

TEXT AND TRANSLATIONS

# Saturday 20th April

FILLING THE CITY WITH SONG  
LEEDS LIEDER FESTIVAL  
2024

## ON WINGS *of* SONG

LEEDS LIEDER 20TH  
ANNIVERSARY FESTIVAL



Howard  
Assembly  
Room



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ENGLAND



# Saturday 20 April

SAT 20 APRIL | 1PM  
HOWARD ASSEMBLY ROOM

## Lunchtime Recital: *Myrtles*: Harriet Burns, Nick Pritchard, Christopher Glynn, Kate Wakeling

Harriet Burns soprano

Nick Pritchard tenor

Christopher Glynn piano

Kate Wakeling poet and reader

Schumann's song cycle *Myrthen*, retold in English by Jeremy Sams, with new poems by Kate Wakeling.

In 1840, Robert Schumann was finally able to marry the woman he loved - the sensationally gifted pianist Clara Wieck - after a long and bitter legal battle with her father. His hard-won happiness found expression in an extraordinary collection of songs, presented to Clara on the morning of their marriage and named after the white myrtle sprigs that for centuries have symbolised love and hope in every wedding bouquet. With secret messages, riddles and lucky charms, these twenty-six songs are an A-Z of Robert's hopes, fears, experiences and beliefs as he stands at a crossroads in life.

Performed in English, alongside new poems by Kate Wakeling to set the scene, this is a fresh take on one of the most unusual and captivating of all song cycles.

### ROBERT SCHUMANN

Dedication

*A Garland of Song - Kate Wakeling*

Free Spirit

The Chestnut Tree

Someone

*Someone else - Kate Wakeling*

Songs of the Inn I

Songs of the Inn II

The Lotus Flower

Talismans

Suleika's song

*If the heart is a mirror - Kate Wakeling*

The Highland Widow

Bridal Song I

Bridal Song II

The Highlander's Farewell

Highland Lullaby

From the Hebrew Songs

Riddle

*Mask - Kate Wakeling*

Venetian Song I

Venetian Song II

The Captain's Lady

Far away

One lingering teardrop

No-one

In the west

*These hands - Kate Wakeling*

You're like a flower

Roses from the East

*At the last - Kate Wakeling*

At the last



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# Text and Translations

## **Myrtles, Robert Schumann (1810-1856)**

### **Dedication**

*The opening song surfs a wave of 'I'm getting married in the morning' exhilaration. The middle section moves into gentler waters and the final bars weave in a tiny tribute to Schubert but quoting his Ave Maria.*

You are my pleasure, you're my pain,  
You are my sunshine, you're my rain.  
You are my soul, you're all I strive for,  
The final goal I stay alive for.  
When you are near, then all my  
Sadness and sorrows disappear.

You are the peace, the calm I long for,  
You are the journey I stay strong for.  
How can it be that you could love me,  
You so sublime, so high above me.  
When I awake, you're all I see,  
The other, better part of me.

### **A Garland of Song**

*(Kate Wakeling)*

What gift is a garland of song?

A garland of flowers  
might be sweet-stemmed,  
star-white, steeped in scent:  
a lovely thing indeed,  
but flowers given must be  
clipped and bound.  
They droop and fade.

A song, though, holds  
its place in time.  
It is purest patience  
waiting mutely on the page.

...



...

It can be woken up  
with just the breath  
and finger tip.

It can move a soul, let's say,  
two hundred years,  
and usher in a bright September day,  
where - under a sky swept clean -  
two figures may at last lean close.

What gift is a garland of song?

It is time remade,  
or a wish, so nearly lost,  
held safe.

For a song is alive, always,  
in its sounding.

It buds and blooms.

It too can scent the air  
with all that's good and true,

and, with a single note,  
it lets the past  
grow new.

## **Free Spirit**

*A look back to the freedom of Robert's bachelor days, but also the sense of embarking on the journey of marriage.*

Time to take the saddle and away we go.  
There's a world of wonders which we've yet to know.  
Who needs friends or family to love us?  
All we need's the firmament above us!

Our Father set the stars in the sky  
As our sempiternal guide.  
So every time we gaze on high  
May He be glorified!



## The Chestnut Tree

*A song about waiting and dreaming, this is unmistakably a portrait of Clara.*

The beautiful spreading chestnut tree,  
Staring through her window, that's all the girl can see.

A myriad blossoms on the tree,  
When the winds caress them the blossoms seem to sway.

They gather in groups of two or three.  
Bobbing, nodding together as though they had loads to say.

They gossip about their neighbour,  
The girl at the window who'll stare and sigh  
All of them know why.

They're whisp'ring, they're whisp'ring  
The more they whisper, the more she'll hear

She will be married within the year, within the year,  
She sits and listens with shining eyes,  
Thinks about her boyfriend, shudders, and smiles and sighs.

## Someone

*The poetry of Robert Burns had a special place on Robert and Clara's bookshelf. The special 'someone' in this poem was originally Bonnie Prince Charlie.*

My heart is in pain, my heart may break,  
My heart is in pain for 'someone';  
Till early morning I lie awake,  
But still I'm dreaming of 'someone'.  
Oh beautiful 'someone',  
Oh wonderful 'someone'.  
I'd gladly travel the whole wide world  
To be with my 'someone'.

