

WIGMORE HALL

Sunday 4 February 2024
7.30pm

Songs from a Beautiful Mouth - Barbara Strozzi

Solomon's Knot

Eligio Quinteiro theorbo
Emilia Benjamin lirone
Jan Zahourek violone
Siobhán Armstrong harp
Walewein Witten harpsichord

Zoë Brookshaw soprano
Clare Lloyd-Griffiths soprano
Kate Symonds-Joy alto
Thomas Herford tenor
David de Winter tenor
Jonathan Sells bass

Thomas Guthrie director
Matteo Dalle Fratte language
coach

Barbara Strozzi (1619-1677) Il primo libro de madrigali Op. 1 (pub. 1644)

*Sonetto. Proemio dell'opera • L'amante timido eccitato •
Godere in gioventù • Con le belle non ci vuol fretta •
Libertà • Le Tre Grazie a Venere • Priego ad Amore •
Silentio nocivo • Godere e tacere •
Il contrasto de' cinque sensi • L'Usignuolo •
La vittoria • Conclusione dell'opera*

Interval

*L'amante modesto • La quaglia, sonetto burlesco •
Pace arrabbiata • Dialogo in partenza •
Canto di bella bocca • Al Battitor di Bronzo della sua
crudellissima Dama • Dal pianto de gli amanti scherniti •
L'Affetto Umano • Consiglio amoroso •
Gli amanti falliti • Il ritorno*



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'Crowned with laurels of immortality.
Maybe they'll call me the new Sappho'

For any young musician, no matter how talented, it would be a bold statement to make. To make it within the opening stanzas of one's first publication is nothing short of audacious. And so, in that opening salvo, Barbara Strozzi laid down the approach that was to sustain a lifetime of work.

Any biography of Strozzi is frustrated by the paucity of surviving evidence, but the fragments that remain hint at a life both richly and courageously lived. She was born in Venice in 1619, the daughter of Isabella Griega, the housekeeper and heir-designate of the poet and academician Giulio Strozzi. Isabella and Giulio lived together, most likely as common-law spouses, and Giulio quickly amended his will to include little Barbara, later legally claiming her as his daughter. While early 17th-century Venice was still a society cruelly marked by misogyny, some protofeminist light was beginning to shine, with pioneering women writers, artists and musicians agitating for their rights. Giulio Strozzi – librettist to Monteverdi, member of the Venetian intelligentsia – was a vocal supporter of these women, and made sure of his daughter's education as both composer and performer. By the age of 17 Barbara had two volumes of music written expressly for her by Nicolò Fontei, with texts provided by her father. At 18 she was the presiding member of the *Accademia degli Unisoni*, a drinking, debating, musical society founded by Giulio. While the *Unisoni* was short-lived, Strozzi's career was just beginning, and over the next 30 years she would go on to publish and promote eight volumes of her own music, cultivating patrons and performances throughout Europe. Lauded by her contemporaries for her *virtù* (neither 'virtue' nor 'virtuosity' but something of both), mocked in an anonymous satire alongside her fellow academy members, she was remembered, after her death in 1677, as musician and poet. A hundred years on, she was named the inventor of the cantata.

Returning to the beginning: in October of 1644, juggling the demands of her musicianship and the needs of her four young children, she published her Op. 1, dedicated to Vittoria della Rovere, Grand Duchess of Tuscany. A collection of duets, trios and madrigals, each piece was composed to a text written by her father, whose words framed the collection as a deliberately curated presentation. The subject matter is typical of the period: love, beauty and the comedy and pathos of human existence. These are no straightforward love songs, however, but calculated displays of verbal and vocal excellence. There is evidence of the academy debate format in 'Le Tre Grazie' and 'Il contrasto de' cinque sensi', and a skewering of hyperbolic love language in 'Dal pianto de gli amanti scherniti'. While the foolishness of lovers is much in evidence, so are more serious situations. Nowhere is this more keenly felt than in 'L'Usignuolo', which gives voice to the outraged Philomela of classical mythology, raped and mutilated

by a man she trusted, pouring out her rage and demands for justice.

