

WIGMORE HALL

Friday 24 March 2023
7.30pm

Marianne Crebassa mezzo-soprano
Joseph Middleton piano

Claude Debussy (1862-1918)

Chansons de Bilitis (1897-8)

La flûte de Pan • La chevelure • Le tombeau des naïades

Jesús Guridi (1886-1961)

From *6 canciones castellanas* (1939)

Allá arriba, en aquella montaña •

No quiero tus avellanas • Cómo quieres que adivine •

Mañanita de San Juan

Isaac Albéniz (1860-1909)

Rumores de la Caleta (Malagueña) from *Recuerdos de Viaje*
Op. 71 (1886-7)

Jules Massenet (1842-1912)

Nuit d'Espagne (?1872)

Maurice Ravel (1875-1937)

Chanson espagnole from *Chants populaires* (1910)

Manuel de Falla (1876-1946)

Séguidille (1909)

Interval

Federico Mompou (1893-1987)

Combat del Somni (1942-51)

Damunt de tu només les flors • Aquesta nit •

Jo et pressentia com la mar • Fes-me la vida

transparent • Ara no sé si et veig encar

Claude Debussy

La soirée dans Grenade from *Estampes* (1903)

Manuel de Falla

Vivan los que rien from *La vida breve* (c.1904-13)

Maurice Ravel

5 mélodies populaires grecques (1904-6)

Chanson de la mariée • Là-bas, vers l'église •

Quel galant m'est comparable •

Chanson des cueilleuses de lentisques • Tout gai!

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Debussy composed his *Chansons de Bilitis* in 1897-8, on the erotic poems which Pierre Louÿs had claimed were translations of ancient Sapphic texts, but which were in fact his own inventions. Edward Lockspeiser wrote that Debussy's settings were 'the most moving revelations of [his] hedonistic, pagan art', developing the evocative style of the *Prélude à l'après-midi d'un faune* into something yet more strange and remote. The secret world and shifting moods of 'La flûte de Pan' give way to 'Le chevelure' with its echoes of Debussy's *Pelléas et Mélisande* and an icy vision of desolation in 'Le tombeau des naïades'.

After early studies in Spain, Basque composer **Jesús Guridi** attended the Schola Cantorum in Paris where his teachers included Vincent d'Indy and Auguste Sérieyx, then moved to Brussels where he was taught by Joseph Jongen. His early music was influenced by Wagner, but by far the most important inspiration for his work came from Spanish and Basque traditional music. The *6 canciones castellanias* had their origins in the score Guridi composed for the film *La malquerida* ('The unloved woman') in 1936. Production of the film was delayed by the Spanish Civil War and it was only released in 1940, but the songs were first performed in Bilbao on 26 November 1939 and published as a set in 1941. 'Allá arriba, en aquella montaña' reveals Guridi's ear for impressionistic harmonies, while 'No quiero tus avellanas' begins with a piano introduction which leads to a beautiful, hymn-like song, supported by modal chords. 'Cómo quieres que adivine' is lively and charming, while the final song, 'Mañanita de San Juan' evokes early morning on St John's Day (Midsummer morning) when music resounds in the depths of the sea.

Albéniz's *Recuerdos de Viaje* ('Souvenirs of a journey') was a suite of seven piano pieces composed in 1886-7. The sixth of these is *Rumores de la caleta* ('Murmurs of the cove' – the cove in question being on the coast near Málaga). It is subtitled 'Malagueña', a quick dance in triple time which was an important part of the Andalusian flamenco tradition.

Probably written in 1872, **Massenet's** *Nuit d'Espagne* was contemporary with Bizet's *Carmen*. With typical grace and ingenuity, Massenet evokes a night filled with torrid romantic thoughts, ending with a joyous shift into a major key to declare 'the hour of love!' Born in the Basque town of Ciboure, **Ravel** was brought up with his mother singing traditional Spanish songs. In 1910, he entered a competition run by the Maison du Lied in Moscow for new arrangements of folksongs. Four of the seven he submitted won prizes, including the 'Chanson espagnole'. Its aptly guitar-like accompaniment underpins a folk tune in which the singer bids a rather bitter farewell to her husband as he is sent off to war. **Falla's** 'Séguidille' is dedicated to Debussy's wife Emma and was composed in 1909. Though conceived

for concert performance, its folk roots in the traditional Spanish seguidilla are never in doubt – the piano part is filled with dance rhythms and the voice is required to whoop as well as to sing.