Ye gods above who are moved by love,  
Confer your blessings on 'someone'.  
I beg you please bestow your special protection  
On 'someone'.  
Oh beautiful 'someone',  
There's not a dragon I wouldn't fight  
For my delightful 'someone'.





## Someone Else

*(Kate Wakeling)*

Might we begin, my love,  
with a word about this dragon.  
The one who wears my father's face.  
Could there be a beast with a brisker tongue,  
or one more ready to snatch at our cause  
then grind it to bits in those taut jaws of his?

The things he said about you, my love.  
The things he said. I don't wish to labour them -  
but then he did try so very hard.  
Whereas you are, I quote:  
'lazy, unreliable and conceited'.  
Also: 'childish and unmanly.'  
There is the question of your performing  
(‘mediocre’ he declares) and your composition  
(‘unclear and completely impossible to perform’).

And then there is the drinking. You are,  
he states a drinker. A drinker of beer.  
And of wine. In public. Every night.  
I note the judge did not discount this claim.  
I noted it well. I note it still. And what, I wonder,  
is our rejoinder to this issue in our midst.  
Perhaps we ought not bait the dragon more  
but instead lay low. Keep quiet.  
Hold our peace. And you, your drink.

## Songs of the Inn I

*A moment of self-irony from Robert, who knew he drank too much (though he wasn't quite the alcoholic that Clara's father claimed).*

Give me a chair,  
A glass or two of wine,  
And then I'm completely fine!  
When you're sitting drinking  
Then nobody can know what you're thinking...  
Give me a chair,  
A glass or two of wine,  
Then I'm completely fine,  
Yes I'm fine ... drinking wine



## Songs of the Inn II

*The wry self mockery continues: a drunk man is railing against the pub landlord, but softens when a young 'cupbearer' arrives on the scene (Schumann always loved children).*

God you're so rude,  
You slam my food and my drink  
All over the table.  
Why can't someone serve me  
Without a scowl or possibly smile if they're able?

You beautiful boy, come and join me here,  
Stop standing there, smiling politely.  
Please will you serve me my wine and my beer,  
Why can't you take care of me nightly?

## The Lotus Flower

*For the Schumann's, it seems, consummation of their love waited upon marriage. Here is its promise.*

The lotus flower is trembling,  
Scared by the blinding light,  
Shielding her face from the sunshine  
She patiently waits for the night.

The moon, her secret lover,  
Awakens her from on high.  
She slowly opens her petals  
And spreads herself to the sky.

She glows and grows and quivers  
And yearns for heaven above,  
While filling the night with her fragrance,  
The essence of pain and love.



## Talismans

*'Everything that happens in the world affects me' said Schumann once, and here is Goethe's similarly universal vision for a true marriage of East. West and all that is holy in the world.*

God is everything on high,  
God is everything below.  
God is everything I dream of,  
God is everything I know.

He, the source of all creation  
All our strength and our salvation,  
Let us worship and adore Him,  
Let us all bow down before Him.

God is everything on high,  
God is everything below;  
When I'm lost in disillusion  
He can comfort my confusion.  
He can lead me, He can guide me,  
He can find the truth inside me.

God is everything on high,  
God is everything below.  
God is everything I dream of,  
God is everything I know.

## Suleika's Song

*A song of separated lovers, connected only through music.*

Singing secretly within me  
There's a song of joy and pride,  
And it says he'll always love me,  
That he'll always want me by his side.

And he'll always send his blessing  
Even though we're miles apart,  
And because he's mine for ever  
I will hear it in my heart.

...





...

Yes my heart is like a mirror,  
Look within, you'll see your face,  
And my soul which you have dwelt in  
Has become a holy place.

When a poem matches music,  
When they sweetly intertwine,  
The resultant song of longing  
Will come close to the divine.

Singing secretly within me  
There's a song of joy and pride,  
And it says he'll always love me  
And he'll always want me, always by his side.

## **If the Heart is a Mirror**

*(Kate Wakeling)*

If the heart is a mirror,  
what of yours?

For a time, your heart's mirror  
returned me as a child  
before either of us  
could glimpse me whole.

Then I watched another face  
shining in the mirror of your heart.  
And I waited at the glass,  
lost to distance,  
consigned to echo.  
But now, I am all reflection.  
I catch myself fully in its glint.  
I am glad to dwell  
in the bright walls of you.  
And you in me.  
See how our two mirror hearts  
now call back and forth,  
unblinking  
and in perfect exchange,  
quick and perpetual  
as light itself.



## The Highland Widow

*This Scots warrior seems to represent the importance of not losing heart, of steadfastness and grit in the face of adversity, 'for better or worse'.*

Unto the lowlands I have come,  
Ochon, Ochon, Ochrie!  
There's not a penny in my purse  
To buy a morsel for me.

It was not so before I came,  
Ochon, Ochon, Ochrie!  
No woman in the Highland hills  
Was happier than me.

For there I had a herd of cows,  
Ochon, Ochon, Ochrie!  
A-grazing on the Highland hills  
And giving milk to me.

And there I had a flock of sheep,  
Ochon, Ochon, Ochrie!  
They bravely faced the Winter cold  
And gave their wool to me.

No happier woman in the clan  
No happier could there be,  
For Donald was the bravest man  
And he belonged to me.

But then Charlie Stuart came along  
To set all Scotland free.  
Then were my Donald's loving arms  
Cruelly torn from me.

