

WIGMORE HALL

Monday 12 February 2024
1.00pm

The Art of the Ballad

Ashley Riches bass-baritone
Joseph Middleton piano

Franz Schubert (1797-1828)

Erlkönig D328 (1815)

Der König in Thule D367 (1816)

Franz Liszt (1811-1886)

Die Loreley S273/1 (1841)

Hugo Wolf (1860-1903)

Die Geister am Mummelsee from *Mörrike Lieder* (1888)

Carl Loewe (1796-1869)

Der Zauberlehrling Op. 20 No. 2 (1832)

Camille Saint-Saëns (1835-1921)

Le pas d'armes du Roi Jean (1852)

Reynaldo Hahn (1874-1947)

Trois jours de vendange (1891)

Claude Debussy (1862-1918)

Ballade des femmes de Paris from 3 ballades de François Villon (1910)

Peter Warlock (1894-1930)

Yarmouth Fair (1924)

Traditional

Barbara Allen *arranged by Roger Quilter*

Benjamin Britten (1913-1976)

Little Sir William (1940)

Samuel Barber (1910-1981)

Solitary Hotel from *Despite and Still* Op. 41 (1968-9)

William Bolcom (b.1938)

From *12 Cabaret Songs* (1977-1985)
Song of Black Max • George



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The Art of the Ballad

Ballads, defined simply as 'poems or songs that narrate a story', have a long tradition, and in German-speaking lands often expound on the mythical and magical. The name 'Erlkönig' possibly originated from the Danish *Ellekonge* ('king of the elves') and is linked with the Saxon *Herla Cyning*, the leader of the Wild Hunt that rampaged through the forests of Germanic mythology.

In Roman times, 'Thule' was a name given to a distant, northerly place beyond the borders of the known world. In Goethe's *Faust*, Gretchen sings 'Der König in Thule' after her first meeting with the eponymous hero. Like many of the songs in Shakespeare's plays, this reflects on the current situation in the story – the king's goblet is his only remaining link with his true and faithful love; how will Gretchen's relationship with Faust turn out?

Despite being a clergyman, Eduard Mörike was deeply interested in the occult and even the demonic. The poem of 'Die Geister am Mummelsee', from his novel *Maler Nolten* ('Nolten the Painter'), is part of a shadow-play called *Der Letzte König von Orplid*, a magical island Mörike invented while studying at the Seminary of Tübingen. It tells of the funeral of Ulmon, Orplid's Wizard-King, who claimed equality with the Gods and was condemned to live eternally and alone, but is finally allowed to die. Mummelsee is a lake in the Black Forest.

The Lorelei rock is a 132-metre-high outcrop by the River Rhine, where strong currents, created by the tight bends of the river and the rocks on the riverbed, caused many shipwrecks and drownings. The murmuring sounds made by these currents, amplified by the rock cliff, are the origin of the name *Lorelei*. *Lureln* is Rhineland dialect for murmuring, and *Ley* is old German for rock. In turn, this gave rise to the legend of a beautiful young girl who threw herself into the Rhine in despair over an unfaithful lover and was transformed into a siren who sat on the rock, combing her hair, and singing to lure sailors to their deaths in the river below.

The tale told by Goethe's *Der Zauberlehrling* has had a good innings; it was reused by Paul Dukas in his symphonic poem of 1897 and by Disney in the 1940 film *Fantasia*. In 1848, Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels alluded to *Der Zauberlehrling* in *The Communist Manifesto*, in which they compared the bourgeois society of their day to 'a sorcerer who is no longer able to control the powers of the nether world whom he has called up by his spells.'

Saint-Saëns wrote 'Le pas d'armes du Roi Jean' aged just 17, either in his final year at the Paris Conservatoire (he began studying there at 13) or very soon after leaving. Victor Hugo's poem describes a tournament at the court of Jean II of France, king from 1350-64, who was captured by the English at the Battle of Poitiers in 1356.

Reynaldo Hahn's 'Trois jours de vendange' is also a teenager's song, written when he was 16, having met the

poet Alphonse Daudet the previous year when Daudet invited him to write the music for his play *L'Obstacle*.

Debussy's 'Ballade des femmes de Paris' depicts the gossip-mongers of Paris, whose tongues Debussy himself had to contend with following his affair with Emma Bardac (previously mistress and muse of Fauré) which led to the attempted suicide of his first wife in 1904. Debussy and Emma married in 1908, but the fallout from the scandal, and the inevitable gossip, remained with Debussy for the rest of his life.

