WIGMORE HALL

Tuesday 20 October 2026
7.30pm

The Memory of a Season

Supported by an anonymous donor

Louise Alder soprano • **Joseph Middleton** piano

Spring

Reynaldo Hahn (1874-1947)	Le printemps (pub. 1899)
Edvard Grieg (1843-1907)	Gruss Op. 48 No. 1 (1884-8)
Hugo Wolf (1860-1903)	Frühling übers Jahr from *Goethe Lieder* (1888)
Giacomo Puccini (1858-1924)	La primavera (c.1880)
Edvard Grieg	Ein Traum Op. 48 No. 6 (1884-8)
Hugo Wolf	Er ist's from *Mörike Lieder* (1888)

Summer

Henri Duparc (1848-1933)	Chanson triste (1868)
Richard Strauss (1864-1949)	Blauer Sommer Op. 31 No. 1 (1896)
Giacomo Puccini	Sole e amore (1888)
Alban Berg (1885-1935)	Sommertage from *7 frühe Lieder* (1905-8)
Cécile Chaminade (1857-1944)	L'été (pub. 1894)
Helen Grime (b.1981)	Seasons (2024) *Winter • Spring 'Eostre Hymn' • Summer • Autumn*

Interval

Autumn

Franz Schubert (1797-1828)	Herbst D945 (1828)
Alban Berg	Im Zimmer from *7 frühe Lieder*
Robert Schumann (1810-1856)	Im Herbste (1828)
Olivier Messiaen (1908-1992)	Pourquoi? from *3 mélodies* (1930)
Claude Debussy (1862-1918)	Les roses (1882)

Winter

Jean Sibelius (1865-1957)	Våren flyktar hastigt Op. 13 No. 4 (1891)
Robert Schumann	Schneeglöckchen from *Lieder-Album für die Jugend* Op. 79 (1849)
Richard Strauss	Winterweihe Op. 48 No. 4 (1900) Weihnachtsgefühl (1899)
Francis Poulenc (1899-1963)	Nous voulons une petite sœur from *4 chansons pour enfants* (1934)
Margaret Bonds (1913-1972)	Songs of the Seasons (1934-55) *Poème d'automne • Winter-moon • Young love in spring • Summer storm*

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This programme begins with spring and ends with winter, while the two seasons-themed cycles that conclude each half – by Helen Grime and Margaret Bonds – take different starting points, beginning with winter and autumn respectively.

Notions of arrival and greeting animate the first pair. In **Reynaldo Hahn**'s *Le printemps*, published in 1899, the performers are directed to sing and play 'with enthusiasm, with intoxication' at the arrival of spring. The bubbling, busy piano part aligns itself with various images put forth in Théodore de Banville's poem. **Edvard Grieg**'s *Gruss* is a setting of a Heinrich Heine poem that, in its third line, describes itself as a 'little song of spring'. The Op. 48 songs, of which we hear the first and last today, count among relatively few collections by Grieg that set German poems. Both *Gruss* and *Ein Traum* evoke the sound of pealing bells, which come through in the piano part; in the latter, it contributes to the sense of blurred boundaries between dream and reality.

Giacomo Puccini's *La primavera* is an early, little-known canzonetta written to the composer's own text in 1880. Flanking it here are two **Hugo Wolf** songs, one each drawn from his *Goethe Lieder* and *Mörike Lieder*. The love song 'Frühling übers Jahr' (Spring all year round) was composed in mid-December 1888 – it is a delicate setting of Goethe's poem that draws upon the metaphorical association between blossoming love and flowers. 'Er ist's', also from 1888, again announces the arrival of spring, ending in an outpouring of celebration in the piano postlude.

The summer sections starts with a song of sadness: **Duparc**'s *Chanson triste* of 1868 sets a poem by Jean Lahor that gazes into the eyes and heart of the beloved, finding there 'a gentle summer moonlight'. **Richard Strauss** composed *Blauer Sommer* in 1896 to mark the birthday of his sister Johanna. Karl Busse's poem is replete with images and sounds of ripeness, fullness, heat and colour, which Strauss matches in his rich textures; the allusion to harvest keeps one eye on the approaching autumn. A cheerful sun comes out in **Puccini**'s *Sole e amore*, which was first printed in 1888 and bears resemblances with music later incorporated into Act 3 of *La Bohème*. 'Sommertage' – the last of **Alban Berg**'s *7 frühe Lieder* (1905-8) – sets Paul Hohenberg's poem on the expansiveness of summer days; Berg's chromatic, late-Romantic music ends in an emphatic minor. Extrovert motion is restored in **Cécile Chaminade**'s *L'été*, which brings to the fore the sounds, sights and smells of summer depicted in Édouard Guinand's poem. It was published in 1894 and counts among the many songs that found widespread popularity within her lifetime.

