

WIGMORE HALL 125

Friday 24 October 2025
7.30pm

Stéphane Degout baritone
Simon Lepper piano

Robert Schumann (1810-1856)

Liederkreis Op. 39 (1840)

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

Claude Debussy (1862-1918)

3 ballades de François Villon (1910)

*Ballade de Villon à s'amyie • Ballade que Villon fait à la
requeste de sa mère • Ballade des femmes de Paris*

Interval

Joseph Guy Ropartz (1864-1955)

4 poèmes de l'intermezzo (1899)

*Tendrement enlacés, ma chère bien-aimée •
Pourquoi vois-je pâlir la rose parfumée? •
Ceux qui, parmi les morts d'amour •
Depuis que nul rayon de tes yeux bien-aimés*

Rita Strohl (1865-1941)

From 6 Poésies de Baudelaire mises en musique (1894)

Un fantôme • Obsession • Madrigal triste

Maurice Ravel (1875-1937)

Sainte (1896)

2 épigrammes de Clément Marot (1895-9)

*D'Anne qui me jecta de la neige •
D'Anne jouant de l'espinette*

L'indifférent from *Shéhérazade* (1903)

Don Quichotte à Dulcinée (1932-3)

Chanson romanesque • Chanson épique • Chanson à boire



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Clara was the inspiration behind the 12 masterpieces that constitute the Eichendorff *Liederkreis*. In a letter to her, referring to 'Mondnacht', **Schumann** described 'Ehe' ['marriage'] as a 'very musical word' – the reason why the left hand of the accompaniment plays a motif of descending fifths: E, B flat, E, which in German notation reads EHE! 'My song flies swiftly to you' runs the final line of Eichendorff's 'Intermezzo', a poem he wrote for his fiancée, Luise von Larisch. Schumann repeats Eichendorff's first verse and composes one of his most beautiful love songs to his own bride. And what better way to manifest his love than by ending the *Liederreihe* with 'Frühlingsnacht'? Ostensibly a nature poem, it becomes a love poem in the final line. At times, however, Schumann must have doubted whether he would ever marry Clara, such was her litigious father's bitter opposition to their union – the reason, surely, why Schumann included 'Auf einer Burg' which ends with the bride in tears. Indeed, many of the poems selected by Schumann for this *Liederkreis* are melancholy or threatening in nature: 'In der Fremde' (nos. 1 and 8), 'Waldesgespräch', 'Wehmut', 'Zwielicht' and 'Im Walde'.

Between 1888 and 1927, Rouart-Lerolle and Durand published 35 songs by **Guy Ropartz** for voice and piano, including 4 *poèmes de l'intermezzo d'Henri Heine* (1899). Like many French composers working in the wake of Baudelaire's essay on *Tannhäuser*, the influence of Wagner is apparent, especially in his use of the Leitmotif. The translations of Heine's poems by Ropartz and Hirsch take liberties with the sense and often the form of the originals. 'Tendrement enlacés' is their version of 'Mein Liebchen, wir sassen beisammen' (set by Brahms as 'Meerfahrt'); 'Pourquoi vois-je pâlir la rose parfumée' is a free translation of 'Warum sind denn die Rosen so blass', already immortalised by Fanny Hensel and Tchaikovsky; 'Ceux qui, parmi les morts d'amour' appears in Heine's *Lyrisches Intermezzo* as 'Am Kreuzweg wird begraben'; and 'Depuis que nul rayon' is none other than 'Wo ich bin, mich rings umdunkelt', set by Richard Strauss as 'Der Einsame', and also by Hugo Wolf.

