

# WIGMORE HALL

Monday 14 February 2022 7.30pm

**Mark Padmore** tenor

**Imogen Cooper** piano

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**Robert Schumann** (1810-1856)

Märzveilchen Op. 40 No. 1 (1840)

Muttertraum Op. 40 No. 2 (1840)

Der Soldat Op. 40 No. 3 (1840)

Der Spielmann Op. 40 No. 4 (1840)

Liederkreis Op. 39 (1840)

*In der Fremde • Intermezzo • Waldesgespräch • Die Stille •  
Mondnacht • Schöne Fremde • Auf einer Burg • In der Fremde •  
Wehmut • Zwielficht • Im Walde • Frühlingsnacht*

*Interval*

**Gabriel Fauré** (1845-1924)

From *5 mélodies 'de Venise'* Op. 58 (1891)

Mandoline • En sourdine

**Reynaldo Hahn** (1874-1947)

From *Chansons grises* (1892)

Chanson d'automne • Tous deux • L'allée est sans fin •  
En sourdine • L'heure exquise

**Gabriel Fauré**

La bonne chanson Op. 61 (1892-4)

*Une sainte en son auréole • Puisque l'aube grandit •  
La lune blanche luit dans les bois • J'allais par des chemins perfides •  
J'ai presque peur, en vérité • Avant que tu ne t'en ailles •  
Donc, ce sera par un clair jour d'été • N'est-ce pas? • L'hiver a cessé*

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During 1840 Schumann produced an abundance of songs. His four settings of poems by Hans Christian Andersen (in German translations by Adalbert von Chamisso) were composed in July 1840, and published in 1842 when Schumann sent a copy to the famous author with a covering note: 'Perhaps the settings will seem strange to you, as, at first, your poems did to me. But as I grew to understand them better, my music took on a more unusual style.' Eric Sams described this stylistic shift as 'a move away from the purely lyric impulse into narrative, character-study and drama.' In the first song, 'Märzveilchen', a young man sings of his love – abetted by the piano which adds a brief epilogue. As Sams put it, 'in this music they live happily ever after.' The second song, 'Muttertraum', is darker, beginning and ending with austere semiquavers which set a tone of foreboding which is maintained throughout. 'Der Soldat' is a slow march, with distant drums as an accompaniment to the singer's solemn melody: the drums beat out their obsessive rhythm until the shocking ending, when the narrator of the poem admits that it was his bullet which shot the condemned soldier. 'Der Spielmann' is set at a wedding celebration, as a violinist is tortured by unrequited love and descends into insanity and despair.

Three months earlier, in April 1840, Schumann and Clara Wieck had been in Berlin planning their own wedding. Back in Leipzig, Robert wrote to Clara that 'my head is ringing with the happiness of our time together – and I have so much music in me that I could sing the whole day through.' (May 1840 was an astonishingly productive month in which Schumann not only wrote the *Liederkreis* Op. 39 but also *Dichterliebe*). For the *Liederkreis*, Schumann chose 12 poems by Joseph, Freiherr von Eichendorff, telling Clara that the cycle was 'my most romantic music ever, with much of you in it.' The imagery of Eichendorff's texts has been summarised by Richard Wigmore as 'loss and loneliness, nocturnal mystery and menace, memory and antiquity, wistful reverie and rapturous soaring', and Schumann reflects these in settings which often have musical links too, explicitly so in 'Auf einer Burg' and the second 'In der Fremde', each beginning with a similar falling phrase. Schumann's claim to have composed his 'most romantic music' in this cycle is supremely evident in the fifth song, 'Mondnacht' – a rapturous night-piece for voice and piano which is the most tender musical depiction of Robert and Clara's love for each other. As Eric Sams memorably put it, 'by common consent this is one of the world's great songs, hard to speak of with restraint.' The same can surely be said of the whole cycle, from the exquisite evocation of peace in the opening 'In der Fremde', to the ecstasy of 'Frühlingsnacht'.

Reynaldo Hahn's earliest success came while he was still a composition student at the Paris Conservatoire: the première of his *Chansons grises* on poems by Paul Verlaine took place at the home of Alphonse Daudet in 1893, sung by Sibyl Sanderson (the favourite soprano of Hahn's teacher Massenet), with the poet himself in the audience. While Verlaine was apparently (and appallingly) indifferent to Fauré's settings of his texts, he was reportedly delighted by the versions produced by Hahn, who was still in his teens at the time. There's a certain reticence and apparent simplicity to Hahn's settings which perhaps allow the poems to shine through (Hahn and Marcel Proust were extremely close – first as lovers, then as lifelong friends – and Hahn always had the most refined literary sensibilities). But when the music rises to an expressive climax, as it does on several occasions in 'L'heure exquise', the results are memorable.

In May 1891, Fauré was a guest of the Princesse de Polignac at the Palazzo Barbaro Wolkoff in Venice and during this stay he composed two settings of poems by Verlaine, 'Mandoline' and 'En sourdine'. After returning to Paris, Fauré added three more songs and the collection appeared as *5 mélodies 'de Venise'*. These demonstrated a remarkable affinity with Verlaine's language and the following year Fauré embarked on his most ambitious Verlaine setting, *La bonne chanson*. The first eight songs were completed in 1893 but the ninth and final song was only added in February 1894. A true cycle, *La bonne chanson* has several recurring themes which bring musical unity to the whole structure. According to the Fauré scholar Jean-Michel Nectoux, the result is 'far more than just a volume of songs. It reaches the proportions almost of a vocal symphony.' The inspiration for the work was the singer Emma Bardac, with whom Fauré became infatuated in the early 1890s. She gave Fauré advice about revisions while he was working on the songs, and sang them in private at her home in Bougival, with the composer at the piano. *La bonne chanson* was first given in a concert by the tenor Maurice Bagès on 25 April 1894. Bagès also gave the first London performance on 1 April 1898, the occasion for which Fauré made a version for piano and string quintet (an arrangement he soon decided was 'unnecessary', preferring the original piano accompaniment). Reactions to the new cycle were mixed: Marcel Proust was enchanted by it ('I adore this collection'), though he noted that Debussy (who later married Emma Bardac) thought it too complicated. History has come down firmly on Proust's side of the argument: *La bonne chanson* is recognised as one of Fauré's greatest achievements, combining sophisticated musical design with spontaneous inspiration.