Helen Grime's cycle *Seasons* was written for Alder and Middleton and premièred by them at the 2025 Leeds Song festival. Its four songs, with words by Dictynna Hood, track an annual cycle beginning with winter and ending with autumn. Grime's programme note for the work describes a 'crystalline' piano melody beginning 'Winter' – a song containing 'distance and loneliness' – while 'Spring' is full of joyful imagery with a repeated refrain; the 'decadence' of Hood's 'Summer' is matched with 'lazy, falling' vocal lines and 'filigree' piano embellishments, while 'Autumn' evokes ancientness and has an air of desperation, with the ending 'hinting towards hope (and spring)'.

Franz Schubert's *Herbst* (D945) is one of several settings of Ludwig Rellstab composed in 1828, the year of his premature death, but it was not included by the publisher Tobias Haslinger in the posthumous Rellstab-Heine-Seidl composite work *Schwanengesang*. The chilly rush of wind that opens the poem – which can be felt in the unsettled piano introduction – signals the loss of summer warmth and colour. A second number from **Berg**'s *7 frühe Lieder*, 'Im Zimmer', takes us indoors, to the comfort of a crackling fire and the company of a beloved. The theme of turning away from nature and towards love is emphasised in **Robert Schumann**'s early song *Im Herbste* (1828), to a poem by Justinus Kerner. **Olivier Messiaen** used his own poem in *Pourquoi* (1930), which asks, rather desolately, why the autumnal leaves, summer roses and songs of spring have lost their charm. The autumn sequence concludes with memories of summer in **Claude Debussy**'s early Banville setting *Les roses* (1882).

The four seasons – and their passing – are invoked in *Våren flyktar hastigt*, an 1891 setting by **Jean Sibelius** of the poet and fellow Swedish-speaking Finn Johan Ludvig Runeberg. Next, Schumann's 'Schneeglöckchen' recalls the gentle bells heard at the start of this programme, here as frozen flowers calling out for spring. **Richard Strauss**'s 1900 song *Winterweihe* retreats from the outside world into inner warmth and strength, the voice cushioned and consoled by the piano's close chords. Strauss composed *Weihnachtsgefühl* in December of the previous year, though this delicate portrayal of now-lost seasonal magic remained unpublished in his lifetime. A more comedic Christmas tale closes the set, in Francis Poulenc's 'Nous voulons une petite sœur', from his *4 chansons pour enfants* of 1934.

Margaret Bonds's *Songs of the Seasons* is a composite cycle comprising songs written over more than 20 years. All are settings of Langston Hughes, whose poetry Bonds had discovered while an undergraduate at Northwestern University, which she referred to as 'a terribly prejudiced place'. In an interview given late in her life, she recalled that encountering Hughes's work 'helped [her] feelings of security'. Bonds met Hughes in 1936, thereafter becoming a friend and frequent collaborator; the song 'Winter-moon' dates from that year. 'Poème d'automne' was one of her first Hughes settings, written in 1934 when she was 21, while 'Summer storm' and 'Young love in spring' both date from 1955.

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Spring

Reynaldo Hahn (1874-1947)

Le printemps (pub. 1899)
Théodore de Banville

Spring

Te voilà, rire du Printemps!
Les thyrses des lilas fleurissent.
Les amantes qui te chérissent
Délivrent leurs cheveux flottants.

Smiling Spring, you have arrived!
Sprays of lilacs are in bloom.
Lovers who hold you dear
unbind their flowing hair.

Sous les rayons d'or éclatants
Les anciens lierres se flétrissent.
Te voilà, rire du Printemps!
Les thyrses des lilas fleurissent.

Beneath the beams of glistening gold
the ancient ivy withers.
Smiling Spring, you have arrived!
Sprays of lilacs are in bloom.

Couchons-nous au bord des étangs,
Que nos maux amers se guérissent!
Mille espoirs fabuleux nourrissent
Nos cœurs émus et palpitants.
Te voilà, rire du Printemps!

Let us lie alongside pools
that our bitter wounds may heal!
A thousand fabled hopes nourish
our full and beating hearts.
Smiling Spring, you have arrived!

