For my third and final concert review I attended the Fall Quarter Student Vocal Recital. There were 26 performances so I had a lot of variety to listen to. I was presently surprised at how good everyone was, although I had no idea how the songs were supposed to sound like they all seemed to have performed the pieces very well. The music performed was of the classical variety, from the 17th and 18th centuries.

Overall I found it very difficult to identify what notes the person was singing. There were a number of things that distracted my ear, starting with the fact that most of the songs were sung in another language. If the song was sung in English, the words were sometimes so drawn out that I couldn't understand them anyway. It was more like opera music than the music I am used to listening to. However, the vocals seemed very powerful even if I had no idea what they were saying. The majority of the singers were singing in soprano, which seemed to me like a very balanced range to sing in.

Unlike a piano or other instruments, the human voice has a lot more variables in it that can produce different sounds. Naturally some people have a lower or higher pitched voice, which translates into their singing. I found it interesting that even though when the performers would be singing the same note, the way they pronounced the word they were singing or the loudness of their voice could make that note sound completely different. From the earlier concerts, I was used to having a piano sound like a piano, only having a set number of sounds that could be played. With this concert, the performers' voices had an almost infinite range of sounds that they could choose from. I found that I had much more anticipation to hear how the next person would sing as opposed to how the next person would perform on the piano.

My favorite song of the night was "Erbarme dich" by Bach, performed by Bruno Caulk (tenor) and Pamela Sheffler (violin). I thought that the piano, violin, and vocals all combined created a very powerful piece of music. It was also interesting watching how they performed the piece, because for the first time the singer had a book in his hand with the sheet music for the piano and violin to synchronize them together. I also observed that before performing, the pianist would strike a key, and the violinist would play and tune that key on their violin. With all 3 units performing at the same time, they created a very dynamic range of sounds.

I found that most of the pieces had to do with love, and were mostly in a minor key. It is interesting to compare the classical music to today's music, where popular songs can be about anything, not just love. It was interesting to hear how the composers translated their feelings very well into their music, and the piano and vocals combined really created a sense of what the composer was feeling at that time.