## Robert Schumann (1810-1856)

### Märzveilchen Op. 40

### March violets

#### No. 1 (1840)

*Hans Christian Andersen trans.*

*Adelbert von Chamisso*

Der Himmel wölbt sich rein und  
blau,  
Der Reif stellt Blumen aus zur  
Schau.

The sky arches clear and  
blue;  
the hoar-frost fashions  
flowers.

Am Fenster prangt ein  
flimmernder Flor.  
Ein Jüngling steht, ihn  
betrachtend, davor.

Shimmering blossom gleams on  
the window,  
a young man stands there,  
looking on.

Und hinter den Blumen blühet  
noch gar  
Ein blaues, ein lächelndes  
Augenpaar.

And blossoming behind those  
flowers  
a pair of blue eyes  
smile.

Märzveilchen, wie jener noch  
keine gesehn.  
Der Reif wird, angehaucht,  
zergehn.

March violets, sweeter than he'd  
ever seen.  
A single breath will melt the  
frost.

Eisblumen fangen zu schmelzen  
an,  
Und Gott sei gnädig dem jungen  
Mann.

Jack Frost's flowers begin to  
thaw –  
may the Lord have mercy on  
that young man.

### Muttertraum Op. 40

### A mother's dream

#### No. 2 (1840)

*Hans Christian Andersen trans.*

*Adelbert von Chamisso*

Die Mutter betet herzig und  
schaut  
Entzückt auf den  
schlummernden Kleinen.  
Er ruht in der Wiege so sanft  
und traut.  
Ein Engel muss er ihr scheinen.

A mother prays fervently and  
looks  
enraptured at her slumbering  
child;  
he sleeps in the cradle all soft  
and snug,  
to her he must seem like an angel.

Sie küsst ihn und herzt ihn; sie  
hält sich kaum.  
Vergessen der irdischen  
Schmerzen,  
Es schweift in der Zukunft ihr  
Hoffnungstraum;  
So träumen Mütter im  
Herzen.

She kisses and hugs him; can  
hardly hold back,  
and forgets her earthly  
sorrows;  
her hopes and dreams fly to the  
future –  
the way all mothers dream in  
their hearts.

Der Rab' indes mit der  
Sippschaft sein  
Kreischt draussen am Fenster  
die Weise:  
Dein Engel, dein Engel wird  
unser sein!  
Der Räuber dient uns zur  
Speise!

The raven meanwhile with its  
brood  
croaks this tune outside the  
window:  
your angel, your angel shall be  
our prey!  
The thief shall provide us with  
food!

### Der Soldat Op. 40 No. 3

### The soldier

(1840)

*Hans Christian Andersen trans.*

*Adelbert von Chamisso*

Es geht bei gedämpfter  
Trommel Klang.  
Wie weit noch die Stätte! der  
Weg wie lang!  
O wär er zur Ruh und alles  
vorbei!  
Ich glaub', es bricht mir das  
Herz entzwei.

He walks to the sound of the  
muffled drum.  
How far the place! the way how  
long!  
Ah, were he at rest and all this  
done!  
My heart, I think, will break in  
two.

Ich hab' in der Welt nur ihn  
geliebt,  
Nur ihn, dem jetzt man den Tod  
doch gibt.  
Bei klingendem Spiele wird  
paradiert;  
Dazu bin auch ich kommandiert.

None but him in the world have  
I loved,  
him, who now they're putting to  
death.  
The firing squad parades with  
full band,  
I too am detailed for the task.

Nun schaut er auf zum  
letztenmal  
In Gottes Sonne freudigen  
Strahl, –  
Nun binden sie ihm die Augen zu, –  
Dir schenke Gott die ewige  
Ruh'!

Now he looks up for one last  
time  
at the joyous rays of God's  
sun, –  
now they put his blindfold on, –  
may God grant you eternal  
peace!

Es haben dann Neun wohl angelegt;  
Acht Kugeln haben  
vorbeigefegt.  
Sie zittern alle vor Jammer und  
Schmerz –  
Ich aber, ich traf ihn mitten in  
das Herz.

The nine of us took good aim,  
eight bullets whistled wide of  
the mark;  
every man shook with pity and  
grief –  
but I, I shot him clean through  
the heart.

## Der Spielmann Op. 40

No. 4 (1840)

Hans Christian Andersen trans.

Adelbert von Chamisso

Im Städtchen gibt es des Jubels  
viel,  
Da halten sie Hochzeit mit Tanz  
und mit Spiel,  
Dem Fröhlichen blinket der  
Wein so rot,  
Die Braut nur gleicht dem  
getünchten Tod.

Ja tot für den, den nicht sie  
vergisst,  
Der doch beim Fest nicht  
Bräutigam ist;  
Da steht er inmitten der Gäste  
im Krug,  
Und streichet die Geige lustig  
genug!