Edvard Grieg (1843-1907)

Gruss Op. 48 No. 1
(1884-8)
Heinrich Heine

Greeting

Leise zieht durch mein Gemüt
Liebliches Geläute.
Klinge, kleines Frühlingslied,
Kling hinaus ins Weite.
Zieh hinaus, bis an das Haus,
Wo die Veilchen spriessen.
Wenn du eine Rose schaust,
Sag, ich lass' sie grüssen.

A sweet sound of bells
peals gently through my soul.
Ring out, little song of spring,
ring out far and wide.
Ring out till you reach the house
where violets are blooming.
And if you should see a rose,
send to her my greeting.

Hugo Wolf (1860-1903)

Frühling übers Jahr from *Goethe Lieder*
(1888)
Johann Wolfgang von Goethe

Perennial Spring

Das Beet, schon lockert
Sichs in die Höh!
Da wanken Glöckchen
So weiss wie Schnee;
Safran entfalltet
Gewaltge Glut,
Smaragden keimt es
Und keimt wie Blut;
Primeln stolzieren
So naseweis,
Schalkhafte Veilchen,
Versteckt mit Fleiss;
Was auch noch alles
Da regt und webt,
Genug, der Frühling,
Er wirkt und lebt.

The flower-bed's
already pushing upwards,
little bells wave there.
As white as snow;
crocuses blaze
with intense colour,
shoots of emerald
and shoots like blood.
Primroses strut
so saucily,
mischievous violets
carefully hidden;
and a great deal else
is stirring and moving,
enough – it's spring,
active and alive.

Doch was im Garten
Am reichsten blüht,
Das ist des Liebchens
Lieblich Gemüt.
Da glühen Blicke
Mir immerfort,
Erregend Liedchen,
Erheiternd Wort,
Ein immer offen,
Ein Blütenherz,
Im Ernste freundlich
Und rein im Scherz.
Wenn Ros und Lilie
Der Sommer bringt,
Er doch vergebens
Mit Liebchen ringt.

But in all the garden
the richest flower
is my sweetheart's
lovely soul.
She looks at me ardently
all the time,
inspiring songs,
provoking words,
an ever-open
blossoming heart,
friendly in grave matters,
and pure in jesting.
Summer may bring
the rose and lily,
but it vies in vain
with my darling.

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

Giacomo Puccini (1858-1924)

La primavera (c.1880) — Spring

È questa la stagione in cui il furore
D'imperversante aquilonar procella
Già cede il loco al natural tepore
Che promette stagion più grata e bella;
E dei giardin l'industre agricoltore
Piegato sovra a pianta tenerella,
Ah! ne benda il fiocco e poi racchiuderà
Quel germe di più fruttifero arboscel.

This is the season in which the fury
of the north wind's raging storms
gives way to the natural warmth that heralds
a more welcome, attractive time of year;
and the hardworking gardener,
bent over a tender young plant,
ah! protects its shoots and then prepares
the seed of a more fruitful sapling.

Edvard Grieg

Ein Traum Op. 48 No. 6 (1884-8) — A dream

Friedrich von Bodenstedt

Mir träumte einst ein schöner Traum:
Mich liebte eine blonde Maid,
Es war am grünen Waldesraum,
Es war zur warmen Frühlingszeit:

I once dreamed a beautiful dream:
a blond maiden loved me,
it was in the green woodland glade,
it was in the warm springtime:

Die Knospe sprang, der Waldbach schwoll,
Fern aus dem Dorfe scholl Geläut –
Wir waren ganzer Wonne voll,
Versunken ganz in Seligkeit.

The buds bloomed, the forest stream swelled,
from the distant village came the sound of bells –
we were so full of bliss,
so lost in happiness.

Und schöner noch als einst der Traum
Begab es sich in Wirklichkeit –
Es war am grünen Waldesraum,
Es war zur warmen Frühlingszeit:

And more beautiful yet than the dream,
it happened in reality,
it was in the green woodland glade
it was in the warm springtime:

Der Waldbach schwoll, die Knospe sprang,
Geläut' erscholl vom Dorfe her –
Ich hielt dich fest, ich hielt dich lang
Und lasse dich nun nimmermehr!

The forest stream swelled, the buds bloomed,
from the village came the sound of bells;
I held you fast, I held you long,
and now shall never let you go!

O frühlingsgrüner Waldesraum,
Du lebst in mir durch alle Zeit –
Dort ward die Wirklichkeit zum Traum,
Dort ward der Traum zur Wirklichkeit!