Mompou completed the first three songs in *Combat del Somni* ('Dream battle') in 1948, adding two more by 1951, all on texts from a collection of Catalan sonnets by Josep Janés. 'Damunt de tu només les flors' is deceptively simple, with piquant harmonies creeping into the piano part to create a mood of sensuous mystery. The opening of 'Aquesta nit' is astringent and declamatory, dominated by dotted rhythms, before reaching a serene close. 'Jo et presentia com la mar' is more animated, the beloved likened to the freedom of a boundless ocean, reflected in the passionate urgency of Mompou's setting. 'Fes-me la vida transparent' returns to the composer's more contemplative style, though with an increasingly imaginative use of dissonance. In 'Ara no sé si et veig encara' the singer wonders if she will ever see her beloved again, ending the cycle in a mood of quiet melancholy.

Debussy's *La soirée dans Grenade* from *Estampes* (1903) evokes the sights and sounds of an evening in the Andalusian city of Granada. The whole piece is anchored by a languorous habanera rhythm, over which a melody with Moorish inflections steals in, while the sounds of flamenco are brought to mind by sumptuous parallel harmonies and spread chords in a brilliantly inventive exploration of piano sonority. Falla's opera *La vida breve* (which Debussy did much to encourage) is also set in Granada and was first performed in 1913. 'Vivan los que rien' is sung by the central character Salud early in the first act. Marked 'with simplicity, in the style of a folk song', the vocal writing is full of Andalusian inflections, as Salud muses on the lives of the poor which are likely to be very short. Alas, hers certainly is: after discovering that her beloved Paco is going to marry another woman, at the opera's dénouement Salud drops dead at his wedding.

Ravel's *5 mélodies populaires grecques* have a curious history. In 1904, Michel-Dimitri Calvocoressi selected the music for a lecture on Greek folksongs at the Sorbonne and asked the soprano Louise Thomasset to perform them. She agreed on condition that the songs had accompaniments, so at short notice Calvocoressi asked his friend Ravel to provide piano parts. The first performance of two songs (Nos. 2 and 3) was given by Thomasset at the lecture on 20 February 1904, and the remaining songs were sung by Marguerite Babiñ at a lecture-recital by Calvocoressi a year later. These arrangements were written at speed, but they are imaginative and extremely pianistic, yet never obscure the original melodies.

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Claude Debussy (1862-1918)

Chansons de Bilitis

(1897-8)

Pierre Louÿs

Songs of Bilitis

La flûte de Pan

Pour le jour des Hyacinthies,
il m'a donné une syrinx
faite de roseaux bien
taillés, unis avec la blanche
cire qui est douce à mes
lèvres comme le miel.

Il m'apprend à jouer, assise
sur ses genoux; mais je
suis un peu tremblante. Il
en joue après moi, si
doucement que je
l'entends à peine.

Nous n'avons rien à nous
dire, tant nous sommes
près l'un de l'autre; mais
nos chansons veulent se
répondre, et tour à tour
nos bouches s'unissent sur
la flûte.

Il est tard; voici le chant des
grenouilles vertes qui
commence avec la nuit. Ma
mère ne croira jamais que
je suis restée si longtemps
à chercher ma ceinture
perdue.

La chevelure

Il m'a dit: 'Cette nuit, j'ai
rêvé. J'avais ta chevelure
autour de mon cou.
J'avais tes cheveux comme
un collier noir autour de
ma nuque et sur ma
poitrine.

'Je les caressais, et c'étaient
les miens; et nous étions
liés pour toujours ainsi, par
la même chevelure la
bouche sur la bouche, ainsi
que deux lauriers n'ont
souvent qu'une racine.

The flute of Pan

For Hyacinthus day he
gave me a syrinx made
of carefully cut reeds,
bonded with white wax
which tastes sweet to
my lips like honey.

He teaches me to play,
as I sit on his lap; but I
am a little fearful. He
plays it after me, so
gently that I scarcely
hear him.

We have nothing to say,
so close are we one
to another, but our
songs try to answer
each other, and our
mouths join in turn on
the flute.