This volume is an incredibly assured debut, showcasing the beginnings of the musical gestures that Strozzi would come to advance over the course of her career. The pieces vary in structure and style as they move between different voice combinations and topics: some light and catchy ('L'Amante timido eccitato'), some conversational ('Dialogo in partenza'), and some, such as 'Silentio nocivo', presaging the later developments of her cantata monodramas. Four particular features of Strozzi's style stand out: madrigalic illustration of word meanings, dexterous fluidity of vocal line, interplay between basso continuo and voice, and a flair for the dramatic. Wordpainting is everywhere: a full ensemble battering repetition of 'the angry voice' in 'L'Usignuolo', a deliberate display of florid singing for the first appearance of the word song ('canto') in the volume's opening number, and the dropping down to hell in the bass voice for 'inferno' in 'Libertà'. Extended fioritura is displayed time and again, most notably in 'Canto di bella bocca', 'Sonetto. Proemio dell' opera', and 'Il ritorno'. The interaction between instrumental and vocal line in 'Dialogo in partenza' and 'Al battitor di bronzo' is a reminder that Strozzi was both instrumentalist and singer, recorded as playing and singing at the same time. Finally, there are hints of the ways in which she would later fully exploit a dramatic, theatrical presentation of text through music in certain moments of 'Consiglio amoroso' and 'L'Affetto Umano.'

Beyond these musical considerations, there is something else to note about Strozzi's Op. 1: the very fact of its publication. Most of the possibilities for composers at the time were heavily bound to specific social roles: a musician tied to a certain court, church or convent. Venice, a mercantile society at the centre of the European publishing trade, offered the possibility of something different: musician as entrepreneur. By printing her works and building multiple patronage relationships Strozzi was able to expand her musical reach. Exploiting the most popular form of vocal music in her own time – the cantata – meant that her music could be performed by professionals and amateurs far beyond her own circle. The spread of her printed works ensured the inclusion of her legacy in the first encyclopaedias of musical history to appear in the 18th Century. Despite the later erasure of women in music, these documents have led us back to a celebration of her talents.

When the Strozzi's – daughter and father – crafted the closing stanzas of this first volume, I hope they may have imagined something of this future.

'In a bright flash,
a shining brilliance,
new music will now appear...
I will sing you a better tune.
If you don't believe me, just keep listening.'

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Barbara Strozzi (1619-1677)

Il primo libro de madrigali Op. 1 (pub. 1644)

Giulio Strozzi

Sonetto. Proemio dell'opera

Mercé di voi, mia fortunata
stella,
Volo di Pindo in fra i beati
chori,
E coronata d'immortali
allori
Forse detta sarò Saffo
novella.

Sonnet: the start

Thanking my lucky
stars,
I fly to you from the happy
choirs on Mount Pindo
crowned with laurels of
immortality.
Maybe they'll call me the
new Sappho.

Così l'impresa faticosa e
bella
Sia felice del canto e
degl'amori,
Che s'unisco le voci i nostri
cori
Non disunisca mai voglia
rubella.

I hope this beautiful journey
- this difficult journey -
is filled with happy songs,
and stories of love
so that our hearts, united
by singing
are never torn because we
want different things.

O che vaga e dolcissima
armonia
Fanno due alme innamorato
e fide,
Che quel che l'una vuol l'altra
desia,
Che gioisce al gioir,
ch'al rider
ride,
Né mai sospiran, che'l sospir
non sia
D'una morte che sana e non
uccide.

What happy, sweet
harmonies
two faithful souls in love
can make.
What one desires, the
other desires too.
Each delights in the
other's joy, laughs with
the other's laughter,
and sighs only with the
sigh of death...
a sigh that heals, and
never kills.

L'amante timido eccitato

T'invito a godere,
Mio core, e paventi?

The coy lover is aroused

I'm inviting you to be happy,
why are you afraid?

Avvezzo ai tormenti,
lo sdegno il piacere.

Suffering is my lot,
I reject pleasure.

Ardisci e
godrai:
Chi non s'arrischia non
gioisce mai.