O woodland glade so green with spring!
You shall live in me for evermore –
there reality became a dream,
there dream became reality!

Hugo Wolf

Er ist's from *Mörike Lieder* (1888) — Spring is here from *Mörike Songs*

Eduard Mörike

Frühling lässt sein blaues Band
Wieder flattern durch die Lüfte;
Süsse, wohlbekannte Düfte
Streifen ahnungsvoll das Land.
Veilchen träumen schon,
Wollen balde kommen.
– Horch, von fern ein leiser Harfenton!
Frühling, ja du bist's!
Dich hab' ich vernommen!

Spring lets its blue banner
flutter on the breeze again;
sweet, well-remembered scents
drift portentously across the land.
Violets, already dreaming,
will soon begin to bloom.
– Listen, the soft sound of a distant harp!
Spring, that must be you!
It's you I've heard!

Summer

Henri Duparc (1848-1933)

Chanson triste (1868) — Song of sadness

Jean Lahor

Dans ton cœur dort un clair de lune,
Un doux clair de lune d'été,
Et pour fuir la vie importune,
Je me noierai dans ta clarté.

Moonlight slumbers in your heart,
a gentle summer moonlight,
and to escape the cares of life
I shall drown myself in your light.

J'oublierai les douleurs passées,
Mon amour, quand tu berceras
Mon triste cœur et mes pensées
Dans le calme aimant de tes bras.

I shall forget past sorrows,
my sweet, when you cradle
my sad heart and my thoughts
in the loving calm of your arms.

Tu prendras ma tête malade,
Oh! quelquefois, sur tes genoux,
Et lui diras une ballade
Qui semblera parler de nous;

Et dans tes yeux pleins de tristesses,
Dans tes yeux alors je boirai
Tant de baisers et de tendresses
Que peut-être je guérirai.

You will rest my poor head,
ah! sometimes on your lap,
and recite to it a ballad
that will seem to speak of us;

And from your eyes full of sorrow,
from your eyes I shall then drink
so many kisses and so much love
that perhaps I shall be healed.

Richard Strauss (1864-1949)

Blauer Sommer Op. 31 No. 1 (1896)

Karl Busse

Blue Summer

Ein blauer Sommer glanz- und glutenschwer
Geht über Wiesen, Felder, Gärten her.
Die Sonnenkrone glüht auf seinen Locken,
Sein warmer Atem läutet Blütenglocken.
Ein goldnes Band umzieht die blaue Stirne,
Schwer aus den Zweigen fällt die reife Frucht
Und Sens' und Sichel blitzt auf Flur und Feld,
Und rot von Rosen ist die ganze Welt.

A blue summer, heavy with shine and embers,
approaches us through meadows, fields and gardens,
the sun's crown glows on its locks of hair,
its warm breath rings flower bells.
A golden ribbon encircles his blue forehead,
ripe fruit falls heavily from the branches
and scythe and sickle flash through field and farmland,
and the entire world is red with roses.

Giacomo Puccini

Sole e amore (1888)

Anonymous

The sun and love

Il sole allegramente
Batte ai tuoi vetri. Amor
Pian batte al tuo cuore,
E l'uno e l'altro chiama.
Il sole dice: O dormente,
Mostrati che sei bella.
Dice l'amor: Sorella,
Col tuo primo pensier pensa a chi t'ama!

The sun brightly
beats against your windows. Love
softly beats against your heart,
and one and the other call to you.
The sun says: O sleeping one,
show yourself - how beautiful you are.
Says love: Sister,
with your first thought, think of the one who loves you!

Alban Berg (1885-1935)

Sommertage from 7 *frühe Lieder* (1905-8)

Paul Hohenberg

Summer days from *7 Early Songs*

Nun ziehen Tage über die Welt,
Gesandt aus blauer Ewigkeit,
Im Sommerwind verweht die Zeit.
Nun windet nächtens der Herr
Sternenkränze mit seliger Hand
Über Wander- und Wunderland.

Days, sent from blue eternity,
journey now across the world,
time drifts away in the summer wind.
The Lord at night now garlands
star-chains with his blessed hand
across lands of wandering and wonder.

O Herz, was kann in diesen Tagen
Dein hellstes Wanderlied denn sagen
Von deiner tiefen, tiefen Lust:
Im Wiesensang verstummt die Brust,
Nun schweigt das Wort, wo Bild um Bild
Zu dir zieht und dich ganz erfüllt.