'Yarmouth Fair' originated as a song called 'The Maggie', which the composer EJ Moeran heard sung by a roadmender. Moeran wrote it down and showed it to **Peter Warlock**, who arranged it for publication. However, Warlock discovered that the words were in fact from an old Music-Hall song, so he asked Hal Collins to write new words for it.

On 2 January 1666, Samuel Pepys recorded in his diary that he heard a Mrs Knipp sing 'Barbara Allen' at a New Year party. This may have been a skit on Barbara Villiers, one of the king's many mistresses (Charles II is known to have fathered at least 14 children by at least seven of them). **Quilter** included this arrangement in his *Arnold Book of Old Songs*, a collection of folksongs which he dedicated to his nephew Arnold Guy Vivian, who was killed during the Second World War.

'Little Sir William' is one of seven folksong arrangements that **Britten** wrote in America in 1940. In a letter to musician and critic Albert Goldberg (7 October 1941), he wrote 'I have arranged a few British folksongs which have been a "wow" wherever performed so far'. Britten and Pears regularly gave these as encores in their recitals together.

The text of **Samuel Barber's** 'Solitary Hotel' is from James Joyce's novel *Ulysses*; characters Stephen Dedalus and Leopold Bloom imagine a solitary alpine hotel where a woman and a man flirt. She writes a mysterious letter, which mentions the Queen's Hotel, at which point the fantasy breaks down as Bloom is reminded of the Queen's Hotel in Ennis, County Clare, where his father committed suicide.

The subtitle of **William Bolcom's** 'Black Max', 'As told by the de Kooning Boys', refers to a group of painters, including Jackson Pollock and Mark Rothko, associated with the Dutch-American artist Willem de Kooning, who liked to amuse his friends with stories of a mysterious man in Rotterdam who dressed in black and may even have been a personification of Death. 'George' tells the bittersweet story of the life and murder of a gender-nonconforming person, perhaps a drag artist or a trans woman. It was written in August 1981 at Ann Arbor, the location of the University of Michigan, where Bolcom taught composition.

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Franz Schubert (1797-1828)

Erlkönig D328 (1815)

Johann Wolfgang von
Goethe

Erlking

Wer reitet so spät durch
Nacht und Wind?

Es ist der Vater mit seinem
Kind;

Er hat den Knaben wohl in
dem Arm,

Er fasst ihn sicher, er hält ihn
warm.

„Mein Sohn, was birgst du so
bang dein Gesicht?“

„Siehst, Vater, du den
Erlkönig nicht?

Den Erlenkönig mit Kron'
und Schweif?“

„Mein Sohn, es ist ein
Nebelstreif.“

„Du liebes Kind, komm, geh
mit mir!

Gar schöne Spiele spiel' ich
mit dir;

Manch' bunte Blumen sind
an dem Strand;

Meine Mutter hat manch
gülden Gewand.“

„Mein Vater, mein Vater, und
hörest du nicht

Was Erlenkönig mir leise
verspricht?“

„Sei ruhig, bleibe ruhig, mein
Kind;

In dünnen Blättern säuselt der
Wind.“

„Willst, feiner Knabe, du mit
mir gehn?

Meine Töchter sollen dich
warten schön;

Meine Töchter führen den
nächtlichen Reihn,

Und wiegen und tanzen und
singen dich ein.“

„Mein Vater, mein Vater, und
siehst du nicht dort

Erlkönigs Töchter am
düstern Ort?“

„Mein Sohn, mein Sohn, ich
seh' es genau;

Es scheinen die alten Weiden
so grau.“

Who rides so late through
night and wind?

It is the father with his
child;

he has the boy safe in his
arms,

he holds him close, he
keeps him warm.

'My son, why hide your
face in fear?'

'Can't you see the Erlking,
father?'

The Erlking with his
crown and robe?'

'My son, it is a streak of
mist.'

'You sweetest child, come
go with me!

Wondrous games I'll play
with you;

many bright flowers grow
on the shore;

my mother has many a
garment of gold.'

'Father, O father, can't
you hear

the Erlking's whispered
promises?'

'Be calm, stay calm, my
child,

the wind is rustling in
withered leaves.'

'Won't you come with me,
fine boy?'

My daughters shall take
good care of you;

my daughters lead the
nightly dance,

and will rock and dance
and sing you to sleep.'

'Father, O father, can't
you see

the Erlking's daughters
there in the gloom?'

'My son, my son, I can see
quite clearly:

it's the old willows
gleaming so grey.'

„Ich liebe dich, mich reizt
deine schöne Gestalt;

Und bist du nicht willig, so
brauch' ich Gewalt.“

„Mein Vater, mein Vater, jetzt
fasst er mich an!

