

# WIGMORE HALL

Sunday 30 June 2024  
3.00pm

Soul speaks to Soul: Songs and Romances of Rachmaninov and Rimsky-Korsakov

Sofia Fomina soprano  
Julius Drake piano

Sergey Rachmaninov (1873-1943)

A prayer Op. 8 No. 6 (1893)  
Music Op. 34 No. 8 (1912)  
The Migrant Wind Op. 34 No. 4 (1912)  
These summer nights Op. 14 No. 5 (1896)  
Twilight has fallen (1891)  
Melody Op. 21 No. 9 (1902)  
How fair this spot Op. 21 No. 7 (1902)  
How long, my friend Op. 4 No. 6 (1893)

Nikolay Rimsky-Korsakov (1844-1908)

The Nymph Op. 56 No. 1 (1898)  
The clouds begin to scatter Op. 42 No. 3 (1897)  
Switezianka Op. 7 No. 3 (1867)  
Not the wind, blowing from the heights Op. 43  
No. 2 (1897)  
Summer night's dream Op. 56 No. 2 (1898)

Sergey Rachmaninov

Fragment from Musset Op. 21 No. 6 (1902)  
Discord Op. 34 No. 13 (1912)  
Sing not to me, beautiful maiden Op. 4 No. 4  
(1892-3)  
Lilacs Op. 21 No. 5 (1902)  
Believe me not, friend Op. 14 No. 7 (1896)



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In almost every respect, Rachmaninov and Rimsky-Korsakov were complete antipodes. Rachmaninov inherited the academic style associated with the Moscow Conservatory and which was associated above all with his idol, Tchaikovsky. Rimsky-Korsakov, by contrast, belonged to the 'mighty handful' (*moguchaya kuchka*), a group of self-taught St Petersburg amateurs who gathered around that charismatic despot, Balakirev. Rachmaninov achieved worldwide fame as the composer of symphonies, concertos and virtuoso solo piano works, whereas Rimsky-Korsakov excelled in national and historical operas, and in vivid orchestral canvases that were more about texture and story-telling than architecture and form. Rimsky-Korsakov's ravishing scores were much admired by early 20th-century Parisian audiences and emulated by Debussy and Ravel. Rachmaninov was more drawn to Berlin, Leipzig and Dresden (where he lived between 1906 and 1909), and on his honeymoon in 1902, he even took his wife on a pilgrimage to Bayreuth, where he heard several of Wagner's music dramas.

Initially, Rachmaninov's attitude towards Rimsky-Korsakov was decidedly cool, as it was towards the Petersburg school more generally. Rachmaninov briefly studied in the Russian capital in the 1880s, yet he was an indolent and indifferent student. We can only speculate what might have become of him had he been allowed to remain in the city, but at it was, he was soon removed to Moscow, where he studied the piano with the noted disciplinarian Zverev, as well as composition with Arensky and Taneyev. It was only when Rachmaninov conducted Rimsky-Korsakov's opera *Pan Voyevoda* that he reassessed his prior views. As he confessed to his biographer, Oskar von Riesemann, in the 1930s: 'As if I had woken from a nightmare, I shook off all my Muscovite prejudice against the great St Petersburg composer. I recognised the artistic sincerity and integrity which inspired Rimsky-Korsakov and raised him high above all pettiness. His admirable mastery of the technique of composition, especially his skill in instrumentation and his sensitive control of orchestral tone-colour, could not but fill me with sincere admiration. I grew really fond of him, and this feeling deepened from day to day'. When Rachmaninov left Russia in 1917, he took with him his treasured score of Rimsky-Korsakov's opera *The Golden Cockerel*.