Er streichet die Geige, sein Haar  
ergraut,  
Es schwingen die Saiten gellend  
und laut,  
Er drückt sie ans Herz und  
achtet es nicht,  
Ob auch sie in tausend Stücken  
zerbricht.

Es ist gar grausig, wenn einer  
so stirbt,  
Wenn jung sein Herz um Freude  
noch wirbt;  
Ich mag und will nicht länger es  
sehnen!  
Das möchte den Kopf mir  
schwindelnd verdrehn. –

Wer heisst euch mit Fingern  
zeigen auf mich?  
O Gott! bewahr' uns gnädiglich,  
Dass Keinen der Wahnsinn  
übermannt;  
Bin selber ein armer Musikant.

## The fiddler

In the little town there's much  
rejoicing,  
they're holding a wedding with  
music and dance,  
the happy man quaffs the  
glinting red wine,  
but the bride's as pale as  
death.

She's dead for the one she  
cannot forget,  
who's at the feast but not as the  
groom;  
he stands among the guests at  
the inn,  
and plays his fiddle gaily  
enough!

He plays his fiddle, his hair  
turns grey,  
the strings resound shrill and  
loud,  
he presses the fiddle close to  
his heart,  
though it breaks into a thousand  
pieces.

It's hideous for a man to die this  
way,  
when his heart's still young and  
striving for joy;  
I cannot and will not watch any  
more!  
My head might reel in a fatal  
whirl. –

Who said to point a finger at  
me?  
O God! have mercy,  
let none of us go  
mad;  
I too am just a poor musician.

## Liederkreis Op. 39 (1840)

Joseph, Freiherr von Eichendorff

### In der Fremde

Aus der Heimat hinter den  
Blitzen rot  
Da kommen die Wolken her,  
Aber Vater und Mutter sind  
lange tot,  
Es kennt mich dort keiner mehr.

Wie bald, ach wie bald kommt  
die stille Zeit,  
Da ruhe ich auch, und über mir  
Rauscht die schöne  
Waldeinsamkeit,  
Und keiner kennt mich mehr hier.

### Intermezzo

Dein Bildnis wunderselig  
Hab' ich im Herzensgrund,  
Das sieht so frisch und fröhlich  
Mich an zu jeder Stund'.

Mein Herz still in sich singet  
Ein altes, schönes Lied,  
Das in die Luft sich schwinget  
Und zu dir eilig zieht.

### Waldesgespräch

Es ist schon spät, es ist schon kalt,  
Was reit'st du einsam durch den  
Wald?  
Der Wald ist lang, du bist allein,  
Du schöne Braut! Ich führ dich  
heim!

„Gross ist der Männer Trug und  
List,  
Vor Schmerz mein Herz  
gebrochen ist,  
Wohl irrt das Waldhorn her und  
hin,  
O flieh! Du weisst nicht, wer ich  
bin.“

So reich geschmückt ist Ross  
und Weib,  
So wunderschön der junge Leib,  
Jetzt kenn ich dich – Gott steh  
mir bei!  
Du bist die Hexe Loreley.

### In a foreign land

From my homeland, beyond the  
red lightning,  
the clouds come drifting in,  
but father and mother have long  
been dead,  
now no one knows me there.

How soon, ah! how soon till that  
quiet time  
when I too shall rest  
beneath the sweet murmur of  
lonely woods,  
forgotten here as well.

### Intermezzo

I bear your beautiful likeness  
deep within my heart,  
it gazes at me every hour  
so freshly and happily.

My heart sings softly to itself  
an old and beautiful song  
that soars into the sky  
and swiftly wings its way to you.

### A forest dialogue

It is already late, already cold,  
why ride lonely through the  
forest?  
The forest is long, you are alone,  
you lovely bride! I'll lead you  
home!

'Great is the deceit and cunning  
of men,  
my heart is broken with  
grief,  
the hunting horn echoes here  
and there,  
O flee! You do not know who I  
am.'

So richly adorned are steed and  
lady,  
so wondrous fair her youthful form,  
now I know you – may God  
protect me!  
You are the enchantress Lorelei.

„Du kennst mich wohl – von  
hohem Stein  
Schaut still mein Schloss tief in  
den Rhein.  
Es ist schon spät, es ist schon kalt  
Kommst nimmermehr aus  
diesem Wald!“

## Die Stille

Es weiss und rät es doch  
Keiner,  
Wie mir so wohl ist, so wohl!  
Ach, wüsst' es nur Einer, nur Einer,  
Kein Mensch es sonst wissen soll!

So still ist's nicht draussen im  
Schnee,  
So stumm und verschwiegen sind  
Die Sterne nicht in der Höh',  
Als meine Gedanken sind.

Ich wünscht', ich wär' ein Vöglein  
Und zöge über das Meer,  
Wohl über das Meer und weiter,  
Bis dass ich im Himmel wär'!

## Mondnacht

Es war, als hätt' der Himmel  
Die Erde still geküsst,  
Dass sie im Blütenschimmer  
Von ihm nur träumen müsst'.

Die Luft ging durch die  
Felder,  
Die Ähren wogten sacht,  
Es rauschten leis die Wälder,  
So sternklar war die Nacht.

Und meine Seele spannte  
Weit ihre Flügel aus,  
Flog durch die stillen Lande,  
Als flöge sie nach Haus.

## Schöne Fremde

Es rauschen die Wipfel und  
schauern,  
Als machten zu dieser Stund'  
Um die halb versunkenen Mauern  
Die alten Götter die Rund'.