Rita Stroh was born in Brittany in 1865 to musical parents. In 1884, she married Émile Stroh and gave birth to three children between 1889 and 1892. She composed chamber and symphonic music but turned in her late 20s to art song. The 12 songs of *Bilitis* (1900) include 'La flûte de Pan' and 'La chevelure' that Debussy had composed three years earlier; the 10 *poésies mises en musique* (1901) contain four settings of Baudelaire and one of Verlaine ('Chanson d'automne'); but this evening we hear three *mélodies* from the 6 *Poésies de Baudelaire mises en musique* (1894). 'Un fantôme' and 'Obsession' appeared in the 'Spleen et Idéal' section of the first edition of *Les Fleurs de Mal*, while 'Madrigal triste' was only added in the third and posthumous edition of 1868. 'Un fantôme' was inspired by Jeanne Duval, the French-born actress and courtesan of Caribbean descent with whom Baudelaire had a tumultuous relationship that spanned two decades – she's referred to in the final line; while 'Madrigal triste' was dedicated to 'L. L...', whose identity remains a

mystery. Stroh's songs were so well-known at the beginning of the 20th Century that Jane Bathori devoted the opening concert of her 'Une heure de musique' series to her *mélodies*, before turning in subsequent recitals to Fauré, Debussy and others. Her popularity, however, dwindled, and she died in the south of France in 1941, after which her music, until recently, fell into oblivion.

And so to **Ravel**. 'Sainte', a hymn to St Cecilia, was described by Mallarmé as 'a little song-like poem written above all with music in mind.' The plainsong-like atmosphere turns more lyrical at the mention of the angel's harp, and the whole song breathes a religious radiance – a rare occurrence in Ravel's music. 'D'Anne qui me jecta de la neige', the first of the 2 *épigrammes de Clément Marot*, evokes the spirit of the 16th Century by creating a dry harpsichord-like sonority and an accompaniment that is contained within the limited range of a 17th-century instrument. Ravel composed 'D'Anne jouant de l'espinette' without any slavish imitation of the timbre of the spinet. 'L'indifférent', from *Shéhérazade*, is a poem about sexual ambiguity in which the female singer tries in vain to interest a young stranger in her hospitality. His eyes are 'soft like a girl's', and his hips 'sway lightly in a languid feminine way'. The sub-text is clear: the young man's sexual orientation (gay) was also that of the poet Klingsor. Ravel's final three songs tonight, *Don Quichotte à Dulcinée*, were his response to a commission to write a score for a film that Georg W Pabst was making for Chaliapin. Ravel failed to deliver in time, which meant that Jacques Ibert was eventually the fortunate composer. In 'Chanson romanesque' we hear the alternating bars of 6/8 and 3/4 rhythm over a guitar-like accompaniment, which conjures up the *quajira* of Spanish folklore and gives the song a deliciously lilting quality; 'Chanson épique', with its 5/4 metre, is reminiscent of the *zortzico* and has a whiff of Catholic incense about it; 'Chanson à boire' is in the spirit of the *jota*, its strong cross-rhythms conveying the tipsiness of Morand's text.

The poems of **Debussy**'s 3 *ballades de François Villon* were taken from *Le Testament*. Written in a fit of remorse, this wonderful work reviews the poet's dissolute life of amorous adventure, robbery, murder and imprisonment. 'Ballade de Villon à s'amyé' describes his affair with Marthe, as we see from the acrostics of the opening two verses (FRANCOY and MARTHE); 'Ballade que Villon fait à la requeste de sa mère pour prier Nostre-Dame' depicts Villon's mother who begs the Virgin Mary to intercede for her son's salvation; 'Ballade des femmes de Paris' apostrophises the eloquence of Parisian women – Debussy renders their constant chatter in his witty and *presto* setting, especially in the triumphant refrain at the end of each verse.

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Richard's new book, *A Carl Loewe Song Companion* (Bittern Press), will be launched at Wigmore Hall on 10 October 2026.

Robert Schumann (1810-1856)

Liederkreis Op. 39 (1840)

Joseph Freiherr von
Eichendorff

Song Cycle

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.“

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

„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'!

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.

'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!

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

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'.

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!

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.

Here beyond the myrtle
trees
in secret twilit
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!

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

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

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!

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

Wehmut

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

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

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

Sadness

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

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

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

Zwielicht

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

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

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

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

Twilight

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?

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.

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.

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

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

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

Frühlingsnacht

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

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

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!

In the forest

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

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.

Spring night

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

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.

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

Claude Debussy (1862-1918)

3 ballades de François Villon (1910)

François Villon

Ballade de Villon à s'ame

Ballad of Villon to his love

Fausse beauté, qui tant me
couste cher,
Rude en effect, hypocrite
douceur,
Amour dure, plus que fer, à
mascher;
Nommer que puis de ma
deffaçon seur.
Charme felon, la mort d'ung
povre cuer,
Orgueil mussé, qui gens met
au mourir,
Yeulx sans pitié! ne veult
Droict de Rigueur
Sans empirer, ung povre
secourir?