It is, though, as song composers that Rachmaninov and Rimsky-Korsakov were most closely matched. Each left behind around 80 romances (as solo songs are called in Russian), and if Rachmaninov's are rather more familiar to us today, then Rimsky-Korsakov's are equally deserving of our attention. His first songs – around two dozen – date from the late 1860s, when he was still serving as an officer in the Russian navy and taking private lessons from Balakirev. This was the age of Alexander II's great reforms – the emancipation of the serfs, the relaxation of censorship and the renewal of the state's institutions and administration – and its mood was vividly captured in the

realist novels of the era. Rimsky-Korsakov was a realist of sorts too. In many of his early songs, he suggests the sights and sounds of Russia's recently acquired Caucasian territories, but in his setting of *Świtezianka* by the Polish romantic poet Mickiewicz, he looked to the Western extent of the empire instead. The composers of the 'mighty handful' are often referred to as nationalists, yet their nationalism was inextricably linked with the expansion of the Russian Empire.

Rimsky-Korsakov wrote few songs in the 1870s and 1880s, but in 1897-8 there came a sudden outpouring of nearly 50 of them. Here, he turned to the Romantic poetry of Pushkin and Maikov, who were now seen as precursors of Russia's emerging Symbolist movement. As before, nature is a frequent theme, but it no longer serves as a mere backdrop or setting, having instead become a metaphor for creativity itself. Rimsky-Korsakov was proud of his ability to reproduce the latent musicality of the poetic word, which he extended by means of fastidiously crafted piano accompaniments.

As Rimsky-Korsakov was coming to the end of his career as a song composer, Rachmaninov was just embarking on his. His first attempts date from the early 1890s and clearly emulate a range of earlier composers. In 'Sing not to me, beautiful maiden', he set a poem that had already attracted Glinka and Balakirev, whilst borrowing some of Rimsky-Korsakov's musical exoticisms. 'These summer nights' and 'Believe me not, friend' set words by poets – Rathaus and Aleksey Tolstoy respectively – who had long been associated with Tchaikovsky. Musically, the songs of this period show affinities with the expressive lyricism favoured by Glinka and Tchaikovsky, yet Rachmaninov was soon to incorporate new influences.

After the botched première of his First Symphony in St Petersburg in 1897, Rachmaninov turned to conducting for a number of years. He soon found himself working with Fyodor Chaliapin, who was preparing to sing the title role in Musorgsky's *Boris Godunov*. From then on, Rachmaninov's songs would become ever more attentive to verbal detail and the subtleties of prosody. At times, they even border on the declamatory, although they never lose their emotional warmth, and one can certainly never forget that their composer was one of the greatest pianists of his age. Yet for all the abundant musical beauty of the *12 Romances* Op. 21 (1902) or *15 Romances* Op. 26 (1906), Rachmaninov had his critics. In 1912, he received a letter from an anonymous admirer, who praised his music, whilst damning his supposedly mediocre literary sensibility. The author of the letter was a budding Symbolist poet, Marietta Shaginyan, and she immediately set about educating him in the latest Russian poetry and sending him verse he might set to music. Although Rachmaninov rejected many of the texts she proposed, her creative influence runs throughout the *14 Romances* Op. 34 (1912).

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## Sergey Rachmaninov (1873-1943)

### A prayer Op. 8 No. 6 (1893)

*Aleksey Pleshcheyev, after Johann Wolfgang von Goethe*

O, Bozhe moi! Vzglyani na greshnuyu menya; Ya muchus, ya bolna dushoi, Izryta skorbyu grud moya. O, moi Tvorets, velik moi grekh, Ya na zemle prestupnei vsekh.	Oh my God! Look down on me, a sinner; I'm miserable, sick in spirit, my heart is torn with remorse. Heavenly Father, my sin is great, there is no greater crime on earth.
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Kipela v nyom mladaya krov, Byla chista yevo lyubov, No on yevo v grudi svoeyi Tail tak svyato ot lyudei. Ya znala vsyo... O, Bozhe moi!	His youthful blood was ardent, his love was pure, but he kept it secret, telling no one for it was sacred to him. I knew all this... O Lord!
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Prosti mne, greshnoi i bolnoi.	Forgive me, a sinner in pain.
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Yevo ya muki ponyala; Ulybkoi, vzorom lish odnim Ya b istselit yevo mogla, No ya ne zzhailas nad nim.	I understood his torments; with just a smile, a single glance, I could have made him well, and yet I took no pity on him.
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Tomilsya dolgo, dolgo on, Pechalyu tyashkoi udruchyon; I umer, bednyj, nakonets. O, Bozhe moi, o, moi Tvorets! Tronsya greshnoyu molboi... Vzglyani, kak ya bolnoi dushoi.	He suffered for a long, long time, in pain and deep sorrow; and finally he died, poor soul. Oh, Lord, oh, heavenly Father! Hear my sinful prayer... Behold, how my soul is in pain.
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### Music Op. 34 No. 8 (1912)

