THE FEMININE SOUL:
LOVE, COURAGE, AND SACRIFICE IN THREE CENTURIES
OF VOCAL REPERTOIRE

by

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Music is a unique form of communication. It sings from soul to soul, touching each of us in uniquely different ways. While researching the life of Clara Schumann, I became intrigued with the idea that feminine qualities, as expressed by her music, could be found in other composers work for the soprano voice. I explored this possibility in a lecture recital and followed up this work by performing two operatic roles and a recital.

This dissertation performance project comprises three programs that represent five aspects of the ying, the feminine side of the soul—namely, yearning for love, courage in the face of love, love itself, loss of love and finally sacrifice for love. Program number one was a presentation of Serse by G. F. Handel presented by the Maryland Opera Studio on November 21, 22, and 24, 2003 in the Ina & Jack Kay Theater in the Clarice Smith Performing Arts Center. I sang the role of Romilda, a character representing courage and sacrifice.
The second performance project was a fully staged performance of *Tales of Hoffmann* by J. Offenbach also presented by the Maryland Opera Studio on May 1 and 5, 2004 in the Kay Theater in the Clarice Smith Performing Arts Center. I sang the role of the yearning Antonia in this production.

The third program presented music in four different languages covering three centuries of art song and concert music in a recital on November 28, 2005 in the Joseph and Alma Gildenhorn Recital Hall. The repertoire examined the feminine themes presented by Romilda and Antonia: yearning for love, love itself, courage, loss of love and sacrifice for love.

All of the above programs are documented in a digital audio format and are available on compact discs.
# TABLE OF CONTENTS

1. Chapter 1
   - Opera 'Serse' Act I (CD1)
   - Opera 'Serse' Act II & III (CD2)

2. Chapter 2
   - Opera 'Les Contes d'Hoffmann' Part I (CD1)
   - Opera 'Les Contes d'Hoffmann' Part II (CD2)
   - Opera 'Les Contes d'Hoffmann' Part III (CD3)

3. Chapter 3
   - Dissertation Recital: Feminine Soul (CD)
     
     **Yearning**
     - Track 1: Zalde – Hector Berlioz
     - Track 2: Romance de Mignon – Henri Duparc
     - Track 3: Gretchen an Spinnrade – Franz Schubert
     - Track 4: Er ist gekommen in Sturm und Regen – Clara Schumann

     **Love**
     - Track 5: Vier Lieder Op. 27 – Richard Strauss
     - Track 6: Cäcilie
     - Track 7: Heimliche Aufforderung
     - Track 8: Morgen!

     **Courage**
     - Track 9: Ch’io mi scordi di te... Non temer, amato ben, K. 505 – Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart

     **Loss**
     - Track 10: Mother Comfort – Benjamin Britten
     - Track 11: Come away, death – Roger Quilter
     - Track 12: Heart! We will forget him! – John Duke

     **Sacrifice**
     - Liu’s Arias from opera Turandot – Giaccomo Puccini
     - Track 13: Signore, ascolta!
     - Track 14: Tanto amore segreto
     - Track 15: Tu, che di gel sei cinta