It is late; here is the song
of the green frogs that
begins with the night.
My mother will never
believe I stayed out so
long to look for my lost
sash.

The tresses of hair

He said to me: 'Last night
I dreamed. I had your
tresses around my
neck. I had your hair
like a black necklace all
round my nape and
over my breast.

I caressed it and it was
mine; and we were
united thus forever
by the same tresses,
mouth on mouth,
just as two laurels
often share one
root.

'Et peu à peu, il m'a semblé,
tant nos membres étaient
confondus, que je devenais
toi-même ou que tu entras
en moi comme mon
songe.'

Quand il eut achevé, il mit
doucement ses mains sur
mes épaules, et il me
regarda d'un regard si
tendre, que je baissai les
yeux avec un frisson.

Le tombeau des naïades

Le long du bois couvert de
givre, je marchais; mes
cheveux devant ma
bouche se fleurissaient de
petits glaçons, et mes
sandales étaient lourdes
de neige fangeuse et
tassée.

Il me dit: 'Que cherches-tu?'
– 'Je suis la trace
du satyre. Ses petits
pas fourchus alternent
des trous dans un manteau
blanc.' Il me
dit: 'Les satyres sont morts.

'Les satyres et les
nymphes aussi. Depuis
trente ans il n'a pas fait un
hiver aussi terrible. La
trace que tu vois est celle
d'un bouc. Mais restons
ici, où est leur
tombeau.'

Et avec le fer de sa houe
il cassa la glace de
la source où jadis riaient
les naïades. Il prenait
de grands morceaux
froids, et les
soulevant vers le ciel
pâle, il regardait au
travers.

And gradually it seemed
to me, so intertwined
were our limbs, that I
was becoming you, or
you were entering into
me like a dream.'

When he had finished, he
gently set his hands on
my shoulders and
gazed at me so
tenderly that I lowered
my eyes with a shiver.

The tomb of the Naiads

Along the frost-bound
wood I walked; my
hair, across my mouth,
blossomed with
tiny icicles, and my
sandals were heavy
with muddy, packed
snow.

He said to me: 'What do
you seek?' 'I follow the
satyr's track. His little
cloven hoof marks
alternate like holes in a
white cloak.' He said to
me: 'The satyrs are
dead.

The satyrs and the
nymphs too. For thirty
years there has not
been so harsh a winter.
The tracks you see are
those of a goat. But let
us stay here, where
their tomb is.'

And with the iron head of
his hoe he broke the ice
of the spring where the
naiads used to laugh.
He picked up some
huge cold fragments,
and, raising them to the
pale sky, gazed through
them.

Jesús Guridi (1886-1961)

From *6 canciones castellanas* (1939)

Traditional

Allá arriba, en aquella montaña

Allá arriba, en aquella montaña,
Yo corté una caña, yo corté
un clavel.

Labrador ha de ser,
Labrador,

Que mi amante lo es.
No le quiero molinero,

Que me da con el
maquiladero.

Yo le quiero labrador,
Que coja las mulas y se vaya
a arar

Y a la medianoche me venga
a rondar.

Entra labrador si vienes a
verme.

Si vienes a verme ven por el
corral,

Sube por el naranjo, que
seguro vas.

Entra labrador si vienes a
verme.

High up on that mountain

High up on that mountain
I picked a cane, I picked a
carnation.

A ploughman,
a ploughman
must my lover be.

I do not want a miller
who treats me like his
corn.

I want a ploughman
to take his mules to
plough

and at midnight serenade
me.

Enter, ploughman, if you
come to see me.

If you come to see me,
come through the yard,
climb the orange tree and
you'll be safe.

Enter, ploughman, if you
come to see me.

No quiero tus avellanas I do not want your hazelnuts

No quiero tus
avellanas,

Tampoco tus alhelíes,
Porque me han salido
vanas

Las palabras que me diste,
Yendo por agua a la
fuente.

Como eran palabras de
amor,

Se las llevó la corriente
De las cristalinas aguas,

Hasta llegar a la fuente,
Donde me diste

palabra

De ser mía hasta la muerte.

I do not want your
hazelnuts,
nor your gillyflowers –
for they've turned out to
be empty,

the promises you made,
as I fetched water from
the fountain.

Since they were words of
love,

the water bore them away,
the crystal-clear water,

down to the fountain,
where you gave me your

word

to be mine unto death.