Erlkönig hat mir ein Leids
getan!“

Dem Vater grauset's, er
reitet geschwind,

Er hält in Armen das
ächzende Kind,

Erreicht den Hof mit Müh
und Not;

In seinen Armen das Kind
war tot.

'I love you, your beautiful
figure excites me;

and if you're not willing, I'll
take you by force.'

'Father, O father, he's
seizing me now!

The Erlking's done me
harm!'

The father shudders,
swiftly he rides,

with the groaning child in
his arms,

with a final effort he
reaches home;

the child lay dead in his
arms.

Der König in Thule

D367 (1816)

Johann Wolfgang von Goethe

Es war ein König in Thule
Gar treu bis an das Grab,
Dem sterbend seine
Buhle
Einen goldnen Becher gab.

Es ging ihm nichts darüber,
Er leert' ihn jeden Schmaus;
Die Augen gingen ihm
über,
So oft er trank daraus.

Und als er kam zu sterben,
Zählt' er seine Städt' im
Reich,
Gönnt' alles seinen Erben,
Den Becher nicht
zugleich.

Er sass beim Königsmahle,
Die Ritter um ihn her,
Auf hohem
Vätersaale,
Dort auf dem Schloss am Meer.

Dort stand der alte
Zecher,
Trank letzte Lebensglut,
Und warf den heil'gen
Becher
Hinunter in die Flut.

Er sah ihn stürzen, trinken
Und sinken tief ins Meer.
Die Augen täten ihm sinken;
Trank nie einen Tropfen
mehr.

Franz Liszt (1811-1886)

Die Loreley S273/1

(1841)

Heinrich Heine

Ich weiss nicht, was soll es
bedeuten,
Dass ich so traurig bin;
Ein Märchen aus alten
Zeiten,
Das kommt mir nicht aus
dem Sinn.

The king in Thule

There was a king in Thule,
faithful to the grave,
to whom his mistress, as
she died,
gave a golden beaker.

He valued nothing higher,
he drained it at every feast;
and each time he drank
from it,
his eyes would fill with tears.

And when he came to die,
he counted the cities of
his realm,
gave all he had to his heirs,
the beaker though
excepted.

He sat at the royal banquet,
surrounded by his knights,
there in the lofty
ancestral hall,
in the castle by the sea.

There he stood, that old
tooper,
drank his life's last glow,
and hurled the sacred
beaker
into the waves below.

He saw it fall and fill
and sink deep into the sea.
His eyes closed;
he never drank another
drop.

Lorelei

I do not know what it
means
that I should feel so sad;
there is a tale from olden
times
I cannot get out of my
mind.

Die Luft ist kühl und es
dunkelt,
Und ruhig fließt der
Rhein;
Der Gipfel des Berges
funkelt
Im Abendsonnenschein.

Die schönste Jungfrau sitzet
Dort oben
wunderbar,
Ihr goldnes Geschmeide
blitzet,
Sie kämmt ihr goldenes
Haar.

Sie kämmt es mit goldenem
Kamme
Und singt ein Lied dabei;
Das hat eine wundersame,
Gewaltige Melodei.

Den Schiffer im kleinen
Schiffe
Ergreift es mit wildem Weh;
Er schaut nicht die
Felsenriffe,
Er schaut nur hinauf in die
Höh'.

Ich glaube, die Wellen
verschlingen
Am Ende Schiffer und Kahn;
Und das hat mit ihrem Singen
Die Loreley getan.

Hugo Wolf (1860-1903)

Die Geister am Mummelsee from Mörrike Lieder (1888)

Eduard Mörrike

Vom Berge was kommt dort
um Mitternacht spät
Mit Fackeln so prächtig
herunter?
Ob das wohl zum Tanze, zum
Feste noch geht?
Mir klingen die Lieder so
munter.
O nein!
So sage, was mag es wohl
sein?

Das, was du da siehest, ist
Totengeleit,
Und was du da hörest, sind
Klagen.

The air is cool, and
twilight falls,
and the Rhine flows
quietly by:
the summit of the
mountain glitters
in the evening sun.

The fairest maiden is sitting
in wondrous beauty up
there,
her golden jewels are
sparkling,
she combs her golden
hair.

She combs it with a
golden comb
and sings a song the while;
it has an awe-inspiring,
powerful melody.

It seizes the boatman in
his skiff
with wildly aching pain;
he does not see the rocky
reefs,
he only looks up to the
heights.

I think at last the waves
swallow
the boatman and his boat;
and that, with her singing,
the Lorelei has done.

