

WIGMORE HALL

Sunday 14 January 2024
3.00pm

All Roads Lead to Rome

Royal Academy of Music Song Circle

Angharad Rowlands mezzo-soprano • Chunmeng Ge piano
Samuel Stopford tenor • Daniel Peter Silcock piano
Clara Orif soprano • Jiewei Yu piano
Johannes Moore baritone • Zany Denyer piano

Gabriel Fauré (1845-1924)

Angharad Rowlands mezzo-soprano • Chunmeng Ge piano

5 mélodies 'de Venise' Op. 58 (1891)

Mandoline • En sourdine • Green • A Clymène • C'est l'extase

Franz Liszt (1811-1886)

Samuel Stopford tenor • Daniel Peter Silcock piano

3 sonetti di Petrarca S270/1 (1842-6)

*Pace non trovo (Sonnet No. 104) • Benedetto sia' il giorno
(Sonnet No. 47) • I' vidi in terra angelici costumi (Sonnet
No. 123)*

Claude Debussy (1862-1918)

Clara Orif soprano • Jiewei Yu piano

Ariettes oubliées (1885-7, rev. 1903)

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

Ralph Vaughan Williams
(1872-1958)

Johannes Moore baritone • Zany Denyer piano

From *The House of Life* (1903)

Love-sight • Silent Noon • Death in love • Love's last gift

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This afternoon's recital is devoted to songs that were inspired by Italian culture. Fauré began his *5 mélodies 'de Venise'* while visiting La Serenissima in 1891; Debussy started his *Ariettes oubliées* just before his stay at the Villa Medici in Rome between 1885-7 as part of his Prix de Rome scholarship; Liszt visited Italy three years before composing the Petrarch sonnets, which he set to music in a quasi-operatic style; and Vaughan Williams chose six sonnets from Dante Gabriel Rossetti's *The House of Life*. Rossetti was the son of an Italian patriot who came to England in 1824 as a political exile, and though educated at King's College School, spoke Italian at home.

Fauré's *5 mélodies 'de Venise'* ('Mandoline' was composed in Venice itself) are settings of Verlaine at his immoral best. The piano part of 'Mandoline' bristles with staccato chords which simulate the plucked instrument that accompanies the flirtations in Verlaine's poem. The rustling movement of the dancers in 'Mandoline' yields in 'En sourdine' to the silence of a chiaroscuro landscape where two lovers abandon themselves to their passion. 'Green' creates a different mood: a breathless lover hurries through the dawn to be at his beloved's side. He arrives with the dew frozen to his brow, bearing fruits, flowers, leaves and branches as gifts. 'A Clymène' is a deliciously light description of the seductive power of a court beauty. The crescendo of rapture is wonderfully caught by Fauré in the change of rhythm in the second verse, where 9/8 gives way to a 4/4 metre, marked *un poco più mosso*. 'C'est l'extase', the final song of the group, reflects Verlaine's sadness and longing for reconciliation with his young wife Mathilde after his affair with Rimbaud, and Fauré responds with a setting which combines both languor (especially in the piano introduction) and ecstasy (in the syncopated accompaniment). Fauré was thrilled with the song, as he wrote to the Princesse de Polignac in 1891, telling her how it incorporated material heard in 'Green' and 'En sourdine', earlier in the cycle.

Liszt's *sonnetti di Petrarca* are dedicated to the opera singer Giovanni Battista Rubini, and require a singer with an enormous range (the highest notes are given *ossia* versions). The accompaniment is highly demanding throughout, and reminds us that Liszt came to Lieder by way of the piano – in a similar way to Schumann. His first original songs were composed immediately after his transcriptions of melodies by Rossini and Schubert. That he was aware of the excessive virtuosic nature of the piano writing in these early songs is clear from a letter to the composer Josef Dessauer in the early 1850s: 'My earlier songs are often too inflatedly sentimental and frequently too overlaid in the accompaniment'. They are, nonetheless, wonderfully enjoyable and highly expressive in a Romantic way. Though dedicated to Rubini, they were clearly kindled by the Countess Marie d'Agoult, who bore Liszt three children. What better way to express his love than to set to music these love poems that were written in 1327 by Petrarch, inspired by his love for Laura?