*Yakov Polonsky*

I plyvut, i rastut, eti chudnye zvuki! Zakhvatila menya ikh volna...	They flow and they grow, these wonderful sounds! I am carried on their wave...
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Podnyalas, podnyala i nevedomoi muki I blazhenstva polna... I bozhestvennyi lik, na mgovenye, Neulovimoi sverknuv krasotoi, Vsplyl, kak zhivoye videnye Nad etoi vozdushnoi, kristalnoi volnoi, I otrazilsya, i pokachnulsya, Ne to ulybnulsya... Ne to proslzilsya...	As it swelled, it lifted me, filling me with strange torment and bliss... And, for an instant, a divine face, in a flash of elusive beauty, floats like a living vision, over this airy, crystal wave, – and is reflected, and sways, almost with a smile... Almost with a tear...
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### The Migrant Wind Op. 34 No. 4 (1912)

*Konstantin Balmont*

Veter perelyotnyi oblaskal menya I shepnul pechalno: 'Noch silneye dnya.' I zakat pomeknul. Tuchi pocherneli. Drognuli, smutilis pasmurnye yeli.	A passing breeze caressed me and whispered sorrowfully: 'Night is more powerful than day.' The sunset dimmed. Clouds darkened. Sombre firs shuddered and swayed.
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I nad tyomnym morem, gde krutilsya val, Veter perelyotnyi zybyu probezhal. Noch tsarila v mire. A mezh tem dalyoko Za morem zazhglosya ognennoye oko.	Over the dark sea, where waves wash ashore, a passing breeze flowed in a ripple. Night reigned in the world. But – far away, beyond the sea, a fiery eye was lit.
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Novyi raspustilsya v nebesakh tsvetok, Svetom vozrozhdyonnym zablistal vostok. Veter izmenilsya i pakhnul mne v ochi, I shepnul s usmeshkoi: 'Den silneye nochi!'	A radiant flower blossomed in the heavens, the east glowed with a renascent light. The wind changed, touched my face, and whispered with a smile: 'Day is stronger than the night!'
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*Please do not turn the page until the song and its accompaniment have ended*

## These summer nights Op. 14 No. 5 (1896)

*Daniil Rathaus*

Eti letniye nochi  
prekrasnye  
Yarkim svetom luny  
ozaryonnye,  
Porozhdayut trevogi  
neyasnye,  
Probuzhdayut  
poryvy vlyublyonnye.

These beautiful summer  
nights,  
resplendent in the  
moon's bright light,  
give birth to vague  
feelings of alarm,  
give rise to surges  
of love.

Zabyvayetsa skorb  
neobyatnaya,  
Shto daruyetsya zhiznyu  
unyloyu,  
I blazhenstva kraya  
blagadatnye.  
Raskryvayutsya  
tainoyu siloyu.

Forgotten is the  
boundless melancholy  
that is bestowed by  
sorrowful life,  
and a promised land of  
happiness  
is revealed by a  
mysterious power.

I otryli drug drugu, ne  
vlastnye  
Nad soboyu serdtsa my  
vlyublyonnye.  
V eti letniye nochi  
prekrasnye,  
Svetom yarkim luny  
ozaryonnye.

And we open up to one  
another  
our hearts so helplessly in  
love.  
On these beautiful  
summer nights,  
resplendent in the  
moon's bright light.

## Twilight has fallen (1891)

*Aleksey Konstantinovich Tolstoy*

Zharkii den blednel  
neulovimo.  
Nad ozerom tuman  
tyanulsya polosoi,  
I krotkii obraz tvoi, znakomyi  
i lyubimyi,  
V vechernii tikhii chas  
nosilsya predomnoi.