False beauty, for whom I
pay so great a price,
Harsh, in truth, behind a
mask of sadness,
A love that's tougher to
chew than steel,
I name you sister of my
undoing.
Criminal charm, death of
my poor heart,
Hidden pride that sends
folk to their destruction,
Eyes devoid of pity—will
not Justice
Help a poor man without
crushing him?

Mieulx m'eust valu avoir esté
crier
Ailleurs secours, c'eust esté
mon bonheur:
Rien ne m'eust sceu de ce
fait arracher;
Trotter m'en fault en fuyte à
deshonneur.
Haro, haro, le grand et le
mineur!
Et qu'est cecy? mourray
sans coup ferir,
Ou pitié peult, selon ceste
teneur,
Sans empirer, ung povre
secourir.

It had been better to have
begged
For help elsewhere, it might
have made me happy.
Nothing could snatch me
from this fate.
Now I must retreat in
shame.
Help me, help me, one
and all!
But what? Am I to die and
not strike a blow?
Or will Pity, softened by
these sad words,
Help a poor man without
crushing him?

Ung temps viendra, qui fera
desseicher,
Jaulnir, flestrir, vostre
espanie fleur:
J'en risse lors, se tant
peusse marcher,
Mais las! nenny: ce seroit
donc foleur,
Vieil je seray; vous, laide et
sans couleur.
Or, beuvez, fort, tant que ru
peult courir.
Ne donnez pas à tous ceste
douleur
Sans empirer, ung povre
secourir.

A time will come that will
dry up,
Fade, and wither your
full-blown flower;
Then I shall laugh, if I can
still walk.
But alas! Nay—that would
be folly:
I shall be old; you ugly
and wan.
So drink deep, while the
river still runs.
Give this pain to no one
else—
Help a poor man without
crushing him.

Prince amoureux, des
amans le greigneur,
Vostre mal gré ne vouldroye
encourir;
Mais tout franc cuer doit,
par Nostre Seigneur,
Sans empirer, ung povre
secourir.

Prince of lovers, greatest
of them all,
I had sooner not incur
your wrath,
But every honest heart
should, by Our Lord,
Help a poor man without
crushing him.

Ballade que Villon fait à la requeste de sa mère pour prier Nostre-Dame

Ballad made at his mother's request for a prayer to Our Lady

Dame du ciel, régente
terrienne,
Emperière des infernaux
palus,
Recevez moi, votre humble
chrétienne,
Que comprise soie entre vos
élus,
Ce non obstant qu'oncques
rien ne valus.
Les biens de vous, ma Dame
et ma Maîtresse,
Sont trop plus grands que
ne suis pécheresse,
Sans lesquels biens âme ne
peut mériter
N'avoir les cieus. Je n'en suis
menteresse.
En cette foi je veux vivre et
mourir.

Lady of Heaven, Regent
of earth,
Empress of the infernal
swamps,
Take me, your humble
Christian,
To be numbered among
your elect,
Though my worth has
been as nothing.
Your mercy, my Lady and
my Mistress,
Is much greater than my
sinfulness,
Wihtout it no soul can
merit
Nor even Heaven, I do not
lie.
In his faith I wish to live
and die.

A votre Fils dites que je suis
sienne;
De lui soient mes péchés
abolut;
Pardonnez moi
comme à
l'Égyptienne,

Say to your Son that I am
his,
By him may my sins be
pardoned.
May he forgive me as he
forgave the Egyptian
woman,

Ou comme il fit au clerc
Théophilus,
Lequel par vous fut quitte et
absolut,
Combien qu'il eût au diable
fait promesse
Préservez-moi que je
n'accomplisse ce!
Vierge portant, sans
rompure encourir,
Le sacrement qu'on célèbre
à la messe:
En cette foi je veux vivre et
mourir.

Or the clerk
Theophilus,
Who was acquitted and
absolved by you,
Though he had made a
pact with Satan.
Preserve me from doing
such a thing,
Virgin, who bore without
incurring blemish
The sacrament we
celebrate at mass.
In his faith I wish to live
and die.