Verlaine's *Ariettes oubliées* from *Romances sans paroles*, written between 1872 and 1873, reflect his troubled emotional state over the break with his wife and his liaison with Rimbaud. Debussy initially published the six songs individually in 1888, calling them simply *Ariettes*; 15 years later in 1903 he published them (in revised form) for a second time as *Ariettes oubliées* and dedicated them to Mary Garden, the Scottish soprano who created the role of Mélisande in *Pelléas et Mélisande*. This new set ushers in the *mélodies* of the mature Debussy. 'C'est l'extase langoureuse', marked 'rêveusement', conveys its voluptuous message through sliding chords of the ninth and a vocal line that has the freedom of natural speech; 'Il pleure dans mon cœur', a poem written in London where Rimbaud and Verlaine spent several months together from September 1872 until April 1873, reflects with its throbbing assonance Verlaine's sadness and uncertainty – a mood perfectly captured by Debussy's obsessive and soft-pedalled semiquavers that he instructs the pianist to play sadly and monotonously; 'L'ombre des arbres' displays some striking modulations that illustrate the disparity between illusion and reality in the poem. In 'Chevaux de bois' Debussy suggests the circular motion of the wooden horses by using the round-like tunes of old-fashioned carousels and whirling arpeggios – until the final bars, that is, when the noisy trills cease and twilight asserts itself in an extraordinarily impressionistic way. Debussy's reading of 'Green' sees the poem as a passionate and successful declaration of love, and indicates that the song should be performed in a mood that is *joyeusement animé*. The cycle ends with 'Spleen', one of the most tormented songs in the repertoire. The obstinately recurring theme of the accompaniment mirrors the obsessive nature of the poem which describes how the poet has grown tired of everything, 'except you, alas!' As the song limps to a close, we sense that Verlaine, having left his wife to indulge his passion for Rimbaud, now realises that the young poet does not fully return his love.

For *The House of Life* (we hear four of the songs), Vaughan Williams chose six of Rossetti's 101 sonnets and fashioned from them a cycle that deals not only with the poet's love for Lizzie Siddal and his infatuation with Jane Morris, but also expresses views on art and beauty. The themes of 'tenderness of love', 'death-in-love' and 'attained spirituality', adumbrated in the opening 'Love-sight', reappear throughout the work and fuse in the final line of the final song, 'Love's last gift', at 'Take my last gift; thy heart hath sung my praise'. 'Silent Noon', like Debussy's 'Green', is a description of amorous fatigue and has, with its softly pulsating accompaniment, arpeggiated bass line, expressive rests and that wonderfully suspended moment at 'the dragonfly/Hangs like a blue thread', rarely been surpassed as an expression of languorous content. Stephen Banfield in *Sensitivity and English Song* describes 'Death in love' as Vaughan Williams's most Wagnerian song.

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Angharad Rowlands mezzo-soprano
Chunmeng Ge piano

Gabriel Fauré (1845-1924)

5 mélodies 'de Venise' Op. 58 (1891)

Paul Verlaine

Mandoline

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

C'est Tircis et c'est
Aminte,
Et c'est l'éternel Clitandre,
Et c'est Damis qui pour
mainte
Cruelle fait maint vers
tendre.

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

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

En sourdine

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

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

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

Mandolin

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

Tircis is there, Aminte is
there,
and tedious Clitandre too,
and Damis, who for many
a cruel maid
writes many a tender
song.

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

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

Muted

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

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

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.

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

Green

Voici des fruits, des fleurs,
des feuilles et des
branches
Et puis voici mon cœur 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 encore de vos
derniers baisers;
Laissez-la s'apaiser de la
bonne tempête,
Et que je dorme un peu
puisque vous reposez.

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

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

Green

Here are flowers,
branches, fruit and
fronds,
and here too is my heart
that beats just for you.
Do not tear it with your
two white hands
and may the humble gift
please your lovely eyes.

I come all covered still
with the dew
frozen to my brow by the
morning breeze.
Let my fatigue, finding
rest at your feet,
dream of dear moments
that will soothe it.

On your young breast let
me cradle my head
still ringing with your
recent kisses;
after love's sweet tumult
grant it peace,
and let me sleep a while,
since you rest.