Who doesn't know what happened then?  
How right to wrong did yield?  
My Donald and his country fell  
Upon Culloden's field.

So to the Lowlands I have come,  
Ochon, Ochon, Ochrie!  
No woman in the wretched world  
Is wretcheder than me.





## **Bridal Song I**

*One side of a conversation: a young bride must persuade her mother she has made the right choice.*

Mother, mother, be assured,  
Yes I love him, that is true.  
Darling mother, don't you worry,  
I'll always love you too.

That I love him, mother dear,  
Doesn't mean I love you less.  
I will always have you here,  
Present in my happiness.

Mother, mother, now I am his,  
Now I love you all the more.  
This is why you gave me birth,  
This is why I'm on this earth,  
This is what my humble life is for.

## **Bridal Song II**

*...and having convinced her, the two (we sense) can talk as equals about what marriage will bring.*

Mother, don't ask how I found him,  
Let me fold my arms around him.  
All your doubts and questions grieve me,  
What will happen should he choose to leave me?  
Mother, who can tell?  
All I know is all is well.  
Let me wind my arms around him.



## The Highlander's Farewell

*A hint of the Schumann's politics here, as the radical democrat Rabbie Burns speaks up for oppressed highlanders.*

My heart's in the Highlands, my heart is not here,  
My heart's in the Highlands a-chasing the deer.  
A-hunting the stag and a-chasing the roe,  
My heart's in the Highlands, wherever I go.

Farewell to the Highlands, the land of my birth.  
The country of valour, the country of worth;  
Wherever I wander, wherever I roam,  
The hills of the Highlands will always be home.

Farewell the mountains besprinkled with snow,  
Farewell the bountiful valleys below,  
Farewell the forests, the acres of green.  
The thundering torrents that race in between.

My heart's in the Highlands, my heart is not here,  
My heart's in the Highlands a-chasing the deer.  
Wherever I wander, wherever I roam,  
The hills of the Highlands will always be home.

## Highland Lullaby

*As if through a Scottish mist, a vision of the family that Robert and Clara hoped for.*

Hee Balou, my sweet wee Donald,  
Picture o' the great Clan Ronald,  
Why not ask our wanton Chief  
Who begot my Highland thief?

See your eyes, so sly, so bonny,  
When you're big you'll steal a pony,  
Ride the country through and through,  
And bring home a cow or two.

Through the Lowlands o'er the border,  
That's where stealing's quite in order.  
In the Lowlands plunder free,  
Bring your booty home to me.





## From the Hebrew Songs

*Much that has been bottled up is released in this song of big emotions. It marks the halfway point in the cycle and echoes the Old Testament story of King Saul being consoled by the sound of David's harp.*

My soul is dark, come,  
Let your harp console me.  
You have the secret gift of music,  
So let your gentle fingers strum  
A melody that might beguile me.  
If there is still some hope to guide me  
Then let me hear its sweet refrain,  
And if I still have tears within me  
Then put them on my fevered brain.

No, let the song be wild and deep  
With not a trace of hope or gladness.  
I desperately need to weep  
Or else my soul with burst with sadness.  
My mind is aching, steeped in sorrow,  
Its sleepless vigil kept too long,  
But now my heart must know about tomorrow,  
So let it break or melt in song.

## Riddle

*Robert loved riddles, word games, coded messages and ciphers.*

It's never in danger but always in trouble,  
And even stranger it's half a bubble,  
You'll find it in books but not in life,  
It is in your husband but not in your wife,  
When war was declared it started the battle,  
It's in the sabre but not in its rattle;  
It's in every bison, zebra and beagle,  
It's found in a bat, but not in an eagle,  
You'll find it in Belgium and in Albania,  
But not in Australia (including Tasmania).  
It's in the beginning but not the end,  
It's there in a buddy but not in a friend.  
It's the end of heart-throb, the start of beauty,  
It's always in combat but never on duty.  
It brazenly blows in a brass quintet

...



...

But totally quiet in doubt and debt.  
You'll find it in bush baby, not in kitten,  
It's never in France but it's always in Britain.  
In everybody but not in me.  
You must have guessed it, so what can it...?  
Yes what...? Yes what can it (B)!

## **Mask**

*(Kate Wakeling)*

Deft riddler, tickler of wits,  
how many masks you wear.  
I have watched you slip from dream-drifter  
to fire-rider to clear-eyed sage.  
I like your masks.  
I like that from time to time  
you spin from soul to soul within.  
And I too know what it is  
to choose one's garb from day to day,  
to pick a mask to meet the moment.  
I have carried myself upon the stage  
and worn the gaze of a hundred burning eyes.

But for you, it is all freedom.  
You stride by in your many boots,  
hold your pen with many hands,  
think with many brains.  
Shape-shifter, you can journey  
thrice across a single day.

Let me now voyage double with you.  
Let us seek new adventure.  
We will be bright travellers,  
sailing from shore to shore  
across these, our many sweet selves.





## Venetian Song I

*Our song cycle magic carpet heads to Venice, traditional destination for lovers.*

Row softly here  
My gondola,  
Soft, soft, soft,  
So soft that nothing will disturb the tide,  
So soft that not an ear may hear us glide.

If Heaven had a tongue to speak,  
And starry eyes to see,  
So many stories it could tell  
Of wayward youths like me.  
Soft, soft, soft, soft.