Cómo quieres que adivine

¡Cómo quieres que
adivine

Si estás despierta o dormida,
Como no baje del cielo

Un ángel y me lo diga!

¡Cómo quieres que
adivine!

Alegría y más
alegría,

Hermosa paloma,
¡Cuándo serás mía!

Cuándo vas a ser,
Hermosa paloma,

Ramito laurel!

Cuándo voy por leña al
monte,

¡Olé ya, mi niña!

Y me meto en la
espesura

Y veo la nieve blanca,

¡Olé ya, mi niña!

Me acuerdo de tu hermosura.

Quisiera ser por un rato

Anillo de tu pendiente,

Para decirte al oído

Lo que mi corazón siente.

Las estrellas voy contando,

¡Olé ya, mi niña!

Por ver la que me
persigue.

Me persigue un lucerito,

¡Olé ya, mi niña!

Pequeñito, pero firme.

How do you expect me to guess

How do you expect me to
guess

if you are awake or asleep,
if you are awake or asleep,
from heaven to tell me!

How do you expect me to
guess!

Joy and more joy shall we
have,

pretty dove,

when you are mine,

when you come to be mine,

pretty dove,

my bouquet!

When I go to the forest for
firewood,

ah my love,

when I am caught in a
thicket

and see the white snow,

ah my love,

I think of your beauty.

I'd like for a while to be

the link in your earring,

to whisper in your ear

what I feel in my heart,

I count the stars,

ah my love,

to see which one pursues
me.

It is a morning star,

ah my love,

small but steadfast.

Mañanita de San Juan

Mañanita de San Juan,
Levántate tempranito

Y en la ventana verás

De hierbabuena un poquito.

Aquella paloma blanca

Que pica en el
arcipiés,

Que por dónde la cogería,

Que por dónde la cogeré;

Si la cojo por el pico

Se me escapa por los pies.

Coge niña la
enramada,

Que la noche está serena

Y la música resuena

En lo profundo del mar.

Early on St John's day

Early on St John's day,
be up with the lark,

and in the window you'll see
a little sprig of mint.

That white dove

which pecks the you
know what,

where might I catch it,

where shall I catch it?

If I grasp it by the beak

its feet are still free to run.

Pick up the garlands, my
lad,

for the night is clear

and music resounds

from the depths of the sea.

Isaac Albéniz (1860-1909)

**Rumores de la Caleta (Malagueña) from
Recuerdos de Viaje Op. 71** (1886-7)

Jules Massenet (1842-1912)

Nuit d'Espagne (?1872) **Spanish night**

Louis Gallet

L'air est embaumé
La nuit est sereine
Et mon âme est pleine de
penseurs joyeux, ô bien-
aimée,
Viens, ô bien-aimée,
Voici l'instant de l'amour!

The air is balmy,
the night serene,
and my soul is full of
joyous thoughts, my
beloved.
Come, beloved!
It is the moment for love.

Dans les bois profonds,
Où les fleurs
s'endorment,
Où chantent les sources;
Vite, enfuyons-nous!
Vois, la lune est claire et
nous sourit dans le ciel,
Les yeux indiscrets ne sont
plus à craindre,
Viens ô bien-aimée, la nuit
protège ton front
rougissant!
La nuit est sereine, apaise
mon cœur,
Viens, ô bien-aimée,
C'est l'heure d'amour!

Into the deep woods
where the flowers are
sleeping,
where the springs murmur,
let us flee!
See, the moon is bright and
smiles on us from the sky.
We need no longer fear
prying eyes.
Come, beloved! Night
protects your blushing
brow.
The night is serene; quiet
my heart.
Come, beloved!
It is the hour of love.

Dans le sombre azur,
Les blondes étoiles
Ecartent leurs voiles pour te
voir passer,
O bien-aimée, viens,
Voici l'instant de l'amour!

In the dark sky,
the fair stars
draw aside their veils to
see you pass.
Come, beloved!
It is the moment for love!

J'ai vu s'entr'ouvrir
Ton rideau de
gaze,
Tu m'entends, cruelle,
Et tu ne viens pas!
Vois, la route est sombre
sous les rameaux
enlacés.
Cueille en leur splendeur
Tes jeunes années.
Viens, car l'heure est brève!
Un jour
éffeuille
Les fleurs du printemps.
La nuit est sereine, apaise
mon cœur,
Viens, ô bien-aimée,
C'est l'heure d'amour!