A Clymène

Mystiques barcarolles,
Romances sans paroles,
Chère, puisque tes yeux,
Couleur des cieux,

Puisque ta voix, étrange
Vision qui dérange
Et trouble l'horizon
De ma raison,

Puisque l'arome insigne
De ta pâleur de cygne,
Et puisque la candeur
De ton odeur,

Ah! puisque tout ton
être,
Musique qui pénètre,
Nimbés d'anges défunts,
Tons et parfums,

A, sur d'âmes cadences,
En ces correspondances
Induit mon cœur subtil,
Ainsi soit-il!

C'est l'extase

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 cœur des petites voix.

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

Cette âme qui se lamente
Et 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?

To Clymène

Mystical barcarolles,
songs without words,
sweet, since your eyes,
the colour of skies,

Since your voice,
strange vision that unsettles
and troubles the horizon
of my reason,

Since the rare scent
of your swan-like pallor,
and since the candour
of your fragrance,

Ah! since your whole
being –
pervading music,
haloes of departed angels,
sounds and scents –

Has in sweet cadences
and correspondences
led on my receptive heart –
so be it!

It is rapture

It is langorous rapture,
it is amorous fatigue,
it is all the tremors of the
forest
in the breezes' embrace,
it is, around the grey
branches,
the choir of tiny voices.

O the delicate, fresh
murmuring!
The warbling and
whispering,
it is like the sweet sound
the ruffled grass gives out...
You might take it for the
muffled sound
of pebbles in the swirling
stream.

This soul which grieves
and this subdued lament,
it is ours, is it not?
Mine, and yours too,
breathing out our humble
hymn
on this warm evening,
soft and low?

Samuel Stopford tenor
Daniel Peter Silcock piano

Franz Liszt (1811-1886)

3 sonetti di Petrarca S270/1 (1842-6)

Petrarch

Pace non trovo (Sonnet No. 104) I find no peace

Pace non trovo, e non ho da far guerra, E temo, e spero, ed ardo, e son un ghiaccio: E volo sopra 'l cielo, e giaccio in terra; E nulla stringo, tutto 'l mondo abbraccio.	I find no peace, and am not inclined for war; and I fear, and I hope, and burn, and am turned to ice, and I soar in the air, and lie upon the ground; and I hold nothing, though I embrace the world.
Tal m'ha in prigion, che non m'apre, né serra, Né per suo mi ritien, né scioglie il laccio, E non m'accide Amor, e non mi sferra; Né mi vuol vivo, né mi trahe d'impaccio.	Love has me in a prison, which he neither opens nor locks; he neither claims me for his own, nor loosens my halter; and Love neither slays me, nor unshackles me; he would not have me live, yet he torments me.

Veggio senz'occhi; e non ho lingua e grido; E bramo di perir, e chieggo aita; Ed ho in odio me stesso, ed amo altrui: Pascomi di dolor; piangendo rido; Egualemente mi spiace morte e vita. In questo stato son, Donna, per Voi.	I see without eyes; and cry without a tongue; I long to perish, and plead for help; I hate myself and love another: I feed on grief; weeping I laugh; death, like life, repels me. You have reduced me, my lady, to this state.
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Benedetto sia'l giorno (Sonnet No. 47) Blessed be the day

Benedetto sia 'l giorno, e 'l mese, e l'anno, E la stagione, e 'l tempo, e l'ora, e 'l punto E 'l bel paese e 'l loco, ov'io fui giunto Da' duo begli occhi che legato m'anno;	Blessed be the day, the month, the year, and the season, and the time, and the hour, and the moment, and the lovely landscape, and the spot where I was enthralled by two lovely eyes that have enslaved me.
---	---

E benedetto il primo dolce affanno
 Ch'ì' ebbi ad esser con Amor congiunto,
 E l'arco e la saette ond' i' fui punto,
 E le piaghe, ch'infino al cor mi vanno.

And blessed be the first sweet pang I suffered,
 when Love overwhelmed me,
 the bow and the arrows which stung me,
 and the wounds which penetrate my heart.

Benedette le voci tante, ch'io
 Chiamando il nome di mia Laura ho sparte,
 E i sospiri e le lagrime e 'l desio.