'You know me well – from its  
towering rock  
my castle looks deep and silent  
down into the Rhine.  
It is already late, already cold,  
you shall never leave this forest  
again!'

## Silence

No one knows and no one can  
guess  
how happy I am, how happy!  
If only one, just one man knew,  
no one else ever should!

The snow outside is not so  
silent,  
nor are the stars on high  
so still and silent  
as my own thoughts.

I wish I were a little bird,  
and could fly across the sea,  
across the sea and further,  
until I were in heaven!

## Moonlit night

It was as though Heaven  
had softly kissed the Earth,  
so that she in a gleam of blossom  
had now to dream of him.

The breeze passed through the  
fields,  
the corn swayed gently to and fro,  
the forests murmured softly,  
the night was so clear with stars.

And my soul spread  
its wings out wide,  
flew across the silent land,  
as though flying home.

## A beautiful foreign land

The tree-tops rustle and  
shudder  
as if at this very hour  
the ancient gods were pacing  
these half-sunken walls.

Hier hinter den Myrtenbäumen  
In heimlich dämmernder Pracht,  
Was sprichst du wirr, wie in  
Träumen,  
Zu mir, phantastische Nacht?

Es funkeln auf mich alle  
Sterne  
Mit glühendem Liebesblick,  
Es redet trunken die  
Ferne  
Wie von künftigem grossen  
Glück!

## Auf einer Burg

Eingeschlafen auf der Lauer  
Oben ist der alte Ritter;  
Drüber gehen Regenschauer,  
Und der Wald rauscht durch das  
Gitter.

Eingewachsen Bart und Haare,  
Und versteinert Brust und Krause,  
Sitzt er viele hundert Jahre  
Oben in der stillen Klausen.

Draussen ist es still und friedlich,  
Alle sind in's Tal gezogen,  
Waldevögel einsam singen  
In den leeren Fensterbogen.

Eine Hochzeit fährt da unten  
Auf dem Rhein im Sonnenscheine,  
Musikanten spielen munter,  
Und die schöne Braut, die weinet.

## In der Fremde

Ich hör' die Bächlein rauschen  
Im Walde her und hin,  
Im Walde, in dem Rauschen  
Ich weiss nicht, wo ich bin.

Die Nachtigallen schlagen  
Hier in der Einsamkeit,  
Als wollten sie was sagen  
Von der alten, schönen Zeit.

Die Mondschimmer fliege  
Als säh' ich unter mir  
Das Schloss im Tale liegen,  
Und ist doch so weit von hier!

Here beyond the myrtle trees  
in secret twilight splendour,  
what are you telling me,  
fantastic night,  
obscurely, as in a dream?

The glittering stars gaze down  
on me,  
fierily and full of love,  
the distant horizon speaks with  
rapture  
of some great happiness to  
come!

## In a castle

Up there at his look-out  
the old knight has fallen asleep;  
rain-storms pass overhead,  
and the wood stirs through the  
portcullis.

Beard and hair matted together,  
ruff and breast turned to stone,  
for centuries he's sat up there  
in his silent cell.

Outside it's quiet and peaceful,  
all have gone down to the valley,  
forest birds sing lonely songs  
in the empty window-arches.

Down there on the sunlit Rhine  
a wedding-party's sailing by,  
musicians strike up merrily,  
and the lovely bride – weeps.

## In a foreign land

I hear the brooklets murmuring  
through the forest, here and there,  
in the forest, in the murmuring  
I do not know where I am.

Nightingales are singing  
here in the solitude,  
as though they wished to tell  
of lovely days now past.

The moonlight flickers,  
as though I saw below me  
the castle in the valley,  
yet it lies so far from here!

Als müsste in dem Garten  
Voll Rosen weiss und rot,  
Meine Liebste auf mich warten,  
Und ist doch so lange tot.

As though in the garden,  
full of roses, white and red,  
my love were waiting for me,  
yet she died so long ago.

## Wehmut

## Sadness

Ich kann wohl manchmal singen,  
Als ob ich fröhlich sei,  
Doch heimlich Tränen dringen,  
Da wird das Herz mir frei.

True, I can sometimes sing  
as though I were content;  
but secretly tears well up,  
and my heart is set free.

Es lassen Nachtigallen,  
Spielt draussen Frühlingsluft,  
Der Sehnsucht Lied erschallen  
Aus ihres Kerkers Gruft.

Nightingales, when spring  
breezes play outside, sing  
their song of longing  
from their dungeon cell.

Da lauschen alle Herzen,  
Und alles ist erfreut,  
Doch keiner fühlt die Schmerzen,  
Im Lied das tiefe Leid.

Then all hearts listen  
and everyone rejoices,  
yet no one feels the pain,  
the deep sorrow in the song.

## Zwielicht

## Twilight

Dämmerung will die Flügel  
spreiten,  
Schaurig rühren sich die Bäume,  
Wolken ziehn wie schwere  
Träume –  
Was will dieses Graun  
bedeuten?

Dusk is about to spread its  
wings,  
the trees now shudder and stir,  
clouds drift by like oppressive  
dreams –  
what can this dusk and dread  
imply?

Hast ein Reh du lieb vor andern,  
Lass es nicht alleine grasen,  
Jäger ziehn im Wald und  
blasen,  
Stimmen hin und wieder wandern.

If you have a fawn you favour,  
do not let her graze alone,  
hunters sound their horns  
through the forest,  
voices wander to and fro.

Hast du einen Freund hienieden,  
Trau ihm nicht zu dieser Stunde,  
Freundlich wohl mit Aug' und  
Munde,  
Sinnst er Krieg im tück'schen  
Frieden.