I have seen
your gauze curtains half-
open.
You can hear me
and you do not come.
See, the path is dark
beneath the interlaced
boughs.
Gather your youthful years
in their splendour.
Come, for the time is short;
one day robs the spring
flowers
of their leaves.
The night is serene; quiet
my heart.
Come, beloved!
It is the hour of love.

Maurice Ravel (1875-1937)

Chants populaires (1910)

Traditional

Chanson espagnole

Spanish song

Adios men homino, adios,
Ja qui te marchas pr'a
guerra
Non t'olvides d'aprendina
Qui che qued'aca n'a
terra.
La, la, la!

Farewell, my man, farewell,
since you have been
taken to the war,
there remains for me, alas,
neither fun nor games on
earth.
La, la, la!

Castella nos de Castilla
Trata ben os gallegos:
Cando van, ven como
rosas,
Cando ven como negros.
La, la, la!

Castille takes our boys,
to make its cause triumph.
Going away as sweet as
roses,
they return as hard as coals.
La, la, la!

Manuel de Falla (1876-1946)

Séguidille (1909)

Théophile Gautier

Un jupon serré sur les
hanches,
Un peigne énorme à son
chignon,
Jambe nerveuse et pied
mignon,
Œil de feu, teint pâle et dents
blanches;
Alza! olà!
Voilà
La véritable Manola.

Her skirt clinging to her
hips,
in her chignon a huge
comb,
rippling legs and dainty
feet,
eyes ablaze, pale
complexion, white teeth;
Alza! Olà!
Behold
a true street-girl of Madrid.

Gestes hardis, libre
parole,
Sel et piment à pleine main,
Oubli parfait du
lendemain,
Amour fantasque et grâce
folle;
Alza! olà!
Voilà
La véritable Manola.

Bold of gesture, free of
speech,
almost too hot to handle,
utterly oblivious of the
morrow,
explosive love and wild
grace;
Alza! Olà!
Behold
a true street-girl of Madrid.

Chanter, danser aux
castagnettes,
Et, dans les courses de
taureaux,
Juger les coups des
toreros,
Tout en fumant des
cigarettes;
Alza! olà!
Voilà
La véritable Manola.

She sings and dances to
castanets
and, in the
bull-ring,
judges the bullfighters'
blows,
while smoking her
cigarettes;
Alza! Olà!
Behold
a true street-girl of Madrid.

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

Interval

Federico Mompou (1893-1987)

Combat del Somni (1942-51)

Josep Janés i Olivé

Damunt de tu només les flors

Above you naught but flowers

Damunt de tu només les flors	Above you naught but flowers.
Eren com una ofrena blanca:	They were like a white offering:
La llum que daven al teu cos	the light they shed on your body
Mai més seria de la branca;	will nevermore belong to the branch.
Tota una vida de perfum	An entire life of perfume
Amb el seu bes t'era donada.	was given you with their kiss.
Tu resplendies de la llum	You were resplendent in the light,
Per l'esguard clos atresorada.	treasured by your closed eyes.
iSi hagués pogut ésser sospir	Could I have been the sigh
De flor! Donar-me, com un llir,	of a flower! Given myself as a lily,
A tu, perquè la meva vida	that my life might
S'anés marcint sobre el teu pit.	wither over your breast,
I no saber mai més la nit,	nevermore to know the night,
Que al teu costat fóra esvaïda.	vanished from your side.

Aquesta nit

Tonight

Aquestra nit un mateix vent	Tonight the same wind
I una mateixa vela encesa	and the same gleaming sail
Devien dur el teu pensament	are bearing your thoughts
I el meu per mars on la tendresa	and mine across seas where tenderness
Es torna música i cristall.	Turns to music and crystal light.
El bes se'ns feia transparència	Our kiss became transparent -
- Si tu eres l'aigua, jo el mirall -	if you were the water, I was the mirror -
Com si abraçéssim una absència.	it was as though we embraced a void.

¿El nostre cel fóra, potser,
Un somni etern, aix, de besos
kisses
made melody - an
incorporeal
union, with burning eyes

Amb flames blanques, i un sospir
And white flames and a sigh
D'acariciar sedes de llir?
as if caressing silken lilies?