But with courage, you can
be happy:
without risk, there is no
happiness.

Il bene hai presente,
Mio cor, che tu brami?

Happiness is here for you,
what is it that you want?

A gioie tu chiami
Chi gioie non sente.

You ask me to be happy
but I'm incapable of it.

Ardisci e
godrai:
Chi non s'arrischia non
gioisce mai.

With courage, you can be
happy:
without risk, there is no
happiness.

L'invito ti
piace,
Mio cor, né ti affretti?

I can tell my invitation
pleases you,
why are you slow to accept?

Vo pian coi
diletti,
Ch'il bene è fallace.

When it comes to
pleasure, I go carefully,
it can deceive.

Ardisci e
godrai:
Chi non s'arrischia non
gioisce mai.

With courage, you can be
happy:
without risk, there is no
happiness.

Godere in gioventù

Enjoy your youth while you can

Nel bel fior di gioventù
Alle gioie aprire il seno,
Donzellette, è gran
virtù.

In the fair flower of youth
ladies, it is a virtue
to give yourself over to
pleasure.

Chi tardi cominciò gode
assai meno: Scherniti
pentimenti,
Che per comprar
contenti,
Non ha spaccio poi molto
L'argento d'un capel, l'oro
d'un volto.

Why be a late starter?
There'll be less to enjoy.
Have no regrets.
For there's nothing of value
in the things you buy -
not the silver in your hair
nor the gold on your
face.

Nel bel fior di
gioventù
Alle gioie aprire il seno,
Donzellette, è gran
virtù.

In the fair flower of your
youth
ladies, it is a virtue
to give yourself over to
pleasure.

È d'un corto mattin breve il
sereno:
Bellezze fuggitive,
Estinte pria che vive,
In van l'arte vi aiuta, non si
racquista più beltà
perduta.

Mornings are
brief:
beauty is fleeting,
it fades as soon as it flowers,
you can't hide it: and
beauty lost is never
regained.

Nel bel fior di
gioventù
Alle gioie aprire il seno,
Donzellette, è gran
virtù.

In the fair flower of your
youth
ladies, it is a virtue
to give yourself over to
pleasure.

Con le belle non ci vuol fretta

Mi tien Filli fin qui,
Mi tien Filli fin qui,
Né ben detto di sì.
Amore, e che farò,
aspetto o lascio?
Amor non mi risponde,
Ma mi dice la speme:
'Aspetta, aspetta,
Con le belle a goder
non ci vuol fretta;
Viene il bene tal'hor, né si sa
dónde.
Non sai tu che consola
L'amante di molt'anni
un' hora sola?'

Libertà

Non ci lusinghi più
Con la tua dolce spene,
Vezzosa servitù:
Libertà, libertà, non più
catene!

Dunqu'era il mio bene,
Dunqu'era il mio core,
Una donna infedel priva
d'amore.

Oh stolido errore,
Per breve gioire
Corteggiar pene e
vagheggiar martire.

Oh basso desire,
Oh alto arrischiato:
Chi gode nell'inferno esser
dannato.

Non ci lusinghi più
Con la tua dolce spene,
Vezzosa servitù:
Libertà, libertà, non più
catene!

Don't rush beautiful women

Phyllis has been leading
me on,
not saying no,
not saying yes.
Tell me what to do, Love.
Should I wait or let her
go?
No response.
But here is Hope. Hope
says 'Wait, wait!
To be happy with
beautiful women you
can't rush them;
pleasure may come, but
you can't tell when.
Don't you know that a
single hour of pleasure
can reward a lover for many
years of suffering?'

Freedom

Stop seducing me
with such sweet hope,
fickle servitude.
I want my freedom: no
more chains.

She was my love,
she was my heart,
an unfaithful, loveless
woman.

It was a stupid mistake,
to court pain, welcome
suffering,
for pleasure so short-
lived.

Base desire,
risk too great.
Enjoy being damned in
Hell.

Stop seducing me
with such sweet hope,
fickle servitude.
I want my freedom: no
more chains.