Femme je suis pauvrete et ancienne,	I am a poor old woman,
Qui rien ne sais; oncques lettre ne lus.	Ignorant and unlettered.
Au moutier vois dont suis paroissienne	In my parish church I see
Paradis peint, où sont harpes et luz,	A painted paradise with harps and lutes,
Et ung enfer où damnés sont boullus:	And a hell where the damned are boiled:
L'ung me fait peur, l'autre joie et liesse.	One fills me with fright, the other with joy and bliss.

La joie avoir fais moi, haute Déesse,	Let me have that joy, high Goddess,
A qui pécheurs doivent tous recourir,	To whom all sinners in the end must come,
Comblés de foi, sans feinte ne paresse:	Full of faith, without hypocrisy or sloth.
En cette foi je veux vivre et mourir.	In this faith I wish to live and die.

Ballade des femmes de Paris

Ballade of the women of Paris

Quoy qu'on tient belles langagières	Though they be reckoned good talkers,
Florentines, Veniciennes,	Florentine and Venetian women,
Assez pour estre messaigières,	good enough to be go- betweens,
Et mesmement les anciennes;	even the ancient women too;
Mais, soient Lombardes, Romaines,	and be they Lombards or Romans
Genevoises, à mes périls,	or Genovese, I say to my peril,
Piemontoises, Savoysiennes,	or Piedmontese or Savoyards –
Il n'est bon bec que de Paris.	there's no tongue like a Parisian one.

De beau parler tiennent chayères,	Chairs in the art of fine chatter, they say,
Ce dit-on Napolitaines,	are held by the women of Naples,
Et que sont bonnes cacquetières	while those from Germany and Prussia
Allemandes et Bruciennes;	are very good at prattle.
Soient Grecques, Egyptiennes,	Yet be they Greek, Egyptian,
De Hongrie ou d'aulture païs,	from Hungary or other lands,
Espaignolles ou Castellannes,	Spanish or Catalanian –
Il n'est bon bec que de Paris.	there's no tongue like a Parisian one.

Brettes, Suysses, n'y sçavent guères,	Bretons and Swiss are mere beginners,
Ne Gasconnes et Tholouzaines;	like Gascons and Toulousians;
Du Petit Pont deux harangères	two jabberers on the Petit Pont
Les conclueront, et les Lorraines,	would silence them, and Lorrainers, too,
Anglesches ou Callaisiennes,	women from England and Calais
(Ay-je beaucoup de lieux compris?)	(I've named a lot of places, eh?),
Picardes, de Valenciennes ...	from Picardy and Valencienne ...
Il n'est bon bec que de Paris.	there's no tongue like a Parisian one.

Prince, aux dames parisiennes,	Prince, to the ladies of Paris
De bien parler donnez le prix;	present the prize for fine chatter;
Quoy qu'on die d'Italiennes,	whatever is said of Italians,
Il n'est bon bec que de Paris.	there's no tongue like a Parisian one.

Interval

Joseph Guy Ropartz (1864-1955)

4 poèmes de l'intermezzo (1899)

Pierre-René Hirsch, after Heinrich Heine

Tendrement enlacés,
ma chère bien-aimée

Tendrement enlacés, ma
chère bien-aimée
Nous nous étions assis dans
un esquif léger,
Et par le calme soir, nous
nous laissions nager
Sur les moires d'une
eau limpide et
parfumée.

L'île mystérieuse où vivent
les esprits,
Dessinait vaguement ses
formes anguleuses;
Sous la lune flottaient des
dances nébuleuses,
Et des sons sensuels
d'instruments désappris.

Et la ronde toujours reserrait
sa spirale
Et les sons devenaient plus
suaves toujours
Et pourtant nous voguions
abandonnés au cours
De l'onde sans espoir sous la
lueur astrale.

Pourquoi vois-je pâlir
la rose parfumée?