In these days, O heart, what can
your brightest travel-song say
of your deep, deep joy?
The heart falls silent in the meadows' song,
words now cease when image after image
comes to you and fills you utterly.

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

Cécile Chaminade (1857-1944)

L'été (pub. 1894)
Édouard Guinand

Ah! chantez, chantez,	Ah! Sing, sing,
Folle fauvette,	wild warbler,
Gaie alouette,	cheerful lark,
Joyeux pinson, chantez, aimez!	joyful chaffinch, sing and love!
Parfum des roses,	Perfume of roses,
Fraîches écloses,	newly opened,
Rendez nos bois, nos bois plus embaumés!	turn our woods ever more fragrant!
Ah! chantez, aimez!	Ah! Sing and love!
Soleil qui dore	Sun that gilds
Les sycomores	the sycamores
Remplis d'essains tout bruisants,	filled with swarms all buzzing,
Verse la joie,	pour over the joy,
Que tout se noie	let everything drown
Dans tes rayons resplendissants.	in your resplendent rays.
Ah! chantez, chantez ...	Ah! Sing, sing ...
Souffle qui passes	Breeze that wafts
Dans les espaces	through the air
Semant l'espoir d'un jour d'été.	sowing hope for a summer day,
Que ton haleine	may your breath
Donne à la plaine	give the plain
Plus d'éclat et plus de beauté.	more brilliance and more beauty.
Ah! chantez, chantez!	Ah! Sing, sing!
Dans la prairie	In the meadow
Calme et fleurie,	calm and flowering,
Entendez-vous ces mots si doux?	do you hear these sweet words?
L'âme charmée,	The charmed soul,
L'épouse aimée	the beloved wife,
Bénit le ciel près de l'époux!	blesses heaven by her husband's side!
Ah! chantez, chantez ...	Ah! Sing, sing ...

Helen Grime (b.1981)

Seasons (2024)
Dictynna Hood

Winter

A part of me is outside with you,
Looking at my lighted windows,
Coming to crack open my pipes,
To stab my warm round belly
With your cold dagger,
To abseil into my sitting room
To touch my surfaces with quietness
Not from anger nor from stealth.
I am held within your physics
Be you snowflake or frost

Spring 'Eostre Hymn'

Praise, praise, praise.
Clouds roll back from early mist,
Across the field Hare's ear listens,
Even though I did not see.
Praise, praise, praise.
On the sunny path
Among small flowers.
Moths vibrating hover,
Hoover nectar.
Praise, praise, praise,
Even if you don't believe.

Summer

These peonies stupify me.
Even the bee sleeps drunk
Inside a bower of petals,
Drowning in organza.
Will you come and save me
Before these flowers take me down,
Falling with their weight and mine
In a torrent of cream.

Autumn

Bring out our dead,
Wrap them close,
Let them rot,
Let the vultures take them.
If there are no vultures,
Ring the crows.
If there are no crows,
Ring the sparrows.
Cry, cry, cry, cry,
Eat our dead you sparrows.
There they are.
Blow wind blow,
Let the spring come.

Interval

Autumn

Franz Schubert (1797-1828)

Herbst D945 (1828)
Ludwig Rellstab

Autumn

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

The winds are blowing
so autumnal and cold;
the fields are barren,
leafless the woods.
You blossoming meadows!
You sunlit green!
Thus do life's blossoms
wither away.

Es ziehen die Wolken
So finster und grau;
Verschwunden die Sterne
Am himmlischen Blau!
Ach, wie die Gestirne
Am Himmel entfliehn,
So sinket die Hoffnung
Des Lebens dahin!

The clouds drift by
so sombre and grey;
the stars have faded
from the heavenly blue!
Ah, as the stars
flee from the sky,
thus does life's hope
fade away!

Ihr Tage des Lenzes
Mit Rosen geschmückt,
Wo ich die Geliebte
Ans Herze gedrückt!
Kalt über den Hügel
Rauscht, Winde, dahin!
So sterben die Rosen
Der Liebe dahin.

You days of spring
adorned with roses,
when I pressed my beloved
against my heart!
Howl on, chill winds,
across the hills!
Thus do love's roses
die away.

Alban Berg

Im Zimmer from *7 frühe Lieder*
Johannes Schlaf

In the room from *7 Early Songs*

Herbstsonnenschein.
Der liebe Abend blickt so still herein.
Ein Feuerlein rot
Knistert im Ofenloch und loht.