Ghosts on Mummelsee

What's this winding down
the midnight mountain
with torches and such
splendour?
Can they be going to a
banquet or ball?
Their singing sounds so
joyful.
Oh no!
Then tell me what it can
be?

What you see is a funeral
procession,
and what you hear are
lamentations.

Dem König, dem Zauberer, gilt es zu Leid, Sie bringen ihn wieder getragen. O weh! So sind es die Geister vom See!	They are mourning the king, the sorcerer, they are bearing him back down again. Oh mercy! They must be the ghosts of the lake!
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Sie schweben herunter ins Mummelseetal – Sie haben den See schon betreten – Sie rühren und netzen den Fuss nicht einmal – Sie schwirren in leisen Gebeten – O schau, Am Sarge die glänzende Frau!	They're gliding down to the Mummelsee valley – already they've alighted on the lake – they move without ever wetting their feet – they hover above while murmuring prayers – oh look, the glistening woman there by the coffin!
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Jetzt öffnet der See das grünspiegelnde Tor; Gib acht, nun tauchen sie nieder! Es schwankt eine lebende Treppe hervor, Und – drunten schon summen die Lieder. Hörst du? Sie singen ihn unten zur Ruh.	The lake now opens its mirror-green doors; look out, already they're cascading down! A living staircase, wavering, rises, and down in the depths they're droning their songs. Can you hear? They're singing him to rest below.
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Die Wasser, wie lieblich sie brennen und glühn! Sie spielen in grünendem Feuer; Es geisten die Nebel am Ufer dahin, Zum Meere verzieht sich der Weiher – Nur still! Ob dort sich nichts rühren will?	How sweetly the waters burn and glow, flickering in the green fire! The mists swirling away on the shore, the lake disappears into the sea – Hush now! Will nothing ever move there again?
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Es zuckt in der Mitten – o Himmel! ach hilf! Nun kommen sie wieder, sie kommen! Es orgelt im Rohr und es klirret im Schilf; Nur hurtig, die Flucht nur genommen! Davon! Sie wittern, sie haschen mich schon!	A swirl in the middle – O heavens! Ah help! The ghosts – they're coming again! There's a roar in the reeds and a wind in the rushes; quick now, run, take flight! Away! They've caught my scent, they're catching me!
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Carl Loewe (1796-1869)

Der Zauberlehrling Op. 20 No. 2 (1832) Johann Wolfgang von Goethe

The sorcerer's apprentice

Hat der alte Hexenmeister Sich doch einmal wegbegeben! Und nun sollen seine Geister Auch nach meinem Willen leben. Seine Wort' und Werke Merkt ich und den Brauch, Und mit Geistesstärke Tu ich Wunder auch.	So the old witch-master has taken himself off for once! And now his spirits shall come to life at my will too. I've marked his words and deeds and methods, and with supernatural powers I too will work wonders.
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Walle! Walle Manche Strecke, Dass, zum Zwecke, Wasser fliesse Und mit reichem, vollem Schwalle Zu dem Bade sich ergiesse.	Hither and thither, back and forth, that water may flow as I intend, and fill the bath in ample, lavish flood.
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Und nun komm, du alter Besen! Nimm die schlechten Lumpenhüllen; Bist schon lange Knecht gewesen; Nun erfülle meinen Willen! Auf zwei Beinen stehe, Oben sei ein Kopf, Eile nun und gehe Mit dem Wassertopf!	So come along, old broomstick! Put on your wretched rags and tatters; you've been in service a long time: now carry out my orders! Stand up on two legs, let's have a head on top; quickly now, get a move on with the water-jug!
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Walle! Walle ... Manche Strecke, Dass, zum Zwecke, Wasser fliesse Und mit reichem, vollem Schwalle Zu dem Bade sich ergiesse.	Hither and thither, back and forth, that water may flow as I intend, and fill the bath in ample, lavish flood.
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Seht, er läuft zum Ufer nieder, Wahrlich! ist schon an dem Flusse, Und mit Blitzesschnelle wieder Ist er hier mit raschem Gusse. Schon zum zweiten Male!	Look, he's running down the bank, my word! He's already at the river, and now back quick as lightning, pouring it out at once. That's the second time already!
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Wie das Becken schwillt!	How the level rises in the tub!
Wie sich jede Schale Voll mit Wasser füllt!	How every basin is filling full of water!
Stehe! Stehe!	Stay! Stay!
Denn wir haben Deiner Gaben Vollgemessen!	Now we've had our fill of your gifts!
Ach, ich merk es! Wehe! Wehe!	Oh dear! I realise
Hab ich doch das Wort vergessen!	I've forgotten the words to say!
Ach, das Wort, worauf am Ende	Oh for the word that would, once and for all,
Er das wird, was er gewesen.	turn him back to what he was!
Ach, er läuft und bringt behende!	Oh, he fetches and carries so fast!
Wärs't du doch der alte Besen!	If only you were the old broomstick again!
Immer neue Güsse Bringt er schnell herein, Ach! und hundert Flüsse Stürzen auf mich ein.	He keeps hurrying in with ever more tubs full; and oh! hundreds of rivers cascade in on me.
Nein, nicht länger Kann ichs lassen; Will ihn fassen.	No, no longer can I let it go on; I'll catch it.
Das ist Tücke!	That's spiteful!
Ach! nun wird mir immer bänger!	Oh, I'm more and more worried!
Welche Miene! Welche Blicke!	What an expression it has! What a face!
O, du Ausgeburt der Hölle! Soll das ganze Haus ersaufen?	O you spawn of hell! Must the whole house be submerged?
Seh ich über jede Schwelle Doch schon Wasserströme laufen.	I can see streams of water pouring through every door already.
Du verruchter Besen, Der nicht hören will! Stock, der du gewesen, Steh doch wieder still!	Accursed broom, why won't it listen? Stick that you were, stand still again!
Willst's am Ende Gar nicht lassen? Will dich fassen, Will dich halten Und das alte Holz behende Mit dem scharfen Beile spalten.	Will you never have done then? I'll catch you and hold you and split the old wood in a flash with the sharp hatchet.