If here on earth you have a friend,  
do not trust him at this hour,  
though his eyes and lips be  
smiling,  
in treacherous peace he's  
scheming war.

Was heut gehet müde unter,  
Hebt sich morgen neugeboren.  
Manches geht in Nacht verloren –  
Hüte dich, sei wach und munter!

That which wearily sets today,  
will rise tomorrow, newly born.  
Much can go lost in the night –  
be wary, watchful, on your guard!

## Im Walde

## In the forest

Es zog eine Hochzeit den Berg  
entlang,  
Ich hörte die Vögel schlagen,  
Da blitzten viel Reiter, das  
Waldhorn klang,  
Das war ein lustiges Jagen!

A wedding procession wound  
across the mountain,  
I heard the warbling of birds,  
riders flashed by, hunting horns  
blared,  
that was a merry chase!

Und eh' ich's gedacht, war alles  
verhallt,  
Die Nacht bedeckt die Runde;  
Nur von den Bergen noch  
rauscht der Wald  
Und mich schauert's im  
Herzensgrunde.

And before I knew, all had  
faded,  
darkness covers the land;  
only the forest still sighs from  
the mountain,  
and deep in my heart I quiver  
with fear.

## Frühlingsnacht

## Spring night

Überm Garten durch die Lüfte  
Hört' ich Wandervögel zieh'n,  
Das bedeutet Frühlingsdüfte,  
Unten fängt's schon an zu blühen.

Over the garden, through the air  
I heard birds of passage fly,  
a sign that spring is in the air,  
flowers already bloom below.

Jauchzen möcht' ich, möchte  
weinen,  
Ist mir's doch, als könnt's nicht  
sein!  
Alte Wunder wieder  
scheinen  
Mit dem Mondesglanz herein.

I could shout for joy, could  
weep,  
for it seems to me it cannot  
be!  
All the old wonders come  
flooding back,  
gleaming in the moonlight.

Und der Mond, die Sterne sagen's,  
Und im Traume rauscht's der  
Hain  
Und die Nachtigallen schlagen's:  
Sie ist Deine, sie ist Dein!

And the moon and stars say it,  
and the dreaming forest  
whispers it,  
and the nightingales sing it:  
She is yours, is yours!

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## Interval

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## Gabriel Fauré (1845-1924)

### From *5 mélodies 'de Venise' Op. 58* (1891)

#### Mandoline

*Paul Verlaine*

#### Mandolin

Les donneurs de sérénades  
Et les belles écouteuses  
Echangent des propos fades  
Sous les ramures chanteuses.

The gallant serenaders  
and their fair listeners  
exchange sweet nothings  
beneath singing boughs.

C'est Tircis et c'est Aminte,  
Et c'est l'éternel Clitandre,

Tirsis is there, Aminte is there,  
and tedious Clitandre too,

Et c'est Damis qui pour  
mainte  
Cruelle fait maint vers tendre.

and Damis, who for many a  
cruel maid  
writes many a tender song.

Leurs courtes vestes de soie,  
Leurs longues robes à queues,  
Leur élégance, leur joie  
Et leurs molles ombres bleues

Their short silken doublets,  
their long trailing gowns,  
their elegance, their joy,  
and their soft blue shadows

Tourbillonnent dans l'extase  
D'une lune rose et grise,  
Et la mandoline jase  
Parmi les frissons de brise.

Whirl madly in the rapture  
of a grey and roseate moon,  
and the mandolin jangles on  
in the shivering breeze.

## En sourdine

*Paul Verlaine*

Calmes dans le demi-jour  
Que les branches hautes font,  
Pénétrons bien notre amour  
De ce silence profond.

Calm in the twilight  
cast by lofty boughs,  
let us steep our love  
in this deep quiet.

Mêlons nos âmes, nos cœurs  
Et nos sens extasiés,  
Parmi les vagues langueurs  
Des pins et des arbousiers.

Let us mingle our souls, our hearts  
and our enraptured senses  
with the hazy languor  
of arbutus and pine.

Ferme tes yeux à demi,  
Croise tes bras sur ton sein,  
Et de ton cœur  
endormi  
Chasse à jamais tout dessein.

Half-close your eyes,  
fold your arms across your breast,  
and from your heart now lulled  
to rest  
banish forever all intent.

Laissons-nous persuader  
Au soufflé berceur et doux  
Qui vient à tes pieds rider  
Les ondes des gazons roux.

Let us both succumb  
to the gentle and lulling breeze  
that comes to ruffle at your feet  
the waves of russet grass.

Et quand, solennel, le soir  
Des chênes noirs tombera,  
Voix de notre désespoir,  
Le rossignol chantera.

And when, solemnly, evening  
falls from the black oaks,  
that voice of our despair,  
the nightingale shall sing.

## Reynaldo Hahn (1874-1947)

From *Chansons grises* (1892)

### Chanson d'automne

*Paul Verlaine*

Les sanglots longs  
Des violons  
De l'automne  
Blessent mon cœur

### Autumn Song

With long sobs  
the violins  
of autumn  
wound my hear

D'une langueur  
Monotone.

with languorous  
monotony.

Tout suffocant  
Et blême, quand  
Sonne l'heure,  
Je me souviens  
Des jours anciens  
Et je pleure;

All choking  
and pale, when  
the hour sounds,  
I remember  
departed days  
and I weep;

Et je m'en vais  
Au vent mauvais  
Qui m'emporte  
Deçà, delà,  
Pareil à la  
Feuille morte.