Autumn sunshine.
The lovely evening looks in so silently.
A little red fire
crackles and blazes in the hearth.

So! – Mein Kopf auf deinen Knie'n. –
So ist mir gut;
Wenn mein Auge so in deinem ruht.

Like this! – with my head on your knees. –
Like this I am content;
when my eyes rest in yours like this.

Wie leise die Minuten ziehn!...

How gently the minutes pass!...

Robert Schumann (1810-1856)

Im Herbste (1828)
Justinus Kerner

In Autumn

Zieh' nur, du Sonne, zieh'
Eilend von hier, von hier!
Auf dass Ihr Wärme komm'
Einzig von mir.

Be off with you, O sun,
hurry away from here!
So that she might be warmed
by me alone!

Welkt nur, ihr Blumen, welkt!
Schweigt nur, ihr Vögelein!
Auf dass Ihr sing' und blüh'
Ich nur allein.

Wither, flowers, O wither!
Be silent now, you little birds!
That I alone might sing to her
and bloom in doing so.

Olivier Messiaen (1908-1992)

Pourquoi? from *3 mélodies* (1930)
Olivier Messiaen

Why?

Pourquoi les oiseaux de l'air,

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Why are the birds of the air,
why are the gleaming waters,
why are the clouds of heaven,
why?
Why are the leaves of autumn,
why are the roses of summer,
why are the songs of spring,
why?
Why for me are they devoid of charm,
why?
Why? Ah, why?

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

Claude Debussy (1862-1918)

Les roses (1882)
Théodore de Banville

Lorsque le ciel de saphir est de feu,
Lorsque l'été de son haleine touche
La folle Nymphe amoureuse, et par jeu
Met un charbon rougissant sur sa bouche;
Quand sa chaleur, dédaigneuse et farouche
Fait tressaillir le myrte et le cyprès,
On sent brûler sous ses magiques traits
Les fronts blêmis et les lèvres mi-closes
Et le riant feuillage des forêts,
Et vous aussi, cœurs enflammés des roses.

Roses

When the sapphire sky's ablaze,
when summer breathes on
the madly enamoured Nymph, and playfully
places a glowing ember on her lips;
when its disdainful and fierce heat
causes the myrtle and cypress to quiver,
one can feel its magical touch burn
pale foreheads and half-closed lips
and the laughing forest foliage,
and you too, roses with glowing hearts.

Winter

Jean Sibelius (1865-1957)

Våren flyktar hastigt Op. 13 No. 4 (1891)
Johan Ludvig Runeberg

Våren flyktar hastigt,
Hastigare sommarn,
Hösten dröjer länge,
Vintern ännu längre.
Snart, I sköna kinder,
Skolen I förvissna
Och ej knoppas mera.
Gossen svarte åter:

Än i höstens dagar
Gläda vårens minnen,
Än i vinterns dagar
Räcka sommarns skördar;
Fritt må våren flykta,
Fritt må kinden vissna,
Låt oss nu blott äska,
Låt oss nu blott kyssas.

Spring is swiftly flying

Spring is swiftly flying,
swifter still flies summer,
autumn is delaying
winter drags more slowly.
Soon the flower of girlhood
will forever wither,
ne'er again to blossom.
Then the heart makes an answer:

Yet through autumn live
glad memories of springtime,
through the winter stretch
the harvestings of summer.
Spring may go a-flying,
cheeks for me may wither,
now's the time for loving,
now's the time for kissing.

Robert Schumann

Schneeglöckchen from *Lieder-Album für die Jugend* Op. 79 (1849)
Friedrich Rückert

Der Schnee, der gestern noch in Flöckchen
Vom Himmel fiel,
Hängt nun geronnen heut als Glöckchen
Am zarten Stiel.

Schneeglöckchen läutet; was bedeutet's
Im stillen Hain?
O komm geschwind! im Haine läutet's
Den Frühling ein.

O kommt, ihr Blätter, Blüt und Blume,
Die ihr noch träumt,
All' zu des Frühlings Heiligtume!
Kommt ungesäumt!

Snowdrop

The snow that only yesterday fell in flakes
from the sky,
hangs now, frozen, as a little bell
from a delicate stem.

A snowdrop rings; what can it mean
in the silent grove?
O come quickly! In the grove it's ringing
springtime in.

Come quickly, leaves, blossom and flowers,
you who still dream,
into spring's sanctuary!
Come without delay!