The hot day grew paler  
imperceptibly.  
A band of mist stretched  
out over the lake,  
and your gentle image, so  
familiar and beloved,  
floated before me in the  
quiet evening hour.

Ulybka ta zh byla, kotoruyu  
lyublyu ya,  
I myagkaya kosa, kak  
prezhde, rasplelas,  
I ochi grustnye,  
poprezhnemu toskuya,  
Glyadeli na menya v  
vechernii tikhii chas.

Your smile was the smile I  
love so much,  
and your soft braid, as  
before, came undone,  
and your sad eyes, with a  
look of longing,  
were gazing at me in the  
quiet evening hour.

Zharkii den blednel  
neulovimo ...

The hot day grew paler  
imperceptibly ...

## Melody Op. 21 No. 9 (1902)

*Semyon Nadson*

Ya b umeret khotel na  
krylyakh upoyenya,  
V lenivom polusnye,  
Naveyannom mechtoi,  
Bez muk raskayanya,  
bez pytki  
razmyshlenya,  
Bez malodushnykh slyoz  
proshchaniya s zemlyoi

I would like to die on  
inspiration's wings,  
in light slumber  
brought on by a dream,  
with no regrets,  
tormenting second  
thoughts,  
faint-hearted tears of  
parting with the earth.

Ya b umeret khotel  
dushistoyu vesnoyu,  
V zapushchyonom sadu, v  
blagukhannyi  
den,  
Shtob kupy tyomnykh lip  
dremali nado  
mnoyu  
I kolykhalasya tsvetushchaya  
siren.

I would like to die in  
fragrant spring,  
in an overgrown garden,  
on a sweet-scented  
day,  
with canopies of dark  
lindens dreaming  
overhead  
and blossoming lilacs  
swaying back and forth.

Shtob ryadom by ruchei  
tainstvennym  
zhurchanyem  
Nemuyu tishinu  
trevozhil i budil,  
I sinii nebosklon  
torzhestvennym  
molchanyem,  
Ob raiskoi vechnosti  
Mne vnyatno govoril ...

With a nearby stream  
murmuring  
mysteriously  
to disturb and alarm the  
mute stillness,  
with the blue sky above in  
its mysterious  
silence  
telling me of eternity  
in words I understand...

Shtob ne molilsya ya, ne  
plakal, umiraya,  
A sladko zadremal, i shtoby  
snilos mne,  
Shto ya plyvu... plyvu,  
I shto volna nemaya  
bezzvuchno  
Otdayot menya  
drugoi volne ...

Let me not be praying or  
weeping as I die,  
but slumbering sweetly,  
having a dream  
that I'm floating... floating,  
and a mute  
wave  
soundlessly hands me  
over to another wave...

## How fair this spot Op. 21 No. 7 (1902)

*Galina*

Zdes khorosho...Vzglyani:  
vdali  
Ognyom gorit reka,  
Tsvetnym kovrom  
luga legli,  
Beleyut  
oblaka.

Here it's so fine...Look: in  
the distance  
the river glitters like fire,  
the meadows are a carpet  
of colour,  
there are white clouds  
overhead.

Zdes net lyudei...  
Zdes tishina...  
Zdes tolko Bog da ya.

Here there are no people  
...it's so quiet...  
here are only God and I.

Tsvety, da staraya sosna, Da ty, mechta moyaya...	And the flowers, and the old pine tree, and you, my dream...
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### How long, my friend Op. 4 No. 6 (1890-3)