Let's linger here my gondolier,  
Soft, soft!  
By this palazzo soft,  
Let me climb aloft  
Yes up I'll go while you keep watch below.

Ah if we took for Heav'n above  
But half the pains that  
We take day and night  
For women's love,  
How holy we would be!  
Soft, soft, soft

## Venetian Song II

*Another mischievous vignette. The Schumanns' courtship depended on stolen and secretive moments like the one described here.*

When through the Piazzetta the night breezes blow,  
Then dearest Ninetta you'll find me below,  
Although you'll be masked I will know who you are,  
You'll shine through the night like the bright Evening star.

Wear the disguise of a young gondolier  
And trembling I'll tell you, "Our boat's over here",  
And then when the clouds are shrouding the moon,  
I'll magic you over the silent lagoon.



## The Captain's Lady

*Robert was genuinely proud to be with a strong woman (though also unable to resist casting himself as her superhero).*

Mount thy steed!  
Make thyself magnificent indeed,  
Be the Captain's Lady.

When the drums do beat  
And the cannons roar,  
Thou shalt see thy love  
In the thick of war.

Grant him all the love and faith  
Thou canst afford him,  
When the foe is vanquished  
Then thou canst reward him.

## Far Away

*The sadness of a poet whose love is 'over the hills and far away'.*

Oh how can I be blithe and gay,  
Oh how can I be brisk and braw,  
My darling boy is here no more,  
He's over the hills and away, way,  
My darling has gone away, way,

The tempest blows by night and day,  
But what care I for rain or snow  
I only cry because I know  
That he is so far away, way,  
That he is so far away, way.

A pair of gloves he bought one day,  
A silken gown of white and grey,  
I wear them still to honour him,  
My darling is far away, way,  
My darling is far away, way.





## One lingering teardrop

*A reminder of what Clara had to sacrifice for her happiness: a father. As Robert wrote in his diary: 'Never forget what Clara has endured for you'..*

There's still one lingering teardrop  
Which still obscures my sight.  
I'd thought my eyes were emptied  
From weeping night after night.

That teardrop had thousands of sisters  
All merrily flowing away,  
But with my sorrow they vanished,  
Like darkness at break of day.

They vanished before I'd noticed,  
Like starlight from the sky,  
Yet once they'd illumined my heartache  
By twinkling in my eye.

Farewell to love that vanished,  
Farewell to stars that shone,  
And you, lingering teardrop,  
Start falling and then be gone.

## No-one

*This simple married man has everything he needs in life. Hard to know whether to take this at face value, or as a caricature of Wieck, who bitterly mocked the Schumann's' 'domestic bliss'.*

I have a darling wife,  
I'd swap my life with no-one.  
But it is plain to see  
She'll cheat on me with no-one.  
I have a bag of gold  
I bought and sold from no-one,  
My fortune is my friend,  
And that I'll lend to no-one.

...



...

I wander through the town,  
I'll cower down to no-one.  
I have my trusty blade,  
So I'm afraid of no-one.  
Let no-one fight with me,  
And I will fight with no-one.  
The world's alright with me,  
That's why I envy no-one.

## **In the West**

*Back in the lonely wilds of Scotland with Robert Burns.*

Out over the Forth I gaze to the North,  
But what are the northern Highlands to me?  
The South and the east are the lands I love least,  
The foreign hills and the wide, wide sea.

I look to the West when I go to my rest,  
Happy my dreams and my slumber may be,  
For far in the West is the man I love best,  
Dear to my baby and dear to me.

## **These Hands**

*(Kate Wakeling)*

How I know them, my love,  
these hands of yours.

I know their surfaces,  
their every temper:  
the way a quiet storm  
will break across them as you work,  
the thrust of them at the page,  
the electric calm they hold when sure.

I know the good weight of them, my love,  
the sweet, dark grip of them,  
how they hunt and spark and soothe.



...

And what of mine?  
These long hands we have laughed at.  
I think you know my hands.  
You watch them - I see it -  
you watch them as I wash the spilled ink  
from your fingers.

In my hands, my spirit rests.  
And when I loose my hands to the keys,  
my spirit wakes and moves and sings.

You love to hold my hands in yours,  
these hands of mine, now bound soft.

I have given you my hands  
and you have taken them.

And you hold them still.

## **You're like a flower**

*One of the great tunes in all Schumann. It was Clara's favourite - and it's not hard to hear why.*

My love, you're like a flower,  
More sweet, more pure, more rare,  
Yet when I gaze upon you  
I am in deep despair.

My love whenever I touch you  
I clasp my hands in prayer,  
Praying that God should protect you,  
So sweet, so pure, so rare.





## Roses from the East

*The most graceful and intimate moment in Myrtles. 'Awaiting Clara' was the note Robert scribbled in the margin.*

The love I send is steeped in scent of roses,  
Although your lovely face is lovelier far;  
The love I send is tenderer than starlight,  
Although I'm sure that you're the sweetest star.  
The love I send is made of stormy weather,  
Sometimes the storm will make your branches sway.  
When you are dreaming, let us dream together,  
And turn my darkest night to glorious day.

## At the Last

*(Kate Wakeling)*

I will picture us when we are old.

Yes, I will picture us when we are old,  
as we make our way across a sunlit square.  
I will picture us freckled and content,  
my hand resting lightly on your arm,  
our children grown,  
our evenings long and sweet.