Seht, da kommt er schleppend wieder!	Look, here it comes carting back more!
Wie ich mich nur auf dich werfe,	Just let me get hold of you,
Gleich, o Kobold, liegst du nieder;	you imp, and you'll be laid flat.
Krachend trifft die glatte Schärfe.	Crack! goes the smooth blade.
Wahrlich! brav getroffen!	Well done, I say!
Seht, er ist entzwei!	Look, it's in two!
Und nun darf ich hoffen, Und ich atme frei!	And now I can hope and breathe freely.
Wehe! Wehe!	Alas! Alas!
Beide Teile	Both pieces
Stehn in Eile	quickly stand up,
Schon als Knechte	fully ready
Völlig fertig in die Höhe!	to go into service!
Helft mir, ach! ihr hohen Mächte!	Oh help me, you powers above!
Und sie laufen! Nass und nässer	And they're off! It's getting
Wir'ds im Saal und auf den Stufen.	wetter and wetter in the hall
Welch entsetzliches Gewässer!	and on the stairs. What a dreadful flood!
Herr und Meister! Hör mich rufen! –	My lord and master, hear my call! –
Ach, da kommt der Meister!	Ah, here comes my master!
Herr, die Not ist gross!	Sir, we need you badly!
Die ich rief, die Geister	I can't get rid
Werd ich nun nicht los.	of the spirits I summoned up.
'In die Ecke, Besen! Besen!	'Into the corner, broom! Broom!
Seids gewesen!	Have done!
Denn als Geister	For this purpose
Ruft euch nur, zu seinem Zwecke,	no one but your master
Erst hervor der alte Meister.'	shall call you out as spirits.'

Camille Saint-Saëns (1835-1921)

Le pas d'armes du Roi The tournament of Jean (1852) King John

Victor Hugo

Par saint-Gille,
Viens-nous-en,
Mon agile
Alezan;
Viens, écoute,
Par la route,
Voir la joute
Du Roi Jean.

Qu'un gros carme
Chartrier
Ait pour arme
L'encrier;
Qu'une fille,
Sous la grille,
S'égosille
A prier;

Nous qui sommes,
De par Dieu,
Gentilshommes
De haut lieu,
Il faut faire
Bruit sur terre,
Et la guerre
N'est qu'un jeu.

Cette ville
Aux longs cris,
Qui profile
Son front gris,
Des toits frêles,
Cent tourelles,
Clochers grêles,
C'est Paris!

Los aux dames!
Au roi los!
Vois les flammes
Des champs clos,
Où la foule,
Qui s'écroule,
Hurle et roule
A grands flots!

Sans attendre,
Çà, piquons!
L'œil bien tendre,
Attaquons
De nos selles
Les donzelles,
Roses, belles,
Aux balcons.

By Saint Giles,
let us set out,
my nimble
chestnut steed;
come, hear me:
we're off
to see King John's
jousting contest.