Jo et pressentia com la mar

I sensed you were like the sea

Jo et pressentia com la mar	I sensed you were like the sea,
I com el vent, immensa, lliure,	and like the wind, immense, free,
Alta, damunt de tot atzar	towering above all hazard
I tot destí. I en el meu viure,	and all destiny. And in my life
Com el respir. I ara que et tinc	Like breathing. And now that I have you,
Veig com el somni et limitava.	I see how limiting my dream had been.
Tu no ets un nom, ni un gest. No vinc	You are neither name nor gesture. Nor do I come
A tu com a la imatge blava	to you as to a hazy image
D'un somni humà. Tu no ets la mar,	Of a human dream. You are not the sea,
Que és presonera dins de platges,	which is confined between beaches,
Tu no ets el vent, pres en l'espai.	you are not the wind, caught in space.
Tu no tens límits; no hi ha, encar,	You are boundless; there are as yet
Mots per a dir-te, ni paisatges	no words to express you, nor landscapes
Per ser el teu món - ni hi seran mai.	to form your world - nor will there ever be.

Fes-me la vida transparent

Fes-me la vida transparent,
Com els teus ulls;
Torna ben pura la mà meva,
I al pensament
Duu-m'hi la pau.
Altra aventura no vull,
Sinó la de seguir
L'estela blanca que neixia
Dels teus camins.
I no llanguir
Per ser mirall d'uns
ulls.
Voldria ser com un riu
oblidadís
Que es lliura al
mar,
Les aigües pures de tota
imatge
Amb un anhel de blau.
I ser llavors feliç
De viure lluny d'amors obscures
Amb l'esperança del teu cel.

Ara no sé si et veig encar

Ara no sé si et veig,
encar.
Els ulls et miren, i
voldria
Que això fos veure't. Si
sabia
Que et veig i et sé,
com fóra
avar

De poder dir que cap
mirall
Del món, ni l'aigua més
serena
No et saben dir; que sols
alena
Un pit que estimi el que el
cristall

No veu ni diu! Si fos
així!
Que tu només fossis en mi!
Lluny dels meus ulls, tan
limitada,

Tan reduïda a gest, a
esguard,
A imatge, a veu, que jo fos
part
De tu, vivent per ma
mirada.

Make my life transparent

Make my life transparent,
like your eyes;
make my hand wholly pure,
and to my thoughts
bring peace.
I desire no other adventure
than to follow
the white wake created
by your passage,
nor to languish
for being the mirror of
your eyes.
I would wish to be like an
oblivious river
that abandons itself to
the sea,
the pure waters of every
image,
yearning for the blue.
And to be happy then,
living far from dark loves
with hope for your heaven.

I no longer even know whether I can see you

I no longer even know
whether I can see you.
My eyes look at you, and I
wish
this were the same as
seeing you. If I knew
how to see you and know
you, how impatient I
would be

To be able to say that no
mirror
in the world, no water,
however still,
can reflect you; for the only
heart that breathes
is one which values all
that glass

Can neither see nor reflect!
Would that it were so!
If only you were within me!
Far from my eyes, so
limited,

So reduced to a gesture,
a look,
an image, a voice, that I
could be
part of you, kept alive
through my gaze.

Claude Debussy

La soirée dans Grenade from *Estampes* (1903)

Manuel de Falla

La vida breve (c.1904-13)

Carlos Fernández-Shaw

Vivan los que rien (Aire de Salud)

¡Vivan los que rien!
¡Mueran los que lloran! ...
La vía del pobre, que vive
sufriendo ...
¡Debe ser mu corta!
Hasta las canciones
¡Me salen hoy tristes!
Esa seguirilla, que era de mi
mare,
¡Sabe lo que dice!
Flor que nace con el
alba
Se muere al morir el
día.
¡Qué felices son las
flores,
Que apenas puén
enterarse
De lo mala que es la vía!
Un pájaro, solo y triste,
Vino á morir en mi huerto;
Cayó y se murió ensegúa.
¡Pa vivir tan triste y solo,
Más le vale haberse
muerto!
El la abandonó por ótra
¡Y ella de angustia murió!
Pá desengaños de
amores
No hay nada como la muerte,

¡Que es el consuelo mayor!