*Arseny Golenishchev-Kutuzov*

Davno-I, moi drug, tvoi vzor pechalnyi Ya v rasstavanya smutnyi mig lovil. Shtob luch yevo proshchalnyi Nadolgo v dushu mne pronik.	How long has it been, my friend, since I studied your sad gaze in the bleak moment of our parting, so the farewell ray of light in your eyes would fill my soul for a long time.
Davno-I, bluzhdaya odinoko, V tolpe tesnyashchei i chuzhoi K tebe zhelannoi i dalyokoi Ya mchalsta grustnoyu mechtoi.	How long has it been, wandering alone in the pressing, alien crowd, I've hastened to join you, my distant love, as if in a sad dream?
Zhelanya gasli... Serdtse nylo... Stoyalo vremya... Um molchal... Davno-I zatishye eto bylo? No vikhr svidanya nabezhal...	Desires faded... My heart ached... Time stood still... My mind was mute... How long did this lull last?  But the whirlwind of reunion has come...
My vmeste vnov, i dni nesutsya, Kak v more voln letuchikh stroi, I mysl kipit, i pesni lyutsya Iz serdtsa, polnovo toboi!	We're together again, and the days flow, like sea waves flying tall, my mind seethes, and songs pour from my heart, filled with thoughts of you!

### Nikolay Rimsky-Korsakov (1844-1908)

#### The Nymph Op. 56 No. 1 (1898)

*Apollon Maykov*

Ya znayu, otchevo u etikh beregov Razdumye tainoye obyemlet dukh plovtsov: Tam nimfa grustnaya s raspushchennoi kosoyu,	I know the reason why, around these shores, a mysterious pensiveness overwhelms sailors' minds:  here, a melancholy nymph, with hair unbraided,
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Poluzakrytaya pevuchei osokoyu, Poroyu pesn poyot pro shyolk svoikh vlasov, Lazur zaplakannykh ochei, zhemchug zubov I serdtse, polnoye lyubvi nerazdelyonnoi. Proyedet li chelnok- plovets obvorozhyonnyi, Yyo zaslushavshis, perestayet gresti; Zamolknit li ona – no dolgo na puti Yemu vsyo chudyatsya napevy nad vodoyu I nimfa v kamyshakh, s raspushchennoi kosoyu.	half-hidden 'midst the songful sedge, sometimes sings a song about her silken hair, the deep blue of her tearful eyes, her pearly teeth, and a heart filled with unrequited love. Whenever a small boat passes by, its enchanted sailor pauses to listen to her and stops rowing; and longs after she falls silent, her strains seem to carry over the water, the nymph, among the reeds, with her unbraided hair.
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*Please do not turn the page until the song and its accompaniment have ended.*

## The clouds begin to scatter Op. 42 No. 3

(1897)

Alexander Pushkin

Redeyet oblakov letuchaya gryada;	A line of flying clouds thins out.
Zvezda pechalnaya, vechernyaya zvezda,	Melancholy evening star, you have cast
Tvoi luch oserebril uvyadshiye ravniny,	your silvery light over the fading plains,
I dremlyushchii zaliv, i chornykh skal vershiny;	the slumbering bay and the black cliff tops.
Lyublyu tvoi slabyi svet v nebesnoi vyshine;	I love your faint light high in the sky;
On dumy razbudil, usnuvshiye vo mne.	it brings back memories that slept within me.
Ya pomnyu tvoi voskhod, znakomoye svetilo,	I remember you rising, familiar star,
Nad mirnoyu stranoi, gde vsyo dlya serdtsa milo,	over that peaceful land I loved so much,
Gde stroino topoly v dolinakh vozneshlis,	where slender poplars grew tall in the valleys,
Gde dremlet nezhnyi mirt i tyomnyi kiparis,	where gentle myrtles and dark cypresses swayed,
I sladostno shumyat poludennye volny.	and waves broke softly on a southern shore.
Tam nekogda v gorakh, serdechnoi dumy polnyi,	There, long ago, in the hills above the sea,
Nad morem ya vlachil zadumchivuyu len,	I would spin out my time in idleness, dreaming of love;
Kogda na khizhiniy skhodila nochi ten –	there, when night's shadow fell over the villages
I deva yunaya vo tme tebya iskala	a young girl might look for you in the darkness,
I imenem svoim podrugam nazyvala.	tell you her name before calling to her friends.