Le Tre Grazie a Venere

Bella madre d'Amore,
Anco non ti ramembra
Che nuda havesti di bellezze
il grido
In sul Troiano lido
Dal giudice Pastore?
Onde se nuda
piaci
In sin a gl'occhi de' bifolchi
Idei,
Vanarella che sei,
Perché vuoi tu con tanti
adobbi e tanti
Ricoprirti a
gl'amanti?
O vesti le tue Gratie
e i nudi Amori,
O getta ancor tu fuori
Gl'arnesi, i mantie i veli:
Di quelle care membra
Nulla, nulla si celi.
Tu ridi e non
rispondi?
Ah, tu le copri, sì, tu le
nascondi,
Che sai ch'invoglia più, che
più s'apprezza
La negata bellezza.

Priego ad Amore

Pietosissimo Amore,
Tu mai non abbandoni
Chi ti consacra riverente il
core.
Chi cieco ti
figura,
Chi nudo, chi bendato,
Chi di saette armato
Non provò tua dolcissima
natura.

Morir, né morir mai,
Languir, ma per un
poco,
È gloria del tuo foco.

Vieni, deh, vieni a noi,
Vieni, gioia dell'alme,
Spargi, spargi benigno i doni
tuoi
E d'un cortese affetto
Alla Barbara mia feconda il
petto.

The three Graces address Venus

Beautiful mother of Love,
have you forgotten that you
were completely naked
when you won that
beauty contest
the judgement of Paris
on the shores of Troy?
If that was indeed how
you delighted
the shepherds on Mount
Ida,
you vain thing,
why do you cover yourself
head to foot with jewelry
and hide yourself from
your lovers?
Either put clothes on the
Graces and Cupids
themselves,
or cast off
these robes and veils:
hide nothing
of your darling body.
You laugh, and don't
answer.
Ah I see. You cover
yourself
because you know that it
is more seductive
to withhold beauty.

Prayer to Love

Merciful Love,
you never abandon
someone
who sincerely offers their
heart.
Anyone who imagines
you sightless,
naked, blindfolded,
arrow-armed,
has never experienced
your sweetness.

To die, or never to die,
to languish, but only for a
while,
this is the glory of your fire.

Come to us,
come, joy of my soul,
shower us with your
generous gifts
and make fertile my heart
for Barbara.

Silentio nocivo

Dolcissimi respiri
De' nostri cori
amanti
Son le parole affettuose e i canti.
Sfoga, o mio core, il tuo
cocente ardore,
Se tal'hor non ti tocca
Nodrirti almen di due soavi baci.
Afflittissima bocca,
Stolta sei se tu taci:
Parla, canta,
respira, esala il
duolo,
Canta, canta, che solo
Dol Dolcissimi respiri
De' nostri cori
amanti
Son le parole affettuose e i canti.

Godere e tacere

Gioisca al gioir nostro e l'aura
e l'onda,
Scherzin tra l'erbe e i
fiori
I lascivetti Amori,
A nostri dolci canti eccho
risponda.
In questo lieto e fortunato
giorno
Volin le Gratie intorno,
Vengan sul labbro i cori
E s'annodino l'alme al suon
de' baci.
Ah, non dir più, taci, mia
lingua, taci!

Wounding silence

Sweetest breaths
are the passionate words
and songs
of our loving hearts.
Tell us of your burning
desire, heart,
when you are unable
to feed on sweet kisses,
afflicted mouth
you are foolish to stay silent:
Speak, sing, breathe,
unburden yourself of
your pain,
Sing, yes, sing, for only
sweetest breaths
are the passionate words
and songs
of our loving hearts.

Enjoy, and be silent

The breezes, the waves,
they rejoice in our joy.
they play among the
grasses and flowers,
the lustful Cupids,
and Echo answers our
sweet songs.
On this auspicious, happy
day
the Graces buzz around us,
our hearts are on our lips
and our souls conjoin to
the sound of kisses.
Enough, no more words,
be silent.