Let a portly Carmelite
custodian of charters
be armed
with an ink-well;
let the maiden
in her convent parlour
pray
till she's hoarse;

We who are,
by the grace of God,
noblemen
of high rank
must cause
a stir on earth,
and war
is but a game.

This town,
ringing with cries,
with its grey
silhouette
of delicate roofs,
of a hundred turrets,
of slender steeples,
is Paris!

Hooray for the ladies!
Hooray for the King!
See the banners
in the ring,
where the seething
crowd
roars and surges
like breakers!

Without delay
let's gallop off!
With amorous gaze,
let us assail
from our saddles
the damsels,
rosy-cheeked and lovely
on their balconies.

Là-haut brille,
Sur ce mur,
Yseult, fille
Au front pur;
Là-bas, seules,
Force aïeules
Portant gueules
Sur azur.

On commence!
Le beffroi!
Coups de lance,
Cris d'effroi!
On se forge,
On s'égorge,
Par saint-George!

Par le Roi!

Dans l'orage,
Lys courbé,
Un beau page
Est tombé.
Il se pâme,
Il rend l'âme;
Il réclame
Un abbé.

Moines, vierges,
Porteront
De grands cierges
Sur son front;
Et, dans l'ombre
Du lieu sombre,
Deux yeux d'ombre
Pleureront.

Car madame
Isabeau
Suit son âme
Au tombeau.

Çà, mon frère,
Viens, rentrons
Dans notre aire
De barons.
Va plus vite,
Car au gîte
Qui t'invite,
Trouverons,

Gleaming up there
on that wall
is the maiden Isolde
with her virginal brow;
down there, on their own,
thongs of old ladies
are dressed in red
and blue.

Battle begins!
The alarm-bell rings!
Crash of lances,
cries of fear!
Horses over-reach,
throats are slit,
in the name of Saint
George!
In the name of the King!

In the battle,
like a wilted lily,
a handsome page
has fallen.
He faints,
he breathes his last;
he begs for
a priest.

Monks, virgins
will hold
tall candles
over his head;
and in the shadow
of that dismal place,
two dark eyes
will weep.

For Lady
Isabeau
follows his soul
to the grave.

Well, my brother,
come, let's return
to our baronial
hall.
Make haste,
for at home
where we're awaited
we shall find

Toi, l'avoine
Du matin,
Moi, le moine
Augustin,
Ce saint homme
Suivant Rome,
Qui m'assomme
De latin,

Oats
for your breakfast,
and Friar Augustin
waiting for me,
this holy man,
a follower of Rome,
who bores me
with Latin,

Et rédige
En romain
Tout prodige
De ma main,
Qu'à ma charge
Il émerge
Sur un large
Parchemin.

And records
in Roman script
all my deeds
of valour,
which at my request
he lists
on a large
parchment.

Le vrai sire
Châtelain
Laisse écrire
Le vilain;
Sa main digne,
Quand il signe,
Egratigne
Le vélin.

A true Lord
of the manor
lets a servant
write for him;
his own noble hand,
when signing his name,
scratches
the vellum.

Reynaldo Hahn (1874-1947)

Trois jours de vendange (1891) *Alphonse Daudet*

Three days of vintaging

Je l'ai rencontrée un jour de
vendange,
La jupe troussée et le pied
mignon;
Point de guimpe jaune et
point de chignon:
L'air d'une bacchante et les
yeux d'un ange.
Suspendue au bras d'un
doux compagnon,
Je l'ai rencontrée aux
champs d'Avignon,
Un jour de vendange.

During the vintage I met
her one day,
skirt tucked in and dainty
feet;
no yellow veil and no
coiled-up hair;
a maenad with an angel's
eyes.
She was leaning on a
sweet friend's arm,
when I met her at
Avignon in the fields,
during the vintage one day.

Je l'ai rencontrée un jour de
vendange.
La plaine était morne et le
ciel brûlant;
Elle marchait seule et d'un
pas tremblant,
Son regard brillait d'une
flamme étrange.
Je frissonne encore en me
rappelant
Comme je te vis, cher
fantôme blanc,
Un jour de vendange!

During the vintage I met
her one day.
The plain was bleak and
the sky ablaze;
she was walking alone,
with faltering steps,
her face was lit by a
curious glow.
I still shudder as I
remember
how I saw you, dear white
spectre,
during the vintage one day!

Je l'ai rencontrée un jour de
vendange,
Et j'en rêve encor presque
tous les jours.
Le cercueil était couvert en
velours,
Le drap noir portait une
double frange.
Les sœurs d'Avignon
pleuraient tout autour ...
La vigne avait trop de
raisin;
L'Amour avait fait la
vendange.