I will put away the dread  
that waits at my side like a shadow:  
your face pale in the black river,  
how they led you away,  
how silence came to take your place.

No, I will picture us when we are old,  
sat softly on the terrace as the light grows dim.  
We will speak of music.  
We will take the quiet as it comes  
and our never-shut hearts  
will tick on, steady as time,  
to swell bright as two flowers,  
forever in bloom.



## **At the Last**

*The omega song of the cycle expresses the noble simplicity of a love that has come through trials.  
A vision of future happiness for our star-crossed lovers.*

Life may be a vale of tears,  
But we're together, side by side.  
Till the day of joy appears  
Just take my songs, my love, my bride,  
Soon the sun will shine upon us.  
Till that day let God provide,  
Till that happens may my loving  
Shine on you, my love, my bride.

# Saturday 20 April

SAT 20 APRIL | 7:30PM  
HOWARD ASSEMBLY ROOM

## Evening Recital: Ema Nikolovska and Joseph Middleton

Ema Nikolovska mezzo-soprano

Joseph Middleton piano

Macedonian-Canadian mezzo-soprano Ema Nikolovska delighted Leeds Lieder audiences in 2021, and we are thrilled to welcome her back to perform - with Joseph Middleton - the newly-commissioned song cycle by Tansy Davies. The rest of their programme centres around the songs of Schubert, Debussy and the remarkable Margaret Bonds, a composer enjoying a well-deserved renaissance.

Since being at Leeds Lieder in 2021, Ema has given her Carnegie Hall and Deutsche Staatsoper Berlin debuts as well as creating the main role in George Benjamin's *Picture a day like this* at Covent Garden's Linbury Theatre. In 2022 she became a recipient of the prestigious Borletti-Buitoni Trust Award. It's a thrill to witness the stratospheric rise of this outstanding artist and we're so pleased to welcome her back to Yorkshire!



© Kaupo Kikkas



### PROGRAMME

#### FRANZ SCHUBERT

Im Frühling  
Daß sie hier gewesen  
Herbst  
Der Unglückliche

#### TANSY DAVIES

The Ice Core Sample Says

\*A Leeds Lieder commission & world première

#### MARGARET BONDS

*Songs of the Seasons*  
Poème d'Automne  
Winter Moon  
Young Love in Spring  
Summer Storm

*Interval*

#### CLAUDE DEBUSSY

*Ariettes oubliées*  
C'est l'extase langoureuse  
Il pleure dans mon cœur  
L'ombre des arbres  
Chevaux de bois  
Green  
Spleen

#### NIKOLAI MEDTNER

Twilight  
Sleeplessness

#### NICOLAS SLONIMSKY

*Five Advertising Songs*  
Utica Sheets and Pillowcases  
Pillsbury Bran Muffins  
Vauv Nose Powder  
Children Cry for Castoria  
Make This a Day of Pepsodent



# Text and Translations

## Franz Schubert (1797-1828)

### Im Frühling

Still sitz ich an des Hügels Hang,  
Der Himmel ist so klar,  
Das Lüftchen spielt im grünen Tal,  
Wo ich beim ersten Frühlingsstrahl  
Einst, ach, so glücklich war.

Wo ich an ihrer Seite ging  
So traulich und so nah,  
Und tief im dunkeln Felsenquell  
Den schönen Himmel blau und hell,  
Und sie im Himmel sah.

Sieh, wie der bunte Frühling schon  
Aus Knosp' und Blüte blickt!  
Nicht alle Blüten sind mir gleich,  
Am liebsten pflückt' ich von dem Zweig,  
Von welchem sie gepflückt.

Denn alles ist wie damals noch,  
Die Blumen, das Gefild;  
Die Sonne scheint nicht minder hell,  
Nicht minder freundlich schwimmt im Quell  
Das blaue Himmelsbild.

Es wandeln nur sich Will und Wahn,  
Es wechseln Lust und Streit,  
Vorüber flieht der Liebe Glück,  
Und nur die Liebe bleibt zurück,  
Die Lieb' und ach, das Leid!

O wär ich doch ein Vöglein nur  
Dort an dem Wiesenhang!  
Dann blieb' ich auf den Zweigen hier,  
Und säng ein süßes Lied von ihr,  
Den ganzen Sommer lang.

*Ernst Schulze (1789-1817)*

### In Spring

I sit quietly on the slope of the hill,  
The sky is so clear,  
The breeze stirs in the green valley  
Where in the first rays of Spring  
I was once, oh, so happy.

Where I walked by her side,  
So comfortably and close,  
And saw deep in the dark rocky spring  
The beautiful sky so blue and light  
And her, reflected in the sky.

Look how colourful Spring already  
Peeps out from bud and blossom!  
Not all blossoms are the same to me,  
Above all I like to pick the from the branch  
From which she has already picked some!

Because everything is just as it always was,  
The flowers, the pastures;  
The sun doesn't shine less brightly,  
The shimmering reflection of the blue sky  
In the spring is no less cheerful.

Only desire and illusions change,  
Joy alternates with strife  
The happiness of love flies past,  
And only love remains,  
Love and, alas, sorrow!

Oh if only I were a little bird  
There on the meadow's slope!  
Then I would stay up here on the branch  
And sing a sweet song about her,  
The whole Summer long.