¡Vivan los que rien!
¡Mueran los que lloran!
La vía del pobre, que vive
sufriendo
Debe ser mu corta.

Long live those who laugh (Aria of Salud)

Long live those who laugh!
Death to those who weep! ...
The life of a poor man, full
of pain,
has to be a short affair!
Even my songs
sound sad today!
This seguirilla, one my
mother used to sing,
has the ring of truth about it!
The flower that blooms at
dawn
dies with the death of the
day.
How happy are those
flowers,
for they scarcely have
time to learn
how painful this life can be!
A little bird, sad and alone,
came to die in my garden;
she fell and died instantly.
Better for her to have died
than lived on so sad and
alone.
Forsaken for another,
she died of a broken heart!
When love proves to be
an illusion,
there is nothing like
death,
it's the ultimate consolation!

Long live those who laugh!
Death to those who weep! ...
The life of a poor man, full
of pain,
has to be a short affair!

Maurice Ravel

5 mélodies populaires grecques (1904-6)

Traditional, trans. Michel-Dimitri Calvocoressi

Chanson de la mariée

The bride's awakening

Réveille-toi, réveille-toi,
perdrix mignonne.
Ouvre au matin tes
ailes.
Trois grains de beauté, mon
cœur en est brûlé.
Vois le ruban, le ruban d'or
que je t'apporte
Pour le nouer autour de tes
cheveux.
Si tu veux, ma belle, viens
nous marier:
Dans nos deux familles, tous
sont alliés.

Wake up, wake up, pretty
partridge,
spread your wings to the
morning.
Three beauty spots – and
my heart's ablaze.
See the golden ribbon I
bring you
to tie around your
tresses.
If you wish, my beauty, let
us marry!
In our two families all are
related.

Là-bas, vers l'église

Down there by the church

Là-bas, vers l'église,
Vers l'église Ayio
Sidero,
L'église, ô Vierge sainte,
L'église, Ayio
Constandino
Se sont réunis, rassemblés
en nombre infini,
Du monde, ô Vierge
sainte!
Du monde tous les plus
braves!

Down there by the church,
by the church of Saint
Sideros,
the church, O Holy Virgin,
the church of Saint
Constantine,
are gathered together, in
infinite numbers,
the bravest people, O
Holy Virgin,
the bravest people in the
world!

Quel galant m'est comparable

What gallant can compare with me?

Quel galant m'est
comparable,
D'entre ceux qu'on voit
passer?
Dis, dame Vassiliki?
Vois, pendus, pendus à ma
ceinture,
Pistolets et sabre aigu...
Et c'est toi que j'aime!

What gallant can
compare with me
among those seen
passing by?
Tell me, Mistress Vassiliki?
See, hanging at my
belt,
pistols and sharp sword...
and it's you I love!

Chanson des cueilleuses de lentisques

Song of the lentisk gatherers

Ô joie de mon âme,
Joie de mon cœur, trésor qui
m'est si cher;
Joie de l'âme et du
cœur.
Toi que j'aime
ardemment,
Tu es plus beau qu'un
ange.
Ô lorsque tu parais, ange si
doux,
Devant nos yeux,
Comme un bel ange blond,
Sous le clair soleil,
Hélas, tous nos pauvres
cœurs soupirent!

O joy of my soul,
joy of my heart, treasure
so dear to me;
joy of the soul and of the
heart,
you whom I love with
passion,
you are more beautiful
than an angel.
O when you appear, angel
so sweet,
before our eyes,
like a lovely, blond angel
under the bright sun –
alas, all our poor hearts
sigh!

Tout gai!

So merry!

Tout gai,
Ha, tout gai;
Belle jambe, tireli, qui danse,
Belle jambe, la vaisselle
danse.
Tra-la-la.

So merry,
ah, so merry;
lovely leg, tireli, that dances,
lovely leg, the crockery
dances,
tra la la.

Translations of Debussy, 'Séguidille' and Ravel by Richard Stokes from A French Song Companion (Johnson/Stokes) published by OUP. Guridi and all Mompou except 'Ara no sé si et veig encar' by Jacqueline Cockburn and Richard Stokes from The Spanish Song Companion published by Victor Gollancz Ltd. 'Ara no sé si et veig encar' and 'Vivan los que rien' by Susannah Howe.