Blessed be the many voices that have echoed
 when I have called my Laura's name,
 and the sighs and the tears, and the longing.

E benedette sian tutte le carte
 Ov'io fama le acquisto, e il pensier mio,
 Ch'è sol di lei, sì, ch'altra non v'ha parte.

And blessed be all those writings,
 in which I have spread her fame, and my thoughts,
 which stem from her alone.

I vidi in terra angelici costumi (Sonnet No. 123)

I beheld on earth angelic grace

I vidi in terra angelici costumi,
 E celesti bellezze al mondo sole;
 Tal che di rimembrar mi giova, e dole:
 Che quant'io miro, par sogni, ombre, e fumi.

I beheld on earth angelic grace
 and heavenly beauty unmatched in this world,
 such as rejoice and pain my memory,
 which is clouded with dreams, shadows, mists.

E vidi lagrimar que' duo bei lumi,
 Ch'han fatto mille volte invidia al sole;
 Ed udi' sospirando dir parole
 Che farian gir i monti, e stare i fiumi.

And I beheld tears spring from those lovely eyes,
 which many a time have put the sun to shame.
 And I heard words uttered with such sighs,
 that mountains would be moved and rivers halted.

Amor! senno! valor, pietate, e doglia
 Facean piangendo un più dolce concerto
 D'ogni altro, che nel mondo udir si soglia.

Love! wisdom! valour, pity and grief
 created in that lament a sweeter concert
 than any other to be heard on earth.

Ed era 'l cielo all'armonia s'intento
 Che non si vedea in ramo mover foglia.
 Tanta dolcezza avea pien l'aer e 'l vento.

And heaven was so intent on that harmony,
 that not a leaf was seen to move on the bough;
 such sweetness had filled the air and the wind.

Clara Orif soprano
Jiewei Yu piano

Claude Debussy (1862-1918)

Ariettes oubliées (1885-7, rev. 1903)

Paul Verlaine

C'est l'extase

It is languorous rapture

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.

It is languorous rapture,
 it is amorous fatigue,
 it is all the tremors of the forest
 in the breezes' embrace,
 it is, around the grey branches,
 the choir of tiny voices.

Ô 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.

O the delicate, fresh murmuring!
 The warbling and whispering,
 it is like the soft cry the ruffled grass gives out ...
 You might take it for the muffled sound
 of pebbles in the swirling stream.

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?

This soul which grieves in this subdued lament,
 it is ours, is it not?
 Mine, and yours too,
 breathing out our humble hymn
 on this warm evening,
 soft and low?

Il pleure dans mon cœur

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

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

Il pleure sans raison
Dans ce cœur qui s'écœure.
Quoi! Nulle
trahison? ...
Ce deuil est sans raison.

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

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

Tears fall in my heart

Tears fall in my heart
as rain falls on the town;
what is this torpor
pervading my heart?

Ah, the soft sound of rain
on the ground and roofs!
For a listless heart,
ah, the sound of the rain!

Tears fall without reason
in this disheartened heart.
What! Was there no
treason? ...
This grief is without reason.

And the worst pain of all
must be not to know why,
without love and without
hate
my heart feels such pain.

The shadow of trees

The shadow of trees in
the misty stream
dies like smoke,
while up above, in the real
branches,
the turtle-doves lament.

How this faded
landscape, O traveller,
watched you yourself fade,
and how sadly in the lofty
leaves
your drowned hopes
were weeping!

Merry-go-round

Turn, turn, you fine
wooden horses,
turn a hundred, turn a
thousand times,
turn often and turn for
evermore,
turn and turn to the
oboes' sound.

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 cœur,
Tandis qu'autour de
tous vos
tournois
Clignote l'œil 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'église tinte un glas
tristement.
Tournez au son joyeux des
tambours!

The red-faced child and
the pale mother,
the lad in black and the
girl in pink,
one down-to-earth, the
other showing off,
each buying a treat with
their Sunday sou.

Turn, turn, horses of their
hearts,
while the furtive
pickpocket's eye is
flashing
as you whirl about and
whirl around,
turn to the sound of the
conquering cornet!

Astonishing how drunk it
makes you,
riding like this in this
foolish fair:
with an empty stomach
and an aching head,
discomfort in plenty, and
masses of fun!