## Daß sie hier gewesen

Daß der Ostwind Däfte  
Hauchet in die Lüfte,  
Dadurch tut er kund,  
Daß du hier gewesen.

Daß hier Tränen rinnen,  
Dadurch wirst du innen,  
Wär's dir sonst nicht kund,  
Daß ich hier gewesen.

Schönheit oder Liebe,  
Ob versteckt sie bliebe?  
Däfte tun es und Tränen kund,  
Daß sie hier gewesen.

*Friedrich Rückert (1788-1866)*

## Herbst

Es rauschen die Winde  
So herbstlich und kalt;  
Verödet die Fluren,  
Entblättert der Wald.  
Ihr blumigen Auen!  
Du sonniges Grün!  
So welken die Blüten  
Des Lebens dahin.

Es ziehen die Wolken  
So finster und grau;  
Verschwunden die Sterne  
Am himmlischen Blau!  
Ach, wie die Gestirne  
Am Himmel entflieh'n,  
So sinket die Hoffnung  
Des Lebens dahin!  
Ihr Tage des Lenzes  
Mit Rosen geschmückt,  
Wo ich die Geliebte  
Ans Herze gedrückt!  
Kalt über den Hügel  
Rauscht, Winde, dahin!  
So sterben die Rosen  
Der Liebe dahin.

*Ludwig Rellstab (1799-1860)*

## She was here

That the East Wind breathes  
Fragrance in the air,  
That's how it makes known  
That you were here.

Because tears were shed here  
You will know,  
Though no-one told you,  
That I was here.

Beauty or love,  
Will they remain hidden?  
Fragrance and tears will make it known  
That she was here.

## Autumn

The winds howl  
Autumnal and cold;  
The fields are barren,  
The trees stripped of leaves.  
You flowering meadows!  
You sunlit green!  
That's how the blossoms  
Of life wither away.

Grey and sombre  
The clouds drift by;  
The stars have disappeared  
From the heavenly blue.  
Alas, just as the stars  
Flee from the heavens,  
Thus does life's hope  
Fade away..  
You Spring days  
Decked with roses,  
When I pressed my sweetheart  
To my heart!  
So, cold over the hill  
Come howl, you winds!  
Thus do love's roses  
Wither and die.

## Der Unglückliche

Die Nacht bricht an, mit leisen Lüften sinket  
Sie auf die müden Sterblichen herab;  
Der sanfte Schlaf, des Todes Bruder, winket,  
Und legt sie freundlich in ihr täglich Grab.

Jetzt wachet auf der lichtberaubten Erde  
Vielleicht nur noch die Arglist und der Schmerz,  
Und jetzt, da ich durch nichts gestört werde,  
Laß deine Wunden bluten, armes Herz.

Versenke dich in deines Kummers Tiefen,  
Und wenn vielleicht in der zerrissnen Brust  
Halb verjährte Leiden schliefen,  
So wecke sie mit grausam süßer Lust.

Berechne die verlorenen Seligkeiten,  
Zähl' alle, alle Blumen in dem Paradies,  
Woraus in deiner Jugend goldnen Zeiten  
Die harte Hand des Schicksals dich verstieß.

Du hast geliebt, du hast das Glück empfunden,  
Dem jede Seligkeit der Erde weicht.  
Du hast ein Herz, das dich verstand, gefunden,  
Der kühnsten Hoffnung schönes Ziel erreicht.

Da stürzte dich ein grausam Machtwort nieder,  
Aus deinen Himmeln nieder, und dein stilles Glück,  
Dein allzuschönes Traumbild kehrte wieder  
Zur besser'n Welt, aus der es kam, zurück.

Zerrissen sind nun alle süßen Bande,  
Mir schlägt kein Herz mehr auf der weiten Welt.

*Caroline Pichler (1769-1843)*

## Tansy Davies (b 1973)

### The Ice Core Sample Says

*Leeds Lieder Commission - world première*

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## Margaret Bonds (1913-1972)

### Songs of the seasons

*Langston Hughes (1902-1967)*

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## The unhappy one

Night falls, with gentle breezes she sinks  
Down upon weary mortals;  
Gentle sleep, death's brother, beckons,  
And lays them gently in their daily graves.

Watching over the earth robbed of light,  
Perhaps only malice and pain remain awake,  
And now that there is nothing to disturb me,  
Poor heart, I let your wounds bleed.

Sink into the depths of your misery,  
And when perhaps, in this anguished heart  
Half forgotten pains sleep,  
Waken them with sweet cruel pleasure.

Add up all the lost joys,  
Count all, all the flowers in Paradise  
From which in your golden youth  
The hard hand of fate banished you.

You loved, you experienced the happiness,  
Which transcends every earthly joy.  
You found a heart which understood you,  
You attained your wildest hope's dearest goal.

Then a cruel power dashed you down  
From your heaven, and your deep happiness,  
Your all-too-lovely dream world returned  
To the better world from which it had come.

All the sweet bonds are now torn asunder,  
In the whole world no heart beats for me anymore.



## Claude Debussy (1862-1918)

### *Ariettes Oubliées*

Paul Verlaine (1844-1896)

#### **C'est l'extase langoureuse**

C'est l'extase langoureuse,  
C'est la fatigue amoureuse,  
C'est tous les frissons des bois  
Parmi l'étreinte des brises,  
C'est vers les ramures grises  
Le chœur des petites voix.