And I go  
where ill winds blow,  
buffeted  
to and fro,  
like a  
dead leaf.

## Tous deux

*Paul Verlaine*

Donc, ce sera par un clair jour  
d'été  
Le grand soleil, complice de ma joie,  
Fera, parmi le satin et la  
soie,  
Plus belle encor votre chère beauté;

## Both of us

So, on a bright summer day it  
shall be:  
the great sun, my partner in joy,  
shall make, amid the satin and  
the silk,  
your dear beauty lovelier still;

Le ciel tout bleu, comme une  
haute tente,  
Frissonnera somptueux à longs  
plis  
Sur nos deux fronts heureux  
qu'auront pâlis  
L'émotion du bonheur et l'attente;

The sky, all blue, like a tall  
canopy,  
shall quiver sumptuously in the  
long folds  
above our two happy brows,  
grown pale  
with pleasure and expectancy;

Et quand le soir viendra, l'air  
sera doux  
Qui se jouera, caressant, dans  
vos voiles,  
Et les regards paisibles des  
étoiles  
Bienveillamment souriront aux  
époux.

And when evening comes, the  
breeze shall be soft  
and play caressingly about your  
veils,  
and the peaceful stars looking  
down  
shall smile benevolently on man  
and wife.

## L'allée est sans fin

*Paul Verlaine*

L'allée est sans fin  
Sous le ciel, divin  
D'être pâle ainsi:  
Sais-tu qu'on serait  
Bien sous le secret  
De ces arbres-ci?

## The path is endless

The path is endless  
beneath the sky, divine  
in being so pale:  
do you know how at ease  
we could be  
beneath the secret of these trees?

Le château, tout blanc  
Avec, à son flanc,  
Le soleil couché,  
Les champs à l'entour:  
Oh! que notre amour  
N'est-il là niché!

The castle, all white,  
flanked by  
the sun now set,  
encircled by fields:  
oh! that our love  
were hidden there!

### En sourdine

*Paul Verlaine*

Calmes dans le demi-jour  
Que les branches hautes font,  
Pénétrons bien notre amour  
De ce silence profond.

### Muted

Calm in the twilight  
cast by lofty boughs,  
let us steep our love  
in this deep quiet.

Fondons nos âmes, nos cœurs  
Et nos sens extasiés,  
Parmi les vagues langueurs  
Des pins et des arbousiers.

Let us mingle our souls, our hearts  
and our enraptured senses  
with the hazy languor  
of arbutus and pine.

Ferme tes yeux à demi,  
Croise tes bras sur ton sein,  
Et de ton cœur  
endormi  
Chasse à jamais tout dessein.

Half-close your eyes,  
fold your arms across your breast,  
and from your heart now lulled  
to rest  
banish forever all intent.

Laissons-nous persuader  
Au souffle berceur et doux  
Qui vient, à tes pieds, rider  
Les ondes des gazons roux.

Let us both succumb  
to the gentle and lulling breeze  
that comes to ruffle at your feet  
the waves of russet grass.

Et quand, solennel, le soir  
Des chênes noirs tombera  
Voix de notre désespoir,  
Le rossignol chantera.

And when, solemnly, evening  
falls from the black oaks,  
that voice of our despair,  
the nightingale shall sing.

### L'heure exquise

*Paul Verlaine*

La lune blanche  
Luit dans les bois;  
De chaque branche  
Part une voix  
Sous la ramée...

### The exquisite hour

The white moon  
gleams in the woods;  
from every branch  
there comes a voice  
beneath the boughs...

Ô bien aimée.

O my beloved.

L'étang reflète,  
Profond miroir,  
La silhouette  
Du saule noir  
Où le vent pleure...

The pool reflects,  
deep mirror,  
the silhouette  
of the black willow  
where the wind is weeping...

Rêvons, c'est l'heure.

Let us dream, it is the hour.

Un vaste et tendre  
Apaisement  
Semble descendre  
Du firmament  
Que l'astre irise...

A vast and tender  
consolation  
seems to fall  
from the sky  
the moon illumines...

C'est l'heure exquise.

Exquisite hour.

## Gabriel Fauré

### La bonne chanson Op. 61 (1892-4)

*Paul Verlaine*

#### Une sainte en son auréole

#### A Saint in her halo

Une Sainte en son auréole,  
Une Châtelaine en sa tour,  
Tout ce que contient la parole  
Humaine de grâce et d'amour;

A Saint in her halo,  
a Châtelaine in her tower,  
all that human words contain  
of grace and love;

La note d'or que fait entendre  
Un cor dans le lointain des bois,  
Mariée à la fierté tendre  
Des nobles Dames d'autrefois;

The golden note of a horn  
in forests far away,  
blended with the tender pride  
of noble Ladies of long ago;

Avec cela le charme insigne  
D'un frais sourire triomphant  
Éclos dans des candeurs de  
cygne  
Et des rougeurs de femme-enfant;

And then – the rare charm  
of a fresh, triumphant smile,  
flowering in swan-like  
innocence  
and the blushes of a child-bride;

Des aspects nacrés, blancs et  
roses,  
Un doux accord patricien:  
Je vois, j'entends toutes ces choses  
Dans son nom Carlovingien.

A nacreous sheen of white and  
pink,  
a sweet patrician harmony –  
all these things I see and hear  
in her Carolingian name.