During the vintage I met
her one day,
and still almost daily I
dream of it.
The coffin was draped in
velvet,
the black shroud had a
double fringe.
The Avignon nuns wept
all around it ...
The vine had too many
grapes;
Love had gathered its
harvest.

Claude Debussy (1862-1918)

Ballade des femmes de Paris from 3 ballades de François Villon (1910)

Quoy qu'on tient belles langagières
Florentines, Veniciennes,
Assez pour estre messaigières,
Et mesmement les anciennes;
Mais, soient Lombardes, Romaines,
Genevoises, à mes périls,
Piemontoises, Savoyiennes,
Il n'est bon bec que de Paris.

Though they be reckoned good talkers,
Florentine and Venetian women,
good enough to be go-betweenes,
even the ancient women too;
and be they Lombards or Romans
or Genovese, I say to my peril,
or Piedmontese or Savoyards –
there's no tongue like a Parisian one.

De beau parler tiennent chayères,
Ce dit-on Napolitaines,
Et que sont bonnes cacquetières
Allemandes et Bruciennes;
Soient Grecques, Egyptiennes,
De Hongrie ou d'aultre païs,
Espaignolles ou Castellannes,
Il n'est bon bec que de Paris.

Chairs in the art of fine chatter, they say,
are held by the women of Naples,
while those from Germany and Prussia
are very good at prattle.
Yet be they Greek, Egyptian,
from Hungary or other lands,
Spanish or Catalanian –
there's no tongue like a Parisian one.

Brettes, Suysse, n'y sçavent guères,
Ne Gasconnes et Tholouzaines;
Du Petit Pont deux harangères
Les conclueront, et les Lorraines,
Anglesches ou Callaisiennes,
(Ay-je beaucoup de lieux compris?)
Picardes, de Valenciennes ...
Il n'est bon bec que de Paris.

Bretons and Swiss are mere beginners,
like Gascons and Toulousians;
two jabberers on the Petit Pont
would silence them, and Lorrainers, too,
women from England and Calais
(I've named a lot of places, eh?),
from Picardy and Valencienne ...
there's no tongue like a Parisian one.

Prince, aux dames parisiennes,
De bien parler donnez le prix;
Quoy qu'on die d'Italiennes,
Il n'est bon bec que de Paris.

Prince, to the ladies of Paris
present the prize for fine chatter;
whatever is said of Italians,
there's no tongue like a Parisian one.

Peter Warlock (1894-1930)

Yarmouth Fair (1924)

Hal Collins

As I rode down to Yarmouth fair
The birds they sang 'Good day, good day',
And the birds they sang 'Good day!'
O, I spied a maid with golden hair
A-walking along my way –
A tidy little maid so trim and fair,
And the birds they sang 'Good day, good day,'
And the birds they sang 'Good day!'

I said: 'My dear, will you ride with me?'
And the birds they sang, 'Go on, go on!'
And the birds they sang 'Go on!'
She didn't say 'yes' and she didn't say 'no',
And the birds they sang 'Heigh ho, heigh ho!'
And the birds they sang 'Heigh ho!'

I lifted her right on to my mare,
O light as a feather was she,
I'd never set eyes on a girl so fair,
So I kiss'd her bravely one, two, three,
O I kiss'd her one, two, three.

Then on we rode to Yarmouth Fair
Past field and green hedge-row,
And in our hearts no fret nor care,
And the birds they sang 'Hullo, hullo!'
And the birds they sang 'Hullo!'

At the fair the fun was fast and free,
And the birds they sang 'Hurray, hurray!'
And the birds they sang 'Hurray!'
The band struck up a lively air
On fiddle and fife and drum.
The maid and me we made a pair,
And we danced to kingdom come,
Ho-ho! And we danced to kingdom come.

The lads and lasses cheer'd us on,
My bonny maid and me,
We danced till stars were in the sky,
And the birds they sang 'Goodbye, goodbye!'
And the birds they sang 'Goodbye!'

Please do not turn the page until the song and its accompaniment have ended.

Traditional

Barbara Allen

arranged by Roger Quilter

Anonymous

In Scarlet Town, where I was born,
There was a fair maid dwellin',
Made ev'ry youth cry 'Well-a-day!'
Her name was Barb'ra Allen.

All in the merry month of May
When green buds they were swellin',
Young Jemmy Grove on his death-bed lay
For love of Barb'ra Allen.

Then slowly, slowly she came up,
And slowly she came nigh him,
And all she said when there she came
'Young man, I think you're dying!'

