

Estonian Generations

Music of Lembit Lepasaar Beecher and 20th Century Estonian Composers

September 29, 2011 8 pm

New York Estonian House
243 East 34th Street
New York, NY 10016

Estonian Generations

Kellad (The Bells)

Heino Eller (1887 – 1970)

Selections from 50 Eesti Rahvaviisi (50 Estonian Folk Tunes)

Juhan Aavik (1884 – 1982)

- i. Meil aiaäärne tänavas (The road by our garden)
- ii. Ketra Liisu (Liisu at the spinning wheel)
- iii. Kui olin alles nooruke (When I was but a child)
- iv. Lõikuse Laul (Harvest Song)

For Camille

Lembit Beecher (b. 1980)

*Selections from Kuus Eesti Jutustavat Rahvalaulu
(Six Estonian Narrative Folksongs)*

Veljo Tormis (b. 1930)

- i. Kari kadunud (Herd lost)
- ii. Tütred lindudeks (Daughters into birds)
- iii. Suisa suud (Bold kiss)

Song in Mistranslation

Lembit Beecher

Siks Oon Mä Suruinen (This is Why I am Sorrowful)

Toivo Kärki (1915 – 1992)

brief intermission

Vater Unser (Our Father)

Arvo Pärt (b. 1935)

Piece from the Year 1981

Lepo Sumera (1950 - 2000)

Dedication

Erkki-Sven Tüür (b. 1959)

Three Songs of Remembered Love

Lembit Beecher

- i. Corn Blue Shirt
- ii. The Most Beautiful Waltz
- iii. The Quiet Snow Fell Down

Song in Mistranslation

Lembit Beecher

Valss (Waltz)

Ilmar Kiiss (b. 1923)

Mary Bonhag, soprano
Evan Premo, double bass
Sato Moughalian, flute
Nick Gallas, clarinet
Karen Ouzounian, cello
Lembit Beecher, piano

Song Descriptions and Texts

Selections from *50 Eesti Rahvaviisi* (50 Estonian Folk Tunes) Juhan Aavik (1884 – 1982)

Meil aiaäärne tänavas (*The road by our garden*)

A song of childhood memory in which the singer recalls her youthful eagerness to grow up, and reflects that now as an adult, she longs for the simple peace of childhood.

Ketra Liisu (*Liisu at the spinning wheel*)

A conversation between a mother and daughter in which the daughter refuses to work at her spinning wheel. The mother entices her with various gifts that the daughter refuses until the mother offers to find her a young husband from Tartu (a town in southern Estonia).

Kui olin alles nooruke (*When I was but a child*)

The singer remembers the simple innocence of her youth and the joy she took from trees, meadows and flowers.

Lõikuse Laul (*Harvest Song*)

A work song describing the process of haying.

Selections from *Kuus Eesti Jutustavat Rahvalaulu*
(*Six Estonian Narrative Folksongs*)
(traditional words, translated by Kristin Kuutma)

Veljo Tormis (b. 1930)

Kari kadunud (*Herd lost*)

I sat on beauty's mountain,
Rested on beauty's turf,
Cuddled on beauty's tree,
Nested in beauty's branches,
Perched in beauty's birches.
I was sewing a silver hat
Stitching the bridegroom's shirt.
Meanwhile the herd scattered,
Father's horse broke loose,
Brother's foal stole away,
Mother's striped cow slipped away,
Father's wise bull went astray.

I went running home,
Running and crying.
Mother met me at the gate,
Father met me on the street:
“Why do you cry, daughter young?”
“Why do I cry, mother dear.
I sat on beauty’s mountain,
Rested on beauty’s turf,
Cuddled on beauty’s tree,
Nested in beauty’s branches,
Perched in beauty’s birches.
I was sewing a silver hat,
Stitching the bridegroom’s shirt.
Meanwhile the herd scattered,
Father’s horse broke loose,
Brother’s foal stole away,
Mother’s striped cow slipped away,
Father’s wise bull went astray.”

“Don’t you cry young daughter!
I’ll send the serfs to seek,
The orphans to look,
The bread-children to find the cows.”
“No, no, no, no, dear mother,
The serf will not seek the horses,
The bread-children won’t find the cows—
The serf seeks carelessly,
The orphan without heed—
I’ll go looking for myself.”

I went to the great mountain,
I jingled the bells.
Father’s horse came running,
Brother’s foal showed up,
Mother’s striped cow fell in,
Father’s wise bull was back.

Tütred lindudeks (Daughters into birds)

Mother had many daughters,
Two flocks of chickens:
She put two to stretch the yarn,
Six to weave the cloth,
Seven to prepare the bed,
Eight to tend the cattle.
Those who were left over,
Left over and left behind,

Those she turned into black grouse by the road,
Into ducks by the sandy heath,
Into woodcocks by the wilderness,
Into birds by the forest.
Mother went to fetch water,
She had to bring light ale.
The grouse tweeted by the road,
The duck quacked by the sandy heath,
The woodcock sang by the wilderness,
The bird called by the forest:
“Mother dearest,
The darling nurturer,
For whom are you fetching the water,
Fetching the water, bringing the ale?”
“For the sisters who make the cheese,
For the daughters-in-law who bake the bread,
For the sons who sharpen the chisel,
For the sons-in-law who whet their knives.”

Then their mother remembered,
Their nurturer felt her love,
She started to call them home,
To invite them to return:
“Come back home, my own chicken,
Return to me, my darling ones!
Your sister made you a big cheese,
Your sister-in-law baked you sweet bread.”
“Mother, dearest,
The darling nurturer,
The willow catkins are better,
The birch sprouts are crunchier
Than the big cheese of your sister,
Than the sweet bread of your sister-in-law”

Suisa suud (Bold kiss)

I went to the forest for a broom,
To the roadside for a tin broom,
To the clover for a copper broom,
To the backyard for a silver broom,
To the paddock for a gold broom,
To the meadow for a shiny broom.
I arrived a Sulev's mountain.
I arrived at Kalev's mountain.
There stood Sulevipoeg,
There stood the bravest Kalevipoeg,
He asked me boldly for a kiss,
He teased me for a kiss, he vexed me for a hug.

I carried a sharp knife,
I was hiding a shiny sword.
Boldly I struck Sulevipoeg,
With vengeance the bravest Kalevipoeg,
I struck through his beautiful body,
Through his glowing face,
Through his new gray coat,
Through his russet hair.

I returned home in tears,
Mother met me, father met me.
Mother asked caressingly,
Father spoke with wisdom:
“Why are you crying, young daughter?”

I went to the forest for a broom,
To the roadside for a tin broom,
To the clover for a copper broom,
To the backyard for a silver broom,
To the paddock for a gold broom,
To the meadow for a shiny broom.
I arrived a Sulev’s mountain.
I arrived at Kalev’s mountain.
There stood Sulevipoeg,
There stood the dearest Kalevipoeg,
He asked me boldly for a kiss,
He teased me for a kiss, he vexed me for a hug.
Boldly for a kiss, pertly for a hug.
I carried a sharp knife,
I was hiding a shiny sword.
Boldly I struck Sulevipoeg,
With vengeance the bravest Kalevipoeg,
I struck through his beautiful body,
Through his glowing face,
Through his new gray coat,
Through his russet hair.

Mother answered, father answered:
“Be of good cheer, dear daughter,
For defending your honor,
For killing a great rogue!”

Siks Oon Mä Suruinen (This is Why I am Sorrowful)

A Finnish song of loss that describes a life that seems to be devoid of meaning.

Thanks to the Estonian House, Katrin Albaz and Toomas Sõrra for helping make this concert possible.
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