O le frêle et frais murmure !  
Cela gazouille et susurre,  
Cela ressemble au cri doux  
Que l'herbe agitée expire...  
Tu dirais, sous l'eau qui vire,  
Le roulis sourd des cailloux.

Cette âme qui se lamente  
En cette plainte dormante  
C'est la nôtre, n'est-ce pas ?  
La mienne, dis, et la tienne,  
Dont s'exhale l'humble antienne  
Par ce tiède soir, tout bas ?

#### **Il pleure dans mon coeur**

Il pleure dans mon coeur  
Comme il pleut sur la ville.  
Quelle est cette langueur  
Qui pénètre mon coeur ?

O bruit doux de la pluie,  
Par terre et sur les toits!  
Pour un coeur qui s'ennuie,  
O le chant de la pluie!

Il pleure sans raison  
Dans mon coeur qui s'écoëure.  
Quoi! nulle trahison?  
Mon deuil est sans raison.

C'est bien la pire peine,  
De ne savoir pourquoi,  
Sans amour et sans haine,  
Mon coeur a tant de peine.

#### **It is langorous ecstasy**

It is langorous ecstasy,  
It is the fatigue after love,  
It is all the rustling of the wood,  
In the embrace of breezes;  
It is near the grey branches:  
A chorus of tiny voices.

Oh, what a frail and fresh murmur!  
It babbles and whispers,  
It resembles the soft noise  
That waving grass exhales.  
You might say it were, under the bending stream,  
The muffled sound of rolling pebbles.

This soul, which laments  
And this dormant moan,  
It is ours, is it not?  
It is not mine and yours,  
Whose humble anthem we breathe  
On this mild evening, so very quietly?

#### **It is raining in my heart**

It is raining in my heart  
As it is raining on the town.  
What is this languor  
That pervades my heart?

Oh the soft patter of the rain  
on the ground and the roofs!  
For a heart growing weary  
oh the song of the rain!

It is raining without cause  
In this disheartened heart.  
What! No betrayal?  
There's no reason for this grief.

Really the worst pain  
Is not knowing why,  
Without love or hatred,  
My heart feels so much pain.

## L'ombre des arbres

L'ombre des arbres dans la rivière embrumée  
Meurt comme de la fumée,  
Tandis qu'en l'air, parmi les ramures réelles,  
Se plaignent les tourterelles.

Combien ô voyageur, ce paysage blême  
Te mira blême toi-même,  
Et que tristes pleuraient dans les hautes feuillées,  
Tes espérances noyées.

## Chevaux de bois

Tournez, tournez, bon chevaux de bois,  
Tournez cent tours, tenez mille tours.  
Tournez souvent et tournez toujours,  
Tournez, tournez au son des hautbois.

L'enfant tout rouge et la mère blanche,  
Le gars en noir et la fille en rose.  
L'une à la chose et l'autre à la pose,  
Chacun se paie un sou de dimanche.

Tournez, tournez, chevaux de leur coeur,  
Tandis qu'autour de tous vos tournois  
Clignote l'oeil du filou sournois.  
Tournez au son du piston vainqueur!

C'est étonnant comme ça vous soûle,  
D'aller ainsi dans ce cirque bête,  
Rien dans le ventre et mal dans la tête,  
Du mal en masse et du bien en foule;

Tournez dadas, sans qu'il soit besoin  
D'user jamais de nuls éperons  
Pour commander à vos galops ronds.  
Tournez, tournez, sans espoir de foin,

Et dépêchez, chevaux de leur âme,  
Déjà voici que sonne à la soupe  
La nuit qui tombe et chasse la troupe  
De gais buveurs, que leur soif affame.

Tournez, tournez! Le ciel en velours  
D'astres en or se vêt lentement,  
L'Eglise tinte un glas tristement.  
Tournez au son joyeux des tambours, tournez.

## The shadow of the trees

The shadow of the trees in the misty river  
Dies like smoke;  
While above, among the real branches,  
The doves are lamenting.

Oh traveller, how well this faded landscape  
Watched you yourself fade!  
And how sadly, in the high foliage, your hopes were weeping,  
Your hopes that are drowned.

## Horses of wood

Turn, turn, fine horses of wood,  
Turn a hundred turns, turn a thousand turns,  
Turn often and turn evermore,  
Turn, turn to the sound of the oboes.

The red-faced child and pale mother,  
The boy in black and the girl in pink,  
The one natural, the other showing off,  
Each getting their penny's worth of Sunday fun.

Turn, turn, horses of their hearts,  
While all around your turning  
Squints the sly pickpocket's eye.  
Turn to the sound of the victorious cornet.

It is astonishing how it intoxicates you,  
Riding around this way in a foolish fair,  
Nothing in your tummy and an ache in your head,  
Very sick and having lots of fun.

Turn, wooden horses, with no need  
Ever to use spurs  
To command you to gallop around,  
Turn, turn, with no hope of hay.

And hurry, horses of their souls-,  
Hear the supper bell already,  
Night is falling and disperses the troop  
Of merry drinkers, famished by their thirst.

Turn, turn! The velvet sky  
Is slowly clothed with golden stars.  
The church bell tolls sadly.  
Turn, to the joyful sound of drums.