As she was walking o'er the fields
She heard the dead-bell knellin',
And ev'ry stroke the dead-bell gave
Cried 'Woe to Barb'ra Allen!'

When he was dead and laid in grave
Her heart was struck with sorrow.
'O mother, mother, make my bed,
For I shall die tomorrow.'

'Farewell,' she said, 'ye virgins all,
And shun the fault I fell in;
Henceforth take warning by the fall
Of cruel Barb'ra Allen.'

Benjamin Britten (1913-1976)

Little Sir William (1940)

Traditional

Easter day was a holiday
Of all the days in the year,
And all the little schoolfellows
Went out to play
But Sir William was not there.

Mamma went to the School Wife House
And knocked at the ring,
Saying, "Little Sir William
if you are there,
Pray let your mother in."

The School Wife open'd the door
And said "He is not here today.
He is with the little schoolfellows
Out on the green
Playing some pretty play."

Mamma went to the Boyne water
That is so wide and deep, saying,
Little Sir William
if you are there,
Oh pity your mother's weep."

"How can I pity your weep, mother
And I so long in pain?
For the little penknife
Sticks close to my heart
And the School Wife hath me slain.

Go home, go home my mother dear,
And prepare my winding sheet,
For tomorrow morning
before eight o'clock,
You with my body shall meet.

And lay my prayer book at my head,
And my grammar at my feet,
That all the little schoolfellows
as they pass by
May read them for my sake."

Samuel Barber (1910-1981)

Solitary Hotel from *Despite and Still* Op. 41

(1968-9)

James Joyce

Solitary hotel in mountain pass.
Autumn. Twilight. Fire lit.
In dark corner young man seated.
Young woman enters.
Restless. Solitary. She sits.
She goes to window. She stands.
She sits. Twilight. She thinks.
On solitary hotel paper she writes.
She thinks. She writes. She sighs.
Wheels and hoofs. She hurries out.
He comes from his dark corner.
He seizes solitary paper.
He holds it towards fire. Twilight.
He reads. Solitary. What?
In sloping, upright and backhands:
Queen's hotel, Queen's hotel, Queen's ho ...

William Bolcom (b.1938)

From 12 Cabaret Songs (1977-1985)

Arnold Weinstein

Song of Black Max

He was always dressed in black,
Long black jacket, broad black hat,
Sometimes a cape,
And as thin, and as thin as rubber tape:
Black Max.

He would raise that big black hat
To the big shots of the town
Who raised their hats right back,
Never knew they were bowing to
Black Max.

I'm talking about night in Rotterdam
When the right night people of all the town
Would find what they could in the night neighborhood of
Black Max.

There were women in the windows
With bodies for sale
Dressed in curls like little girls
In little doll house jails.
When the women walked the street
With the beds upon their backs,
Who was lifting up his brim to them?
Black Max!

And there were looks for sale, the art of the smile,
Only certain people walked that mystery mile
Artists, charlatans, vaudevillians,
Men of mathematics, acrobatics and civilians.

There was knitting needle music from a lady organ grinder
With all her sons behind her.
Marco, Vito, Benno
(Was he strong! Though he walked like a woman)
And Carlo, who was five.
He must still be alive!

Ah, poor Marco had the syph
And if you didn't take the terrible cure those days
You went crazy and died
And he did.

And at the coffin
Before they closed the lid,
Who raised his lid?
Black Max!

I was climbing on the train one day
Going far away to the good old USA
When I heard some music underneath the tracks.
Standing there beneath the bridge,
Long black jacket, broad black hat,

Playing the harmonica,
One hand free to lift that hat to me:
Black Max!

George

My friend George
Used to say,
'Oh, call me Georgia, hon,
Get yourself a drink,'
And sang the best soprano
In our part of town.

In beads, brocade and pins
He sang if you happened in
Through the door he never locked
And said, 'Get yourself a drink,'
And sang out loud
Till tears fell in the cognac
And the chocolate milk and gin
And on the beads, brocade and pins.

When strangers happened through
His open door
George said, 'Stay,
But you gotta keep quiet while I sing,'
And then a minute after:
'And call me Georgia.'

One fine day
A stranger in a suit of navy blue
Took George's life
With a knife
George had placed
Beside an apple pie he'd baked
And stabbed him in the middle
Of Un bel di vedremo
Which he sang for this particular stranger
Who was from the United States Navy.

The funeral was at the cocktail hour.
We knew George would like it like that.
Tears fell on the beads, brocade and pins
In the coffin
Which was white
Because George was a virgin.

Oh call him Georgia, hon,
Get yourself a drink...

'You can call me Georgia, hon,
Get yourself a drink!'

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