Il contrasto de' cinque sensi

Chi di noi vaglia più,
E di gioia maggior ministro
sia,
Fiera lite ognor
fu.
Io miro, io sento, io gusto, io
fiuto, io tocco,
E nella donna mia
Tal'hor, anco mercé d'un
picciol bacio,
Tutto trabocco.
Tocca pur quanto sai,
Che nel sol tocco
Amore
Il verace gioir non pose mai.
Ne sia giudice il cor mesto e
languente;
'Ohimè' senti ch'il cor dentro
ci dice,
Ch'un sol bacio, ch'è niente, il
fa felice.

L'Usignuolo

Quel misero Usignuolo
Spiega la pompa de' canori
accenti,
E racconta il suo duolo
Al fonte, al prato,
alla foresta, ai
venti.
Piange l'ingiurie
Filomena e i
torti
D'un Trace ingannatore,
E non canta d'amore,
Ma con l'irata lingua
Ricorda al Ciel che i traditori
estingua.
Chi crederia che voce
Cara e soave tanto
Muovan gli sdegni al canto?
Noi pur, o belle avere,
Allor ch'al nostro ossequioso
affetto
Son le mercedi rare,
Più di rabbia cantiam che per
diletto.

The Quarrel of the Five Senses

Which of us is the best,
the greatest source of
pleasure,
this has always been a
source of argument.
I see, I hear, I taste, I
smell, I touch,
and sometimes
with just one small kiss
from my lady
it all overflows.
Touch me all you want,
Love can never achieve
the heights of pleasure
by touch alone.
My sad languishing heart
will judge;
Alas, it says,
one kiss, one little kiss, is
all it takes.

The Nightingale

The wretched nightingale
gives voice to glorious
song,
pouring out its suffering
to the streams, the
meadows, the trees, the
wind.
Meanwhile Philomena
laments the wrongs
done to her
by the deceitful Thracian,
and sings not of love
but with angry voice
calls on Heaven to
assassinate all traitors.
Who would think a voice
so sweet and suave
could sound so angry?
My hungry beauties,
whilst the rewards for our
gentle affections
are so few and far between,
we too sing more from
rage than delight.

La vittoria

I gran Giove non si gloria
D'altre belle esser amante;
Gode solo il dio costante
Quando in seno è di Vittoria.

La Vittoria d'un bel Rovere
Al suo Giove adorna il crine,
Nel cui verde in aure e brine
Già la Gloria venne a piovere.

Nacque già nobil primitia,
Già gli rese il ciel fecondi;
Ma d'Etruria anco i sei mondi
D'alti Eroi voglion dovizia.

Conclusione dell'opera

Voi sete, o begli occhi,
Le stelle che scorto
Col vostro bel raggio
Nel primo viaggio
M'havete a buon porto.
Oh Dio, che mi tocchi,
Di mirti e d'allori il crine adornato,
Che premio è più grato
De gli ostri e de gli ori.
Ed ecco il primo voto
appendo al tempio
D'un nuovo e forse non creduto esempio.

A un lampo sereno
Che splende cotanto,
È forza che belle
Sien l'arie novelle
Nel regno del canto.
O Dio, che ripieno
Di sconcia armonia,
Havete l'orecchio,
Ond'io v'apparecchio
Miglior melodia.

Victory

Great Jupiter glories in loving
just one beauty;
strong-willed, he is content only
in the embrace of Victory herself.

His brow is adorned by Victory's oaken laurel.
Its glory rains shimmering down
in golden frosty sparkles of greenery.

Already the noble heir is born,
and already heaven has made him fertile;
meanwhile from Tuscany, the six worlds
of great heroes will share their riches.

The end of the piece?

Beautiful eyes, you are stars
glittering on the gorgeous sunbeam
of your first appearance.
You have led me safe to harbour.
How you bewitch me, your hair bejewelled with myrtle,
more worthy a prize than all the gold in the world.
You are the first sacred offering,
a new, unheralded paragon of beauty.

In a bright flash, a shining brilliance,
new music will now appear full beautiful
in this kingdom of song.
Dear God, whose ear is battered betimes
with discordant harmony:
hear this.
For I will sing you a better tune.