#### Puisque l'aube grandit

#### Since day is breaking

Puisque l'aube grandit, puisque  
voici l'aurore,  
Puisque, après m'avoir fui  
longtemps, l'espoir veut bien  
Revoler devers moi qui l'appelle  
et l'implore,  
Puisque tout ce bonheur veut  
bien être le mien,  
Je veux, guidé par vous, beaux  
yeux aux flammes douces,  
Par toi conduit, ô main où  
tremblera ma main,  
Marcher droit, que ce soit par  
des sentiers de mousses

Since day is breaking, since  
dawn is here,  
since hope, having long eluded  
me, would now  
return to me and my  
implore,  
since all this happiness will truly  
be mine,  
I shall, guided by your fair eyes'  
gentle glow,  
led by your hand in which I  
place my trembling hand,  
walk straight ahead, on mossy  
paths



|  |  |
|--|--|
| Ou que rocs et cailloux<br>encombrent le chemin;   | or boulder-strewn and stony<br>tracks;               |
| Et comme, pour bercer les<br>lenteurs de la route, | And while, to ease the journey's<br>languid pace,    |
| Je chanterai des airs ingénus, je<br>me dis        | I shall sing some simple airs, I<br>tell myself      |
| Qu'elle m'écouterà sans<br>déplaisir sans doute;   | that she will surely hear me<br>without displeasure; |
| Et vraiment je ne veux pas<br>d'autre Paradis.     | and truly I crave no other<br>paradise.              |

**La lune blanche luit dans  
les bois      The white moon gleams  
in the woods**

|   |  |
|---|--|
| La lune blanche<br>Luit dans les bois;<br>De chaque branche<br>Part une voix<br>Sous la ramée ... | The white moon<br>gleams in the woods;<br>from every branch<br>there comes a voice<br>beneath the boughs ... |
| Ô bien-aimée.   | O my beloved.  |

|  |  |
|--|--|
| L'étang reflète,<br>Profond miroir,<br>La silhouette<br>Du saule noir<br>Où le vent pleure ... | The pool reflects,<br>deep mirror,<br>the silhouette<br>of the black willow<br>where the wind is weeping ... |
|--|--|

|                        |                               |
|------------------------|-------------------------------|
| Rêvons, c'est l'heure. | Let us dream, it is the hour. |
|------------------------|-------------------------------|

|   |   |
|---|---|
| Un vaste et tendre<br>Apaisement<br>Semble descendre<br>Du firmament<br>Que l'astre irise ... | A vast and tender<br>consolation<br>seems to fall<br>from the sky<br>the moon illumines ... |
|---|---|

|                        |                 |
|------------------------|-----------------|
| C'est l'heure exquise. | Exquisite hour. |
|------------------------|-----------------|

**J'allais par des chemins  
perfides      I walked along  
treacherous ways**

|   |  |
|---|--|
| J'allais par des chemins<br>perfides,<br>Douloureusement incertain.<br>Vos chères mains furent mes<br>guides. | I walked along treacherous<br>ways,<br>painfully uncertain.<br>Your dear hands guided<br>me. |
|---|--|

|  |  |
|--|--|
| Si pâle à l'horizon lointain<br>Luisait un faible espoir d'aurore;<br>Votre regard fut le matin. | So pale on the far horizon<br>a faint hope of dawn was gleaming;<br>your gaze was the morning. |
|--|--|

|  |  |
|--|--|
| Nul bruit, sinon son pas sonore,<br>N'encourageait le voyageur.<br>Votre voix me dit: 'Marche encore!' | No sound, save his own footfall,<br>encouraged the traveller.<br>Your voice said: 'Walk on!' |
|--|--|

|  |   |
|--|---|
| Mon cœur craintif, mon sombre<br>cœur<br>Pleurait, seul, sur la triste voie;<br>L'amour, délicieux vainqueur,<br>Nous a réunis dans la joie. | My fearful heart, my heavy<br>heart,<br>wept, lonely along the sad road;<br>Love, that charming conqueror,<br>has united us in joy. |
|--|---|

**J'ai presque peur, en  
vérité      In truth, I am almost  
afraid**

|   |  |
|---|--|
| J'ai presque peur, en vérité,<br>Tant je sens ma vie enlacée<br>À la radieuse pensée<br>Qui m'a pris l'âme l'autre été, | In truth, I am almost afraid,<br>so much do I feel my life bound up<br>with the radiant thoughts<br>that captured my soul last summer, |
|---|--|

|  |  |
|--|--|
| Tant votre image, à jamais<br>chère,<br>Habite en ce cœur tout à<br>vous,<br>Ce cœur uniquement jaloux<br>De vous aimer et de vous plaire; | So deeply does your ever-dear<br>image<br>inhabit this heart that is wholly<br>yours,<br>this heart, whose sole desire<br>is to love you and please you; |
|--|--|

|  |   |
|--|---|
| Et je tremble, pardonnez-moi<br>D'aussi franchement vous le dire,<br>À penser qu'un mot, qu'un<br>sourire<br>De vous est désormais ma loi, | And I tremble, forgive me<br>for telling you so frankly,<br>to think that one word, one<br>smile<br>from you is henceforth law to me, |
|--|---|

|  |   |
|--|---|
| Et qu'il vous suffirait d'un geste,<br>D'une parole ou d'un clin d'œil,<br>Pour mettre tout mon être en<br>deuil<br>De son illusion céleste. | And that one gesture would suffice,<br>one word, one single glance,<br>to plunge my whole being in<br>mourning<br>from its heavenly illusion. |
|--|---|

|  |  |
|--|--|
| Mais plutôt je ne veux vous voir,<br>L'avenir dût-il m'être sombre<br>Et fécond en peines sans nombre,<br>Qu'à travers un immense<br>espoir, | But I would sooner not see you –<br>however dark the future might be<br>and full of untold grief –<br>could I not, through an immense<br>hope, |
|--|--|

|   |  |
|---|--|
| Plongé dans ce bonheur<br>suprême<br>De me dire encore et toujours,<br>En dépit des mornes retours,<br>Que je vous aime, que je t'aime! | Immersed in this supreme<br>happiness,<br>repeat to myself again and again,<br>despite bleak reversals,<br>that I love you, I love thee! |
|---|--|