Gee-gees, turn, you'll
never need
the help of any spur
to make your horses
gallop round:
turn, turn, without hope of
hay.

And hurry on, horses of
their souls:
nightfall already calls
them to supper
and disperses the crowd
of happy revellers,
ravenous with
thirst.

Turn, turn! The velvet
sky
is slowly decked with
golden stars.
The church bell tolls a
mournful knell –
turn to the joyful sound of
drums!

Green

Voici des fruits, des fleurs,
des feuilles et des
branches
Et puis voici mon cœur 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 encore 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
vernissée
Et du luisant buis je suis
las,

Et de la campagne
infinie
Et de tout, fors de vous,
hélas!

Green

Here are flowers,
branches, fruit, and
fronds,
and here too is my heart
that beats just for you.
Do not tear it with your
two white hands
and may the humble gift
please your lovely eyes.

I come all covered still
with the dew
frozen to my brow by the
morning breeze.
Let my fatigue, finding
rest at your feet,
dream of dear moments
that will soothe it.

On your young breast let
me cradle my head
still ringing with your
recent kisses;
after love's sweet tumult
grant it peace,
and let me sleep a while,
since you rest.

Spleen

All the roses were red
and the ivy was all black.

Dear, at your slightest
move,
all my despair
revives.

The sky was too blue, too
tender,
the sea too green, the air
too mild.

I always fear – oh to wait
and wonder! –
one of your agonizing
departures.

I am weary of the glossy
holly,
of the gleaming box-tree
too,

And the boundless
countryside
and everything, alas, but
you!

Johannes Moore baritone
Zany Denyer piano

Ralph Vaughan Williams (1872-1958)

From *The House of Life* (1903)

Dante Gabriel Rossetti

Love-sight

When do I see thee most, beloved one?
When in the light the spirits of mine eyes
Before thy face, their altar, solemnize
The worship of that Love through thee made known?

Or when in the dusk hours, (we two alone)
Close-kissed and eloquent of still replies
Thy twilight-hidden glimmering visage lies,
And my soul only sees thy soul its own?

O love - my love! if I no more should see Thyself,
nor on the earth the shadow of thee,
Nor image of thine eyes in any spring,
How then should sound upon Life's darkening slope
The groundwhirl of the perished leaves of Hope
The wind of Death's imperishable wing?

Silent Noon

Your hands lie open in the long fresh grass, –
The finger-points look through like rosy blooms:
Your eyes smile peace. The pasture gleams and glooms
'Neath billowing skies that scatter and amass.

All round our nest, far as the eye can pass,
Are golden kingcup fields with silver edge
Where the cow-parsley skirts the hawthorn hedge.
'Tis visible silence, still as the hour-glass.

Deep in the sun-searched growths the dragonfly
Hangs like a blue thread loosen'd from the sky: –
So this wing'd hour is dropt to us from above.
Oh! clasp we to our hearts, for deathless dower,
This close-companion'd inarticulate hour
When twofold silence was the song of love.

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

Death in love

There came an image in Life's retinue
That had Love's wings and bore his gonfalon:
Fair was the web, and nobly wrought thereon,
O soul-sequestered face, thy form and hue!
Bewildering sounds, such as Spring wakens to,
Shook in its folds; and through my heart its power
Sped trackless as the memorable hour
When birth's dark portal groaned and all was new
But a veiled woman followed, and she caught
The banner round its staff, to furl and cling,
Then plucked a feather from the bearer's wing,
And held it to his lips that stirred it not,
And said to me, "Behold, there is no breath:
I and this Love are one, and I am Death."

Love's last gift

Love to his singer held a glistening leaf,
and said: "The rose-tree and the apple-tree
Have fruits to vaunt or flowers to lure the bee;
And golden shafts are in the feathered sheaf
Of the great harvest marshal, the year's chief
Victorious summer; aye, and 'neath warm sea
Strange secret grasses lurk inviolably
Between the filtering channels of sunk reef..."

All are my blooms; and all sweet blooms of love
To thee I gave while spring and summer sang;
But autumn stops to listen, with some pang
From those worse things the wind is moaning of.
Only this laurel dreads no winter days:
Take my last gift; thy heart hath sung my praise."