Pourquoi vois-je pâlir la rose
parfumée?
Dis-moi, dis-moi, ma bien-
aimée,
Dis-moi pourquoi!
Pourquoi, dans le gazon
touffu, les violettes,
Si fraîches d'habitude, ont-
elles aujourd'hui
Un air d'ennui?
Pourquoi le chant des
alouettes
Si nostalgiquement meurt-il
par les chemins?
Pourquoi s'exhale-t-il
des bosquets de
jasmins
La funéraire odeur qui sort
des cassolettes?

Tenderly
intertwined, my dear
beloved

Tenderly intertwined, my
dear beloved,
we sat ourselves in a little
rowboat,
and in the calm evening,
we let ourselves float
atop the shot silk of
crystalline and
perfumed waters.

The mysterious isle
where the spirits live
indistinctly outlined their
skeletal forms;
beneath the moon fluttered
shapeless dances,
and the alluring sounds of
forgotten instruments.

And the dance ever
tightened its spiral
and the sounds became
sweeter still
and yet we sailed
abandoned on the course
of the water without hope
beneath the sidereal light.

Why do I see the
perfumed rose grow
pale?

Why do I see the perfumed
rose grow pale?
Tell me, tell me, my
beloved,
tell me why!
Why, among the tangled
grass, do the violets,
normally so lively, today
have
an air of boredom?
Why does the song of the
larks
so wistfully die along the
country lanes?
Why does the funerary
scent which rises from
censers
drift from the thickets of
jasmine?

Pourquoi, semblable au feu
suprême d'un flambeau
Qui s'éteint, le soleil à
l'horizon sans borne
Jette-t-il un éclat moins
ardent et moins beau?
Pourquoi la terre entière est-
elle grise et morne
Comme un tombeau?
Pourquoi suis-je si las, si
triste et si malade?
Ma chère bien-aimée oh!
dis-le, dis-le moi,
Si tu trouves encore un mot
qui persuade,
Dis-moi pourquoi tu m'as
abandonné?
Pourquoi?

Ceux qui, parmi les
morts d'amour

Ceux qui, parmi les morts
d'amour,
Ont péri par le suicide
Sont enterrés au carrefour
Là s'épanouit et réside

Une fleur bleue étrange
fleur
Aussi rare que sa couleur
Aucun nom ne l'a désignée
C'est la fleur de l'âme
damnée!

Pendant la nuit au carrefour
Je soupire dans le silence
Au clair de lune se balance
La fleur des damnés de
l'amour!

Depuis que nul rayon
de tes yeux bien-aimés

Depuis que nul rayon de tes
yeux bien-aimés
N'arrive plus aux miens
obstinément fermés,
Je suis enveloppé de
ténèbres morales.
L'étoile de l'amour s'est
éteinte pour moi
Plus de douce clarté,
rien que l'ombre et
l'effroi!
Un gouffre large ouvert me
veut dans ses spirales.
Nuit éternelle, engloutis-moi!

Why, like the fire atop a
torch
as it dies, does the sun on
the boundless horizon
cast a radiance less fiery
and less lovely?
Why is the whole land
grey and bleak
like a tomb?
Why am I so weary, so
sad and so sick?
My dear beloved, oh! tell
me, say it to me,
if you can find one more
persuasive word,
tell me why you have
abandoned me?
Why?

Those who, among
love's dead

Those who, among love's
dead,
perished by their own hand
are buried at the crossroads;
there blooms and lives

A blue flower, a strange
flower
as rare as its colour;
nobody has named it -
it is the flower of the
damned soul!

By night at the crossroads
I sigh in the silence;
in the moonlight sways
the flower of those
damned by love!

Now that no beam
from your beloved
eyes

Now that no beam from
your beloved eyes
reaches my obstinately
closed ones any more,
I am enveloped in
spiritual darkness.
The star of love is gone
out for me
no more sweet
brightness, nothing but
shadow and fear!
A vast yawning abyss wants
me in its clutches.
Eternal night, devour me!