Richard Strauss

Winterweihe Op. 48 No. 4 (1900)
Karl Friedrich Henckell

In diesen Wintertagen,
Nun sich das Licht verhüllt,
Lass uns im Herzen tragen,
Einander traulich sagen,
Was uns mit innerm Licht erfüllt.

Was milde Glut entzündet,
Soll brennen fort und fort,
Was Seelen zart verbündet,
Und Geisterbrücken gründet,
Sei unser leises Losungswort.

Das Rad der Zeit mag rollen,
Wir greifen kaum hinein,
Dem Schein der Welt verschollen,
Auf unserm Eiland wollen
Wir Tag und Nacht der sel'gen Liebe weih'n.

Winter consecration

In these winter days,
when the light is veiled,
let us bear in our hearts
and confess to one another
what fills us with inner light.

That which ignites a gentle flame
must burn on and on,
that which tenderly unites souls
and creates spiritual bridges
shall be our whispered password.

The wheel of time may roll on,
we can hardly catch hold of it,
lost to the world's deceptive light,
we shall on our island
dedicate ourselves day and night to blessed love.

Weihnachtsgefühl
(1899)
Martin Greif

Christmas feeling

Naht die jubelvolle Zeit,
Kommt auch mir ein Sehnen;
Längst entfloh'ner Seligkeit
Denk' ich nach mit Tränen.

When the joyful time draws near,
I feel a yearning;
tearfully I think of the rapture
that vanished long ago.

Und ich schaue, wie im Traum
Ihren fernen Schimmer
Weben um den Weihnachtsbaum,
Kehrt sie selbst auch nimmer.

And as in a dream I see
its distant shimmer
weave around the Christmas tree,
though rapture itself never returns.

Francis Poulenc (1899-1963)

Nous voulons une petite sœur from *4 chansons pour enfants*
(1934)
Jean-Marie Legrand

We want a baby sister

Madame Eustache a dix-sept filles,
Ce n'est pas trop, mais c'est assez.
La jolie petite famille,
Vous avez dû, dû, dû la voir passer.
Le vingt décembre on les appelle:
Que voulez-vous, mesdemoiselles, pour votre Noël?
Voulez-vous une boîte à poudre?
Voulez-vous de petits mouchoirs?
Un petit nécessaire à coudre?
Un perroquet sur son perchoir?
Voulez-vous un petit ménage?
Un stylo qui tache les doigts?
Un pompier qui plonge et qui nage?

Madame Eustache has seventeen daughters,
which is none too many, but quite enough.
A fine little family –
you must have seen them passing by.
On December 20 they are summoned:
What, girls, would you like for Christmas?
Would you like a powder box?
Would you like some little handkerchiefs?
A little sewing set?
A parrot on his perch?
Would you like a little doll's house?
A pen that inks fingers?
A fireman that can dive and swim?

Un vase à fleurs presque chinois?
Mais les dix-sept enfants en chœur
Ont répondu: Non, non, non, non, non,
Ce n'est pas ça que nous voulons,
Nous voulons une petite sœur
Ronde et joufflue comme un ballon
Avec un petit nez farceur,
Avec les cheveux blonds,
Avec la bouche en cœur,
Nous voulons une petite sœur

An almost Chinese flower vase?
But the seventeen children replied
in chorus: No, no, no, no, no.
That's not what we want,
we want a baby sister,
round and chubby like a balloon,
with a funny little nose,
with blonde hair
and a heart-shaped mouth.
We want a baby sister.

L'hiver suivant, elles sont dix-huit,
Ce n'est pas trop, mais c'est assez.
Noël approche et les petites
Sont bien emba, ba, ba,
Sont vraiment embarrassées.
Madame Eustache les appelle:
Décidez-vous, mesdemoiselles, pour votre Noël.
Voulez-vous un mouton qui frise?
Voulez-vous un réveil-matin?
Un coffret d'alcool dentifrice?
Trois petits coussins de satin?
Voulez-vous une panoplie
De danseuse de l'Opéra?
Mais les dix-huit enfants en chœur
Ont répondu: Non, non, non, non, non,
Ce n'est pas ça que nous voulons,
Nous voulons une petite sœur
Ronde et joufflue comme un ballon
Avec un petit nez farceur,
Avec les cheveux blonds,
Avec la bouche en cœur,
Nous voulons une petite sœur.

