My thoughts upon expression, and thus throw
Soul--heart--mind--passions--feelings--strong or weak
All that I would have sought, and all I seek
Bear, know, feel--and yet breathe--into one word
And that one word were Lightning, I would speak;
But as it is, I live and die unheard,
With a most voiceless thought, sheathing it as a sword."

Frederick Rzewski is a contemporary American composer whose works are often inspired by secular and socio-historical themes, show a deep political conscience and feature improvisational elements. "Winnsboro Cotton Mill Blues" is part of four-piece set called North American Ballads. This piece is the most programmatic of the four, clearly articulating the noise of the machines in an industrial factory. Rzewski uniquely utilizes the sounds of the cotton mill by a nonstop rhythm that begins alternating between two notes, slowly adding more and more until eventually asking the pianist to play with their entire forearms. The machinery is abruptly interrupted by a blues song that portray the poor working conditions of laborers in a textile mill in Winnsboro, North Carolina in 1930.

Meghan Kent is a student of Amanda Halstead. This recital is presented in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Bachelor of Music Performance Degree.

OLD DOMINION UNIVERSITY
Department of Music

Student Recital

Meghan Kent – Piano

Diehn Fine and Performing Arts
Chandler Recital Hall

April 8, 2011   7:30pm

Program

La Cathédrale Engloutie   Claude Debussy
                                                 (1896-1918)

Minstrels

Sonata in D Major, op. 28, "Pastorale"   Ludwig van Beethoven
    Allegro   (1770-1827)
    Andante
    Scherzo
    Rondo

Intermission

Vallee d'Obermann   Franz Liszt
                                                 (1811-1886)

Winnsboro Cotton Mill Blues   Frederic Rzewski
                                                  (b. 1938)

Today's recital is in lovingly memory of my grandfather, Donald Joe Kent. Music was his life and an inspiration to his family. We miss you, Granddaddy. I know you would have been proud of me

Program Notes

Debussy was one of the great composers of the style of musical impressionism during the late 19th and early 20th century. Impressionist composers were the first to use the uncommon whole tone scale, major seventh chords, and extended chords to five and six part harmonies. These and other characteristics of their music convey impressions, imagery, and sensations that set impressionism apart from all other time periods. *La Cathedrale Engloutie* was inspired by an ancient myth of a sunken cathedral that rises up from the sea. Sounds of bells ringing, organ playing, and ancient chanting can be heard throughout the piece until the cathedral begins to sink back into the water. *Ministrels* came to life when Debussy toured in America. As he traveled, he saw the shows put on by minstrels, which is where he got the inspiration for this piece. The piece contains much humor, odd interruptions, and quirky rhythms that parody the comedy of minstrel shows.

Beethoven's Piano Sonata No. 14 has become known as the "Pastorale." There is speculation as to whether this title refers to images of countryside and nature such as that of his Pastorale Symphony or to the sense of peace and tranquility throughout the first and fourth movements. Published in 1801, right around the time he was writing of his worsening deafness, this sonata is quite unique in comparison to his other piano sonatas. While nowhere near as popular as its predecessor, *Moonlight* Sonata, the *Pastorale* is admired for the intricacy and technicality in each of the four movements as he paints this serene image through music.

Franz Liszt was not only a prolific composer, but he was also quite the piano virtuoso who spent most of his life touring all over Europe. His musical maturity can be seen evolving through his experience and travel. *Vallée d'Obermann* is part of a collection of piano suites entitled *Années de pèlerinage*. This particular movement is from his years spent in Switzerland. This highly programmatic piece is based on this poem...

Byron's *Childe Harold's Pilgrimage*
"Could I embody and unbosom now
That which is most within me,--could I wreak