Rita Strohl (1865-1941)

From 6 Poésies de Baudelaire mises en musique (pub. 1901)
Charles Baudelaire

Un fantôme

A phantom

Dans les caveaux
d'insondable tristesse
Où le Destin m'a déjà
relégué;
Où jamais n'entre un rayon
rose et gai;
Où, seul avec la Nuit,
maussade hôtesse,

In the vaults of
unfathomable sadness
To which Fate has
already consigned me;
Where no rosy, cheerful
beam ever enters;
Where, alone with Night,
that sullen hostess,

Je suis comme un
peintre qu'un Dieu
moqueur
Condamne à peindre, hélas !
sur les ténèbres;
Où, cuisinier aux appétits
funèbres,
Je fais bouillir et je mange
mon cœur,

I am, as a painter,
condemned by a
mocking God,
To paint, alas! the
shadows;
Where, like a cook with a
ghoulish appetite,
I boil and devour my own
heart,

Par instants brille,
et s'allonge, et
s'étale
Un spectre fait de grâce et
de splendeur.
À sa rêveuse allure
orientale,

There sometimes shines,
stretches out and
distends
A phantom, made of
grace and splendour.
From its dreaming,
oriental figure,

Quand il atteint sa totale
grandeur,
Je reconnais ma belle
visiteuse:
C'est Elle! noire et pourtant
lumineuse.

When it reaches its full
height,
I recognize my beautiful
visitor:
It is She! black and yet
luminous.

Obsession

Obsession

Grands bois, vous m'effrayez
comme des cathédrales;
Vous hurlez comme l'orgue ;
et dans nos cœurs
maudits,
Chambres d'éternel
deuil où vibrent de vieux
râles,
Répondent les échos de vos
De profundis.

Great forests, you frighten
me like cathedrals;
You howl like an organ;
and in our cursed
hearts,
Chambers of eternal
mourning, where ancient
death-rattles vibrate,
Your De Profundis
echoes in response.

Je te hais, Océan!
tes bonds et tes
tumultes,
Mon esprit les retrouve en
lui ; ce rire amer
De l'homme vaincu, plein de
sanglots et d'insultes,
Je l'entends dans le rire
énorme de la mer.

Ocean, I hate you! your
crested waves, your
storms –
I see them in my soul; this
bitter laughter
Of a defeated man, full of
sobs and insults,
I hear it in the vast
laughter of the sea.

Comme tu me plairais, ô
nuit! sans ces étoiles
Dont la lumière parle un
langage connu!
Car je cherche le vide, et le
noir et le nu!

How you will please me, O
night! without those stars,
Whose light speaks a
language I understand!
For I seek the void, the
black and the bare!

Mais les ténèbres sont elles-
mêmes des toiles
Où vivent, jaillissant
de mon œil par
milliers,
Des êtres disparus aux
regards familiers.

But the very shadows are
canvasses,
Where vanished beings
dwell with familiar
expressions,
Leaping in thousands
from my eyes.