Next winter – there are eighteen,
which is none too many, but quite enough.
Christmas draws near
and the girls
are truly perplexed.
Madame Eustache summons them:
Girls, you must decide on your Christmas present –
Would you like a woolly sheep?
Would you like an alarm clock?
A bottle of mouth-wash?
Three little satin cushions?
Would you like
a ballerina's costume?
But the eighteen children replied
in chorus: No, no, no, no, no.
That's not what we want,
we want a baby sister,
round and chubby like a balloon,
with a funny little nose,
with blonde hair
and a heart-shaped mouth.
We want a baby sister.

Song continues overleaf. Please turn the page as quietly as possible.

Elles sont dix-neuf l'année suivante,
Ce n'est pas trop, mais c'est assez.
Quand revient l'époque émouvante,
Noël va de nou,
nou,
Noël va de nouveau passer.
Madame Eustache les appelle:
Décidez-vous, mesdemoiselles, pour votre Noël.
Voulez-vous des jeux excentriques
Avec des piles et des moteurs?
Voulez-vous un ours électrique?
Un hippopotame à vapeur?
Pour coller des cartes postales,
Voulez-vous un superbe album?
Une automobile à pédales?
Une bague en aluminium?
Mais les dix-neuf enfants en chœur
Ont répondu: Non, non, non, non, non,
Ce n'est pas ça que nous voulons,
Nous voulons deux petites jumelles,
Des sœurs exactement pareilles,
Deux sœurs avec des cheveux blonds!
Leur mère a dit: C'est bien,
Mais il n'y a pas moyen.
Cette année vous n'aurez rien, rien, rien.

There are nineteen the following year,
which is none too many but quite enough.
When the heart-warming season returns,
Christmas once more approaches.
Christmas once more approaches.
Madame Eustache summons them.
Girls, you must decide on your Christmas present:
Would you like some unusual toys
with batteries and engines?
Would you like an electric bear?
A steam hippopotamus?
Would you like a superb scrap-book
for pasting postcards in?
Would you like a pedal-car?
An aluminium ring?
But the nineteen children replied
in chorus: No, no, no, no, no.
That's not what we want.
We want twin baby sisters,
identical twin sisters,
two sisters with blonde hair!
Their mother said: Very well,
but it cannot be done.
This year you'll have nothing at all!

Margaret Bonds (1913-1972)

Songs of the Seasons (1934-55)

Langston Hughes

Poème d'automne

The autumn leaves
Are too heavy with color.
The slender trees
On the Vulcan Road
Are dressed in scarlet and gold
Like young courtesans
Waiting for their lovers.
But soon
The winter winds
Will strip their bodies bare
And then
The sharp, sleet-stung
Caresses of cold
Will be their only
Love.

Winter-moon

How thin and sharp is the moon tonight!
How thin and sharp and ghostly white
Is the slim curved crook of the moon tonight!

Young love in spring

When the March winds roar like a lion
And the last little snowflakes drift down
From a half-dreary, half-happy April sky
And then lovely May rolls around
And I walk with you down a country lane,
We know that spring has come again.

When the rising sun laughs at the dawn
And the scent of the soil's warm and sweet
And the little green sprouts peep out of the earth
And grow upward the sunshine to greet
And we find a violet beside the way,
We know that spring has come to stay,
Spring has come our way.

When I look at you in the haze
Of the twilight's last lingering glow
In the half-dusky, half-starry evening sky,
Where sweet scented winds gently blow
And our dreams, like birds,
Heading homeward soar,
We know that spring has come once more.

Summer storm

Thunder
July thunder
And the wonder
Of lightning in the sky
And a sudden gale
That shakes the blossoms down
In perfumed splendor
To the grassy ground.

Thunder
July thunder
And the wonder
In my heart
That I have found you
Wonderful you
Beneath the blossoms gay
In the perfumed splendor
Of a July day

With the wonder
Of summer lightning
In the sky
And a sudden gale that shakes
The blossoms down
Like confetti in your hair,
Like confetti on the ground
Perfumed confetti drifting down
On the sweet and wonderful summer earth
The sweet summer earth.

There
Pillowed on the grass
In the orchard's shade
I kissed you and kissed you
And kissed you
'Til a sudden gale shook
The blossoms down,
Confetti in your hair,
Confetti on the ground
And then the rain
The soft sweet rain
Came down.

We run down the road in the dust of July
We are happy for the rain,
Clean and cool from on high,
In the dust, hand in hand,
In the dust of July,
Hand in hand, you and I,
In July.

Thunder
Thunder in my heart
The wonder of love
Thunder
Wonder in our eyes
The wonder of being in love
We two
The wonder of being in love
With you.

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