL DAUNAIS

• Well-known baritone who won many prizes for his vocal performances
• Founded the Trio Lyrique with whom he recorded 250 radio broadcasts
• Composed more than 200 songs for voice and piano, 30 songs for children, 18 choral pieces and arranged more than 70 folksongs
Daunais wrote music and text to *He Lives in My Heart*

- Waltz reminiscent of Erik Satie’s *Je te veux*
- Composed in 1941
- Pedagogical values: keeping consistent timbre throughout large range, chromatic harmonies, and vowel modification.
• Original key: F Major
• Transposed key available in E flat Major
• Large range: from B₃ to A₅
• Tessitura is medium: from G₄ to E₅
• Song is in ABA¹ form with a coda at the end.
• Chromatic harmonies in Section B
Unifying Registers

- Laryngeal stabilization is required to keep timbre consistency
- Add space, energy and depth as pitch ascends
VOCAL PEDAGOGY

Passaggio Zones & Vowel Modification

Bass  Baritone  Tenor  Alto  Mezzo  Soprano
Vowel Modification

\[ \text{IL HABITE MON COEUR} \]

\[ \text{tou - jours} \quad \rightarrow \quad [\text{tujur}] \rightarrow [\text{tujur}] \]

\[ [\text{tute}] \rightarrow [\text{tut\text{\text{e}}}] \quad \rightarrow \quad \text{De tou - te} \]
• Set of 12 light and comic songs
• Can be sung by older and younger singers alike
• Contain simple rhythms and diatonic harmonies
• Most songs have ranges of less than one octave
• Arranged for SATB choir by Daunais in 1979
• Original key: G Major
• Range: from G₄ to C₅
• Time signature is 2/4
• Rhythms are easy consisting of 8th, 1/4 & 1/2 notes.
• Pedagogical goals of this piece include: exaggerating the diction, singing legato lines and singing expressively.
Final Consonants

• Recurring final sound (fake Latin-sounding words): /ys/
• Tongue position of /i/ + lip position of /u/ = /y/

angelus
trolleybus
éméritus
orémus
laïus
terminus
escrabouillus
tempus
6. LE BEL ALEXIS

- Original key: G minor
- Range: from G₄ to E flat ⁵
- Expression marking: very melodious, with tenderness.
- Pedagogical goals of this piece include: minor key, staccato-tenuto, singing legato and expressively.
6. LE BEL ALEXIS

Tenuto

Staccato-Tenuto

Specke de la Ro-
ho-
ho-
ho-
ho-

(any vowel)

(any vowel)
• Original key: D minor
• Range: from B flat 3 to E flat 5
• Small tessitura: E\textsuperscript{4} and B\textsuperscript{4}
• Original title of the poem: \textit{Vent du soir}
• Text by Paul Fort (1872–1960) (> 30 volumes of ballads)
• Pedagogical goals of this piece include: long legato phrases, vowel modification and French diction.
Breath Management

- Good posture
- Low breaths
- Prevent rib cage from collapsing
ANDRÉ MATHIEU
(1929-1968)

- At 6 years old, had already composed more than 9 works for piano
- At age 7, won a scholarship to study piano and composition in Paris
- Paris critics compared him to Mozart for the quality of his compositions
ANDRÉ MATHIEU

• His *Concertino No. 2* won 1st prize
• He performed it in Montreal with Sir Thomas Beecham conducting
• Played it at Carnegie Hall when he was only 13 years old.
ANDRÉ MATHIEU

André Mathieu representing Canada at an event in Carnegie Hall presided over by Eleanor Roosevelt, Fiorello La Guardia and supported by Thomas Mann and Albert Einstein.
ANDRÉ MATHIEU

- Studied composition with Arthur Honegger
- Studied piano with Jules Gentil
- Played for Alfred Cortot
- Composed mainly for piano but also 11 songs for voice
- He died suddenly in 1968 at the age of 39.
• Original key: D flat Major
• Form is AA\textsuperscript{1}BAA\textsuperscript{11} (Blues Tempo)
• Range: from C\textsc{iv} to A flat 5
• Medium Tessitura: F\textsc{iv} to D flat 5
• Text by Jean Laforest, a scriptwriter at Radio-Canada.
• Pedagogical goals of this piece include: triplets, French diction, vowel modification.
SI TU CROIS...

Vowel Modification

Si tu crois...

[crø də] → [croε dʌ]

au creux de mes

[trø] → [trʌ]

au - tre - - fois.
SI TU CROIS...

Triplets

je ne serai plus là pour te blottir au creux de mes
• Original key: F Major
• Range: from D flat 4 to to A φλατ 5
• Medium Tessitura: A4 to D5
• Text by Paul Verlaine (1844-1896)
• Only known musical setting of this poem.
• Pedagogical goals include: Changing time signatures & rhythmic patterns, chromatic harmonies, key modulation, ascending octave leaps and vowel modification.
Octave leaps, changing time signatures & rhythmic patterns

Les chères mains m'ouvrent les rêves.
Mains en songe, mains à me,
Sais-je, moi, ce que vous
Les Chères MAINS

Chromatic harmonies & key modulation

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el-le, De comp-li-ci-té ma-ter-nel-le D’af-fec-

\[ \text{Musical notation} \]
• Original key: E flat Major
• Range: from C4 to F sharp 5
• Medium Tessitura: A flat 4 to E flat 5.
• Text by Paul Verlaine (1844-1896)
• Piece best suited for intermediate students
• Pedagogical goals include: ascending octave leaps, chromatic variations, vowel modification, complex rhythms and changing time signatures.
Complex harmonies and non-diatonic tones

et l'on entend à peine leurs paroles
COLLOQUE SENTIMENTAL

Changing time signatures

poir!» «L'espoir a fui, vaincu, vers le ciel

noir.» Tels ils mar -
In addition to French mélodies, French-Canadian Art Songs add more depth and variety to the repertoire.
A SELECTION OF MUSIC BY
CALIXA LAVALLÉE,
LIONEL DAUNAIS, &
ANDRÉ MATHIEU
O Canada !
Terre de nos aïeux,
Ton front est ceint de fleurons glorieux !
Car ton bras sait porter l’ épée,
Il sait porter la croix !
Ton histoire est une épopée
Des plus brillants exploits.
Et ta valeur, de foi trempée,
Protègera nos foyers et nos droits (2x)
SPRING FLOWERS
CALIXA LAVALLÉE
NUIT D’ÉTÉ

CALIXA LAVALLÉE

TITRE PAGE FROM THE MORNING CHRONICLE, 24 JUNE 1880.
Ce cher abbé Bélus
Le bel Alexis
LE VENT DES FORÊTS
LIONEL DAUNAIS
SI TU CROIS

ANDRÉ MATHIEU
Les Chères mains

André Mathieu

Prestigious Windsor Hotel where the song was premiered in 1950
COLLOQUE SENTIMENTAL
ANDRÉ MATHIEU
LA TOURTIÈRE
LIONEL DAUNAIS
LA CABANE À SUCRE
ALBERT LARRIEU
LA SOUPE AUX POIS

ALBERT LARRIEU
THE END

TED HARRISON, O CANADA
THANKS, EH?

Thank you for coming. I hope you have enjoyed this brief survey of French-Canadian music.

Please contact me if you would like to find out more about Canadian music or how to order sheet music of Canadian compositions.

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