Madrigal triste I Que m'importe que tu sois sage? Sois belle! et sois triste! Les pleurs Ajoutent un charme au visage, Comme le fleuve au paysage; L'orage rajeunit les fleurs. Je t'aime surtout quand la joie S'enfuit de ton front terrassé; Quand ton cœur dans l'horreur se noie; Quand sur ton présent se déploie Le nuage affreux du passé. Je t'aime quand ton grand œil verse Une eau chaude comme le sang; Quand, malgré ma main qui te berce, Ton angoisse, trop lourde, perce Comme un râle d'agonisant. J'aspire, volupté divine! Hymne profond, délicieux! Tous les sanglots de ta poitrine, Et crois que ton cœur s'illumine Des perles que versent tes yeux! II Je sais que ton cœur, qui regorge De vieux amours déracinés, Flamboie encor comme une forge, Et que tu couves sous ta gorge Un peu de l'orgueil des damnés; Mais tant, ma chère, que tes rêves N'auront pas reflété l'Enfer, Et qu'en un cauchemar sans trêves, Songeant de poisons et de glaives,	Sad madrigal I What do I care if you be wise? Be beautiful! and be sad! Tears Add charm to your face, Like a river adorns a landscape; Flowers are refreshed by storms. I love you best when joy Vanishes from your vanquished brow; When your heart drowns in sorrow; When an atrocious cloud from the past Settles on your present. I love you when your wide-open eyes Shed water as warm as blood; When, despite my hand that cradles you, Your too oppressive anguish breaks through, Like the death-rattle of a dying man. I breathe in – O divine rapture! O deep and delicious hymn! – All the sobbing of your breast, And I believe your heart will glow From the pearls that well from your eyes! II I know that your heart, which overflows With old, uprooted loves, Still blazes like a forge, And that in your breast you conceal Some of the pride of the damned; But as long, my dear, as your dreams Have not reflected Hell, So long as in a relentless nightmare – Dreaming of poison and blades,	Éprise de poudre et de fer, N'ouvrant à chacun qu'avec crainte, Déchiffrant le malheur partout, Te convulsant quand l'heure tinte, Tu n'auras pas senti l'étreinte De l'irrésistible Dégoût, Tu ne pourras, esclave reine Qui ne m'aimes qu'avec effroi, Dans l'horreur de la nuit malsaine Me dire, l'âme de cris pleine: 'Je suis ton égale, ô mon Roi!'	In love with gunpowder and steel, Opening your door only in fear, Seeing calamity on all sides, Tormented by the tolling bell – You will not have felt the embrace Of irresistible Disgust, You will not be able, slave-queen, Who loves me only out of fear, In the horror of fevered night, To say to me, your soul filled with screams, 'I am your equal, O my King!'
Maurice Ravel (1875-1937)			
Sainte (1896) <i>Stéphane Mallarmé</i>	Saint		
A la fenêtre recélant Le santal vieux qui se dédore De la viole étincelant Jadis selon flûte ou mandore,	At the window that harbours the old sandalwood of flaking gilt of the viol that sparkled once to flute or mandola,		
Est la Sainte pâle, étalant Le livre vieux qui se déplie Du Magnificat ruisselant Jadis selon vêpre et complie:	Stands the pale saint, displaying the ancient unfolded book of the Magnificat that glistened once to vespers and compline:		
A ce vitrage d'ostensoir Que frôle une harpe par l'Ange Formée avec son vol du soir Pour la délicate phalange	At this monstrance-glass brushed by a harp the Angel forms in his evening flight for the delicate finger-		
Du doigt que, sans le vieux santal Ni le vieux livre, elle balance Sur le plumage instrumental, Musicienne du silence.	-tip that, lacking the old sandalwood and the ancient book, she poises on the instrumental plumage, musician of silence.		

2 épigrammes de Clément Marot (1895-9)
Clément Marot

D'Anne qui me jecta de la neige On Anne who threw snow at me

Anne par jeu me jecta de la neige,
Que je cuidoyis froide, certainement:
Mais c'estoit feu, l'expérience en ay je,
Car embrasé, je fus soudainement.
Puis que le feu loge secretement
Dedans la neige, où trouveray je place
Pour n'ardre point? Anne, ta seule grace
Estaindre peult le feu que je sens bien,
Non point par eau, par neige ne par glace,
Mais par sentir un feu pareil au mien.

Anne in play threw snow at me,
which I certainly thought cold:
but what I felt from it was fire,
for suddenly I was all aflame.
Since fire dwells secretly
in the snow, where shall I find a place
where l'll not burn? Anne, your favour alone
can quench the flame I so keenly feel,
not with water nor snow nor ice,
but by feeling a fire which matches mine.

D'Anne jouant de l'espinette On Anne playing the spinet

Lors que je voy en ordre la brunette,
Jeune, en bon poinct, de la ligne des dieux,
Et que sa voix, ses doigts et l'espinette
Meinent un bruyct doux et mélodieux,
J'ay du plaisir et d'oreilles et d'yeulx
Plus que les saintz en leur gloire immortelle,
Et autant qu'eulx je deviens glorieux
Dès que je pense estre un peu aymé d'elle.

When I see my neat and dark-haired lady,
young, comely, of divine lineage,
and when her voice, her fingers, and the spinet
make a sweet melodious sound,
my ears and eyes know greater pleasure
than the saints in their immortal glory:
and I become as glorious as they,
the moment I feel she loves me a little.

L'indifférent from Shéhérazade (1903)
Tristan Klingsor

Tes yeux sont doux comme ceux d'une fille,
Jeune étranger,
Et la courbe fine
De ton beau visage de duvet ombragé
Est plus séduisante encore de ligne.

Your eyes are soft like a girl's,
young stranger,
and the delicate curve
of your handsome down-shaded face
is still more attractively shaped.

