

# *KSU musicians perform well*

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Music Critic

What do a bunch of variously colored flowers, an alto saxophone, a flute and Robert Edwards all have in common?

Answer: Jennifer Edwards singing *Dejeuner sur L'Herbe* by Newel Kay Brown during her vocal recital in All Faiths Auditorium on Wednesday evening.

Mr. Brown is professor of theory and composition at North Texas State University at Denton, Texas, and *Dejeuner sur L'Herbe* was commissioned from him by Al Cochran of the KSU department of music. Despite the title, the text, by poet Richard Sale, is in English.

"The little thought-flowers keep coming..."

The setting, in which Mary Lee Cochran played the flute, Al Cochran the alto sax, and Robert Edwards the piano, is varied and dramatic and provided Ms. Edwards ample opportunity for both characterization and dramatization. She did both to great effect.

The text is not of a constant quality, but it has some nice lines.

"When the sun goes slant and lazy..."

*Dejeuner sur L'Herbe* may not be to everyone's liking, but on first hearing I found it to be an interesting and engaging work that was well performed by all concerned — in addition to the notable singing and declamation of Jennifer Edwards, Al Cochran's rich and well controlled tone was particularly attractive — and worth looking forward to hearing a second time.

Jennifer Edwards is a charming and engaging performer who can create a character, or set a mood for a song, easily and to great effect. She had her best opportunity to do so during her portrayal of *The Deaf Old Woman*, out of which she created a delightful miniature drama.

There was also plenty of drama to be had in Ravel's *Chansons Madecasses*. This powerful trio of songs which Ravel composed in 1925-26 arose out of request from Mrs. Elizabeth Sprague Coolidge for a song cycle for voice, flute, cello and piano. The composer obliged by setting French translations, by Evariste-Desire de Parney, of three Madagascar folk songs.

Warren Walker, cello, joined Ms. Edwards, Mary Lee Cochran and

Robert Edwards for an effective performance of these powerful songs.

The first half of the program had consisted of works by Purcell, Schubert and Rossini. Most notable here was the sublime music of Schubert and the way in which Ms. Edwards conveyed so well the character of each of his songs.

This was a fascinating and vocally taxing recital, and I came away with the thought that we are indeed fortunate to have amongst us a singer of the caliber of Jennifer Edwards, that I

would like to hear a great deal more of Al Cochran's fine saxophone playing and that we can only be grateful for those who have the foresight to commission new works. If serious classical music is to survive, the majority of musicians cannot continue to act in the main as janitorial custodians of dead artifacts, dusting them off now and then, indeed wearing some of them out with their constant dusting and polishing, just to see the old light shine one more time "in the chilling rooms of memory."