## Switezianka Op. 7 No. 3 (1867)

Lev Mey, after Adam Mickiewicz

Paren prigozhii moi, Paren krasivyyi, kto ty?	Youth, handsome and comely - who are you?
Zachem nad Svitezyu burlivoi	Why above the roaring Svitez-lake
Brodish nenastnoi poroyu?	are you wandering in poor weather?
Brossya k nam v volny	Plunge yourself into the waves
I budem kruzhitsya vmeste po zybi	and let us swirl together
Khrustalnoi so mnoyu.	in the crystal ripple.
Khochesh, moi milyi, I lastochkoi shibkoi	If you would like, my dear, as a swift swallow
Budesh nad ozerom mchatsya,	you could fly over the lake,
Ili krasivoi vesyoloyu rybkoi	or as a beautiful jolly fish,
Tselyi den budesh ty v struikakh pleskatsya.	the entire day you could splash in the streams.

Nochyu na lozhe volny  
serebristoi  
Landishei my  
nabrosayem,  
Sladko zadremlem  
pod senyu  
struistoi,  
Divnye gryozy  
uznayem!

At night, the bed of the  
silvery wave  
we'll cover with lilies of  
the valley,  
in languorous slumber  
under the streaming  
cover  
we'll have wondrous  
dreams!

## Not the wind, blowing from the heights Op.

43 No. 2 (1897)

Aleksey Nikolayevich Tolstoy

Ne veter, vey a s vysoty, Listov kosnulsya nochyu lunnoi	Not the wind which, blowing from the heights
Moyei dushi kosnulas ty.	has caused the leaves to tremble;
Ona trevozhna, kak listy,	it is you who have made my soul tremble,
Ona, kak gusli, mnogostrunna.	sensitive like the leaves.
Zhiteiskii vikhr yeyo terzal I sokrushitelnym nabegom,	Like the strings of a lyre, the north wind of life has ill-treated it,
Svistya i voya, struny rval I zanosil kholodnym snegom.	howling, breaking its strings, sprinkling it with snow.
Tvoya zhe rech laskayet slukh, Tvoyo legko prikosnovenye, Kak ot tsvetov letyashchii pukh, Kak maiskoi nochi dunovenye.	But thy words are gentle to my ear, thy hand is light like the down of the flowers, like a May breeze at night.

## Summer night's dream Op. 56 No. 2 (1898)

Apollon Maykov

Dolgo nochyu vchera ya zasnut ne mogla.	Last night I was unable to fall asleep for a long time.
Ya vstavala, okno otvoryala...	I got up to throw open the window...
Noch nemaya menya i tomila, i zhgla,	Night, in its muteness, oppressed and enflamed me,
Aromatom tsvetov opyanyala...	intoxicating me with the scent of flowers...
Tolko vdruk zashumeli kusty pod oknom, Raspakhnulas, shumya zaneska –	Then suddenly there came a sound from the bushes beneath the window rustling, the curtain blew open –

I vletel ko mne yunosha, svetel litsom, Tochno ves byl iz lunnovo bleska.	and a young man flew into my room, his face shining, as if he were made of nothing but the moon's radiance.
Rastvorilisya dveri svetlitsy moyei, Kolonnady za nimi otkrylis; V piramidakh iz roz verenitsy ognei V alebastrovykh vazakh svetilis...	The doors of my room flew open, revealing the colonnades behind them; in pyramids of roses, row upon row of lights shone in alabaster vases...
Chudnyi gost podkhodil vsyo k posteli moyei, Govoril mne on s krotkoi ulybkoi: 'Otchevo predo mnoyu v podushki skorei Ty nyrnula ispugannoi rybkoi!	The wondrous guest came still closer to my bed; he spoke to me with a gentle smile: 'Why, when I came, did you bury your face in your pillow, like a startled little fish!
Oglyanisya – ya bog, bog videnii i gryoz, Tainyi drug ya zastenchivoi devy... I blazhenstvo nebes ya vperve prinyos Dlya tebya, dlya moyei korolevy...'	Turn and face me – I am the god of visions and fantasies, I am the secret friend of every timid maiden... and now, for the first time, I bring you heaven's rapture, you, my queen...'
Govoril i litso on moyo otryval Ot podushki tikhonko rukami; I shchyoki moyeo krai goryacho tseloval, I iskal moikh ust on ustami...	He spoke – and with his hands he softly lifted my face from the pillow; and passionately he kissed the edge of my cheek, and sought out my lips with his lips...
Pod dykhanyem yevo obessilela ya... Na grudi razomkiulisya ruki... I zvuchalo v ushakh: 'Ty moya! Ty moya!' Tochno arfy dalyokiye zvuki...	Under his breath I grew faint... I unclasped my hands from my breast... And I heard in my ears: 'You are mine! You are mine!' like the distant sound of a harp...
Protekali chasy... ya otkryla glaza... Moi pokoi byl uzh oblit zareyu...	Hours went by... I opened my eyes... my peace has already been suffused with the morn...