## Avant que tu ne t'en ailles

Avant que tu ne t'en ailles,  
Pâle étoile du matin,  
– Mille cailles  
Chantent, chantent dans le  
thym. –

Tourne devers le poète,  
Dont les yeux sont pleins d'amour,  
– L'alouette  
Monte au ciel avec le jour. –

Tourne ton regard que noie  
L'aurore dans son azur;  
– Quelle joie  
Parmi les champs de blé mûr! –

Puis fais luire ma pensée  
Là-bas, – bien loin, oh! bien loin!  
– La rosée  
Gaîment brille sur le foin. –

Dans le doux rêve où  
s'agite  
Ma mie endormie encor ...  
– Vite, vite,  
Car voici le soleil d'or. –

## Donc, ce sera par un clair jour d'été

Donc, ce sera par un clair jour  
d'été:  
Le grand soleil, complice de ma  
joie,  
Fera, parmi le satin et la  
soie,  
Plus belle encor votre chère beauté;

Le ciel tout bleu, comme une  
haute tente,  
Frissonnera somptueux à longs  
plis  
Sur nos deux fronts qu'auront  
pâlis  
L'émotion du bonheur et l'attente;

Et quand le soir viendra, l'air  
sera doux  
Qui se jouera, caressant, dans  
vos voiles,

## Before you fade

Before you fade,  
pale morning star,  
– a thousand quail  
are singing, singing in the  
thyme. –

Turn to the poet  
whose eyes are full of love,  
– the lark  
soars heavenward with the day. –

Turn your gaze drowned  
in the blue of dawn;  
– what delight  
among the fields of ripened corn! –

And make my thoughts gleam  
yonder, far, ah far away!  
– The dew  
glints brightly on the hay. –

Into the sweet dream where still  
asleep  
my love is stirring ...  
– Make haste, make haste,  
for here's the golden sun. –

## So, on a bright summer day it shall be

So, on a bright summer day it  
shall be:  
the glorious sun, my partner in  
joy,  
shall make, amid the satin and  
the silk,  
your dear beauty lovelier still;

The sky, all blue, like a tall  
canopy,  
shall quiver sumptuously in long  
folds  
above our two brows, grown  
pale  
with pleasure and expectancy;

And when evening comes, the  
breeze shall be soft  
and play caressingly about your  
veils,

Et les regards paisibles des  
étoiles  
Bienveillamment souriront aux  
époux.

## N'est-ce pas?

N'est-ce pas? nous irons, gais  
et lents, dans la voie  
Modeste que nous montre en  
souriant l'Espoir,  
Peu soucieux qu'on nous ignore  
ou qu'on nous voie

Isolés dans l'amour ainsi qu'en  
un bois noir,  
Nos deux cœurs, exhalant leur  
tendresse paisible,  
Seront deux rossignols qui  
chantent dans le soir.

Sans nous préoccuper de ce  
que nous destine  
Le Sort, nous marcherons  
pourtant du même pas,  
Et la main dans la main, avec  
l'âme enfantine

De ceux qui s'aiment sans  
mélange, n'est-ce pas?

## L'hiver a cessé

L'hiver a cessé: la lumière est tiède  
Et danse, du sol au firmament  
clair.  
Il faut que le cœur le plus triste  
cède  
À l'immense joie éparse dans l'air.

J'ai depuis un an le printemps  
dans l'âme  
Et le vert retour du doux floral,  
Ainsi qu'une flamme entoure  
une flamme,  
Met de l'idéal sur mon idéal.

Le ciel bleu prolonge, exhausse  
et couronne  
L'immuable azur où rit mon  
amour.  
La saison est belle et ma part  
est bonne  
Et tous mes espoirs ont enfin  
leur tour.

and the peaceful stars looking  
down  
shall smile benevolently on man  
and wife.

## Is it not so?

Is it not so? Happy and  
unhurried we'll follow  
the modest path where Hope  
directs us with a smile,  
little caring if we are neither  
known nor seen.

Isolated in love as in a dark  
wood,  
our two hearts, breathing gentle  
love,  
shall be two nightingales singing  
at evening.

With no thought of what  
Destiny  
has in store, we shall walk along  
together,  
hand in hand, our souls like  
those of children

Whose love is unalloyed, is that  
not so?

## Winter is over

Winter is over, the light is soft  
and dances up from the earth to  
the clear sky.  
The saddest heart must  
surrender  
to the great joy that fills the air.

For a year I have had spring in  
my soul,  
and the green return of sweet May,  
like flame encircling  
flame,  
adds an ideal to my ideal.

The blue sky prolongs,  
heightens, and crowns  
the steadfast azure where my  
love smiles.  
The season is fair and my lot is  
happy  
and all my hopes are at last  
fulfilled.

|   |                                       |
|---|---------------------------------------|
| Que vienne l'été! Que viennent<br>encore  | Let summer come! Let<br>autumn        |
| L'automne et l'hiver! Et chaque<br>saison | and winter come too! Each<br>season   |
| Me sera charmante, ô Toi que<br>décore    | will delight me, O you graced<br>with |
| Cette fantaisie et cette raison!          | imagination and good sense!           |

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