## Green

Voici des fruits, des fleurs, des feuilles et des branches  
Et puis voici mon coeur qui ne bat que pour vous.  
Ne le déchirez pas avec vos deux mains blanches  
Et qu'à vos yeux si beaux l'humble présent soit doux.

J'arrive tout couvert encore de rosée  
Que le vent du matin vient glacer à mon front.  
Souffrez que ma fatigue à vos pieds reposée  
Rêve des chers instants qui la délasseront.

Sur votre jeune sein laissez rouler ma tête  
Toute sonore encor de vos derniers baisers ;  
Laissez-la s'apaiser de la bonne tempête,  
Et que je dorme un peu puisque vous reposez.

## Spleen

Les roses étaient toutes rouges,  
Et les lierres étaient tout noirs.  
Chère, pour peu que tu te bouges,  
Renaissent tous mes désespoirs.

Le ciel était trop bleu, trop tendre,  
La mer trop verte et l'air trop doux;  
Je crains toujours, ce qu'est d'attendre,  
Quelque fuite atroce de vous!

Du houx à la feuille vernie,  
Et du luisant buis je suis las,  
Et de la campagne infinie,  
Et de tout, fors de vous. Hélas!

## Green

Here are flowers, fruit, leaves and branches,  
And then here is my heart, which beats only for you.  
Do not tear it up with your two white hands,  
And may the humble present please your beautiful eyes!

I arrive all covered in dew,  
Which the wind of morning freezes on my forehead.  
Let my fatigue as I rest at your feet,  
Dreaming of dear moments, be soothed.

On your young breast allow my head to rest,  
Still ringing with your last kisses;  
Let it calm itself after love's pleasant tempest,  
And let me sleep a little, since you are resting.

## Spleen

All the roses were red,  
The ivy was all black.  
At your slightest move  
All my old despairs awake!

The sky was Too blue, too tender,  
The air too soft, the sea too green.  
I always fear, what it is to wait!  
One of your agonising flights!

I am so tired of glossy holly,  
And weary of the bright box-tree,  
Of the boundless countryside,  
Of everything alas! Except you!



## Nikolai Medtner (1880-1951)

### Сумерки

Тени сизые смешались,  
Цвет поблекнул, звук уснул –  
Жизнь, движенье разрешились  
В сумрак зыбкий, в дальний гул ...  
Мотылька полет незримый  
Слышен в воздухе ночном ...  
Час тоски невыразимой! ...  
Всё во мне, и я во всем! ...

Сумрак тихий, сумрак сонный,  
Лейся в глубь моей души,  
Тихий, томный, благовонный,  
Все залей и утиши –  
Чувства мглой самозабвенья  
Переполни через край! ...  
Дай вкусить уничтоженья,  
С миром дремлющим смешай!

*Fyodor Ivanovich Tyutchev (1803-1873)*

### Бессонница

Часов однообразный бой,  
Томительная ночи повесть!  
Язык для всех равно чужой  
И внятный каждому, как совесть!

Кто без тоски внимал из нас,  
Среди всемирного молчанья,  
Глухие времени стенанья,  
Пророчески-прощальный глас?

Нам мнится: мир осиротелый  
Неотразимый Рок настиг –  
И мы, в борьбе, природой целой  
Покинуты на нас самих.

...

### Twilight

The blue-grey shadows have blended together,  
Colour has faded, sound has fallen asleep -  
Life, movement, in the unsteady twilight,  
Have dissolved into a distant rumble ...  
A moth flies past, invisible  
Heard in the night air ...  
Hour of ineffable longing! ...  
Everything in me, and I in everything! ...

Quiet twilight, sleepy twilight,  
Pour into the depths of my soul,  
Quiet, dark, fragrant,  
All flood in and calm me -  
Feelings of the haze of self-forgetting  
Fill me to overflowing! ...  
Let me taste of oblivion,  
Blend me with the slumbering world!

### Sleeplessness

The monotonous striking of the clock -  
The story of the weary night!  
A language equally foreign to everyone  
And distinct for everyone, like conscience!

Which of us has heard without melancholy,  
Amid the world's silence,  
Time's deaf groan,  
Its voice foretelling our departure?

It seems to us the orphan world  
Is overtaken by irresistible Destiny -  
And we, in the struggle, have been abandoned  
To ourselves by the whole of Nature.

...

## (Бессонница)

...

И наша жизнь стоит пред нами,  
Как призрак на краю земли,  
И с нашим веком и друзьями  
Бледнеет в сумрачной дали ...

И новое, младое племя  
Меж тем на солнце расцвело,  
А нас, друзья, и наше время  
Давно забвеньем занесло!

Лишь изредка, обряд печальный  
Свершая в полуночный час,  
Металла голос погребальный  
Порой оплакивает нас!

*Fyodor Ivanovich Tyutchev (1803-1873)*

## (Sleeplessness)

...

And our life stands before us,  
Like a ghost at the end of the earth,  
And along with our times and our friends  
It fades into the gloomy distance ...

And a new, young generation  
Meanwhile, has blossomed in the sun,  
And we, our friends, and our age  
Are long forgotten in oblivion!

But occasionally, completing its sad ritual  
At the hour of midnight,  
The funerary voice of the metal  
Sometimes mourns for us!

## Nicolas Slonimsky (1894-1995)

### Five advertising songs

*Due to copyright reasons we are unable to reproduce the text of these songs.*






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