Ya odna... vsya drozhu... raspustilas kosa... Ya ne znayu, shto bylo so mnoyu...	I am alone... I am all a- quiver... My braid is undone... I don't know what has happened to me...
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## Sergey Rachmaninov (1873-1943)

### Fragment from Musset Op. 21 No. 6 (1902)

*Aleksey Apukhtin*

Chto tak usilenno serdtse bolnoye Byotsya, i prosit, i zhazhdet pokoya? Chem ya vzvolnovan, ispugan v nochi? Stuknula dver, zastonav i zanoya... Gasnushchei lampy blesnuli luchi... Boze moi! Dukh mne v grudi zakhvatilo! Kto-to zovyot menya, shepchet unylo... Kto-to voshyol...Moya kelya pusta, Net nikogo, eto polnoch probilo... O, odinochestvo, o, nishcheta!	Why does my sick heart so violently beat, and beg, and thirst for peace? Why am I troubled, afraid in the night? A door slammed, groaning and whining... rays of the spluttering lamp glittered... my God! It takes my breath away! Someone calls me, in a pitiful whisper... someone entered...my cell is empty, I'm alone, that was midnight striking... O loneliness, O poverty!
--	--

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

## Discord Op. 34 No. 13 (1912)

*Yakov Polonsky*

Pust po vole sudeb ya rasstalas s toboi,	Never mind that fate has parted us,
Pust drugoi obladayet moyei krasotoi!	and another man possesses my beauty!
Iz obyatii ego, iz nochnoi dukhoti,	From his embraces, in the stifling night,
Unoshus ya dalyoko na krylyakh mechty.	I am carried far away on wings of dream.
Vizhu snova nash staryi, zapushchyonnyi sad:	I see again our garden, old and overgrown:
Otrazhyonnyi v prude potukhayet zakat,	the setting sun reflected in the pond;
Pakhnet lipovym tsvetom v prokhlade allei;	the air smells of blossoms in the cool linden alleys;
Za prudom, gde-to v roshche, urchit solovei...	past the pond, in the grove, a nightingale is warbling ...
Ya steklyanuyu dver otvorila, drozhu,	I open the glass door, trembling,
Ya iz mraka v tainstvennyi sumrak glyazhu...	in darkness I gaze into the mysterious shadows,
Chu! tam khrustrnula vetka, ne ty li shagnul?!	Hark! a stick cracked, was that you taking a step?!
Vstrepenu lasya ptichka, ne ty li spugnul?!	A bird flew up - was it you who startled it?
Ya prislushivayus, ya muchitelno zhdu,	I listen intently in an agony of expectation,
Ya na shelest shagov tvoikh tikho idu -	I tiptoe toward the rustle of your footsteps,
Kholodit moi chleny to strast to ispug -	my limbs shiver with passion and fright,
Eto ty menya za ruku vzyal, milyi drug!?	is it you taking my hand, my darling!?
Eto ty ostorozhno tak obnyal menya,	Is this cautious embrace you,
Eto tvoi potselui - potselui bez ognia!	is this kiss yours - a kiss without fire!
S bolyu v trepetnom serdtse, s volneniyem v krovi,	With pain in your trembling heart, with excitement in your blood,
Ty ne smeyesh otdatsya bezumstvam lyubvi,	you don't dare to surrender to mad flights of love,
I, vnimaya recham blagorodnym tvoim,	and, listening to your noble words,
Ya ne smeyu dat volyu vlecheniyam svoim,	I dare not give vent to my own feelings,
I drozhu, i shepchu tebe: milyi ty moi!	and I tremble, and whisper to you: darling of mine!
Pust vladeyet on zhalkoi moyei krasotoi!	So what if he possesses my poor beauty!
Iz obyatii ego, iz nochoi dukhoty,	From his embraces, in the stifling night,