Ta lèvre chante
Sur le pas de ma porte
Une langue inconnue et charmante
Comme une musique fausse;
Entre! et que mon vin te reconforte...

Your lips sing
at my door
an unknown charming tongue,
like music off-pitch;
enter! and let my wine refresh you...

Mais non, tu passes
Et de mon seuil je te vois t'éloigner
Me faisant un dernier geste avec grâce
Et la hanche légèrement ployée
Par ta démarche féminine et lasse.

But no, you pass by
and I see you leaving my threshold,
gracefully waving farewell,
your hips lightly swaying
in your languid feminine way.

Don Quichotte à Dulcinée (1932-3)
Paul Morand

Don Quixote to Dulcinea

Chanson romanesque Romantic song

Si vous me disiez que la terre
À tant tourner vous offensa,
Je lui dépêcherais Pança:
Vous la verriez fixe, et se taire.

Were you to tell me that the earth offended you with so much turning,
I'd dispatch Panza to deal with it:
you'd see it still and silenced.

Si vous me disiez que l'ennui
Vous vient du ciel trop fleuri d'astres,
Déchirant les divins cadastres,
Je faucherais d'un coup la nuit.

Were you to tell me that you are wearied by a sky too with stars –
tearing the divine order asunder,
I'd scythe the night with a single blow.

Si vous me disiez que l'espace
Ainsi vidé ne vous plaît point,
Chevalier dieu, la lance au poing,
J'étoilerais le vent qui passe.

Were you to tell me that space itself, thus denuded was not to your taste –
as a god-like knight, with lance in hand,
I'd sow the fleeting wind with stars.

Mais si vous disiez que mon sang
Est plus à moi qu'à vous, ma Dame,
Je blêmirais dessous le blâme,
Et je mourrais, vous bénissant.

But were you to tell me that my blood is more mine, my Lady, than your own,
I'd pale at the admonishment
and, blessing you, would die.

O Dulcinée. O Dulcinea.

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

Chanson épique

Epic song

Bon Saint Michel qui me donnez loisir De voir ma Dame et de l'entendre, Bon Saint Michel qui me daignez choisir Pour lui complaire et la défendre, Bon Saint Michel, veuillez descendre Avec Saint Georges sur l'autel De la Madone au bleu mantel.	Good St Michael who gives me leave to behold and hear my Lady, good St Michael who deigns to elect me to please her and defend her, good St Michael, descend, I pray, with St George onto the altar of the Madonna robed in blue.
D'un rayon du ciel bénissez ma lame Et son égale en pureté, Et son égale en piété Comme en pudeur et chasteté: Ma Dame.	With a heavenly beam bless my blade and its equal in purity, and its equal in piety as in modesty and chastity: my Lady.
(O grands Saint Georges et Saint Michel) L'ange qui veille sur ma veille, Ma douce Dame si pareille A Vous, Madone au bleu mantel! Amen.	(O great St George and great St Michael) Bless the angel watching over my vigil, my sweet Lady, so like unto Thee, O Madonna robed in blue! Amen.

Chanson à boire

Drinking song

Foin du bâtard, illustre Dame, Qui pour me perdre à vos doux yeux Dit que l'amour et le vin vieux Mettent en deuil mon cœur, mon âme!	A pox on the bastard, illustrious Lady, who to discredit me in your sweet eyes, says that love and old wine are saddening my heart and soul!
Je bois à la joie! La joie est le seul but Où je vais droit... lorsque j'ai... bu! Ah! Ah! Ah! la joie! Je bois à la joie!	I drink to joy! Joy is the only goal to which I go straight... when I'm... drunk! Ha! Joy! I drink to joy!
Foin du jaloux, brune maîtresse, Qui geind, qui pleure et fait serment D'être toujours ce pâle amant Qui met de l'eau dans son ivresse!	A pox on the jealous wretch, O dusky mistress, who whines and weeps and vows always to be this lily- livered lover who dilutes his drunkenness!
Je bois à la joie! La joie est le seul but Où je vais droit... lorsque j'ai... bu! Ah! Ah! Ah! la joie! Je bois à la joie!	I drink to joy! Joy is the only goal to which I go straight... when I'm... drunk! Ha! Joy! I drink to joy!

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