Ya opyat uletayu na krylyakh mechty,	I am carried away again on wings of dream,
V etot sad, v etu tem, vot na etu skamyu,	to this garden, this darkness, this bench,
Gde vpervye podslushal ty dushu moyu...	where you first listened secretly to my soul ...
Ya dushoyu slivayus s tvoyeyu dushoi,	And again I merge my soul with yours -
Pust vladeyet on zhalkoi moyei krasotoi!	so what if he possesses my poor beauty!

## Sing not to me, beautiful maiden Op. 4 No.

4 (1890-3)

*Alexander Pushkin*

Ne poi, krasavitsa, pri mne	Sing not to me, beautiful maiden,
Ty pesen Gruzii pechalnoi:	your songs of sad Georgia:
Napominayut mne one Druguyu zhizn i bereg dalnoi.	they remind me of another life and distant shore.
Uvy, napominayut mne	Alas, they bring back memories,
Tvoi zhestokiye napevy I step, i noch, i pri lune	your cruel melodies, of the steppe at night, and, in the moonlight,
Cherty dalyokoi, bednoi devy!...	the features of a poor maiden far away!...
Ya prizrak milyi, rokovoi, Tebya uvidev, zabyvayu;	Seeing you, I forget that dear, fateful vision;
No ty poyosh i predomnoy Ego ya vnov voobrazhayu.	but when you sing, again I imagine it before me.

Ne poi, krasavitsa, pri mne	Sing not to me, beautiful maiden,
Ty pesen Gruzii pechalnoi:	your songs of sad Georgia:
Napominayut mne one Druguyu zhizn i bereg dalnoi.	they remind me of another life and distant shore.

## Lilacs Op. 21 No. 5 (1902)

*Ekaterina Beketova*

Poutru, na zare, Po rosistoi trave,	In the morning, at dawn, through dewy grass,
Ya poidu svezhim utrom dyshat;	I walk and breathe the fresh morning air,
I v dushistuyu ten,	and to the fragrant shade,
Gde tesnitsya siren,	where lilacs cluster,
Ya poidu svoyo schastye iskat...	I'll go in search of my happiness...



V zhizni schastye odno	Only one happiness
Mne naiti	am I destined to find in
suzhdeno,	life,
I to schastye v sireni	and that happiness lives
zhivyot;	in the lilacs;
Na zelyonykh vetvyakh,	on green branches,
Na dushistykh kistyakh	in fragrant clusters,
Moyo bednoye schastye	my poor happiness
tsvetyot...	blossoms...

### **Believe me not, friend Op. 14 No. 7 (1896)**

*Aleksey Konstantinovich Tolstoy*

Ne ver mne, drug, kogda	Don't believe me, friend,
v izbytko	when, overwhelmed by
gorya	troubles,
Ya govoryu, shto razlyubil	I say I do not love you
tebya.	anymore.
V otliva chas ne ver izmene	Do not believe the ebbing
morya:	sea's inconstancy:
Ono k zemle vorotitsya,	it will return to land,
lyubya.	loving as before.
Uzh ya toskuyu, prezhnei	Full of passion I long for
strasti polnyi,	you again,
Moyu svobodu vnov tebe	again I'm ready to
otdam.	surrender to you.
I uzh begut s obratnym	And rushing back the
shumom volny	loud waves run
Izdaleka k lyubimym	from far away to their
beregam.	beloved shore.

*Translations of Rachmaninov by Richard D Sylvester from Rachmaninoff's Complete Songs: A Companion with Texts and Translations published by Indiana University Press. 'The Nymph' and 'Summer night's dream' by Philip Ross Bullock. 'The clouds begin to scatter' by Andrew Huth. 'Switezianka' copyright © by Sergey Rybin from The LiederNet Archive, [lieder.net](http://lieder.net).*