E a chi gli studi miei creder non giova,
Mando querela e lo disfido a prova.

If you don't believe me,
just keep listening.

Interval

L'amante modesto

Volano frettolosi i giorni e presto
Un secolo sarà che t'amo, o Clori,
Né de' miei lunghi ossequiosi amori
Un picciol guiderdone anco t'ho chiesto.
Amante son, ma candido e modesto;
Voglio che taciturno il cor t'adori
E voglio disfogar gl'interni ardori
Col muto fiato d'un sospir onesto.

Godati chi di me più fortunato
Nacque ai diletti impuri.
A me sol basta saper
Dalla mia Clori esser amato.

Così mai non guerreggia e non contrasta
Rivalità; diverso è il nostro stato:
Egli t'ama impudica, io t'amo casta.

The Modest Lover

The days fly by, and soon, Cloris,
I will have loved you for a hundred years.
And yet, in my unceasing subservient love
not once have I asked for a single reward.
I'm a lover, but a pure-hearted, modest one;
I adore you silently,
I relieve my inner burning with the silent breath of a true lover's sigh.

I will allow whoever is more fortunate than me to enjoy you,
to indulge with you in licentious pleasure.
For me it is enough to know that my Cloris loves me.

We are rivals with no quarrel;
We are simply different:
His love is lustful, mine is pure.

La quaglia, sonetto burlesco

Lascia di Libia il ciel l'ardita
quaglia
E rivarcato il procelloso
Egeo,
Invan cercando il suo crudel
marmeo,
Qui nel foco d'amor tutta si
squaglia.

Mentre sonora più la voce
scaglia
Contro l'amante fuggitivo e
reo,
Par che mi desti un impeto
Febeo,
E a dir contro di voi l'ira
m'assaglia.

Ecco vanno del pari i nostri
affanni:
S'ella il capo dibatte, il mio
piè trotta;
Si pasce ella di migli, io di
mal'anni.

Squaquera spesso, ed io
sospiro a ogn'hotta;
Le penne ha sconcie, ed io
squarciati i panni;
Ella adora un marmeo, io una
marmotta.

Pace arrabbiata

Come può, non come
suol,
Quell'altero
Chiede pace, pace vuol.
Grida il fiero:
'Ad Amor e non a te
Curvo il collo e bacio il piè.'
Replicò Fillide all'or:
'Servi me, che servi
Amor.
Tu non conosci, o stolto,
Che vicario d'Amor fatto è il
mio/suo volto?'
Come può, non come
suol,
Quell'altero
Chiede pace, pace vuol.

Privilegio ha la beltà:
Guerra e pace
Bella donna e rompe e fa.
Ecco tace

The Quail (a comic sonnet)

As the brave Quail leaves
behind the skies of Libya
and crosses the stormy
Aegean sea,
she searches in vain for
her cruel deceiver,
everything melts here in
the fire of Love.

As the Quail hurls her
voice
at the false-hearted, run-
away lover,
I am struck by an
Apollonian inspiration,
anger incites me to take
you down a peg or two.

Our vexations are
comparable:
she shakes her head, I
come running;
she eats millet, I feed on
endless pain;

She complains unceasingly,
I sigh constantly;
her feathers are ruffled, I
rip my clothes;
she loves an idiot: I a
witch.

Peace in Anger

However he can (not
however he wants)
this smughead
pleads for, longs for, peace.
He cries:
'It is Love's foot, not yours,
that I bow down and kiss.'
To which Phyllis replies:
'But if you serve me, you
serve Love.
Don't you know, fool,
that Love has sent me in
his stead?'
However he can (not
however he wants)
this smughead
pleads for, longs for, peace.

Beauty has privilege:
a beautiful woman
makes both war and peace.
Behold the silent

Quell'ardente, e che può
dir
Se non fingere è soffrir?
Quell'altier che la
sprezzò
Fintamente l'inchinò.
Si vede ben ch'allora
Quel che bestemmia il cor la
lingua adora.
Privilegio ha la beltà:
Guerra e pace
Bella donna e rompe e fa.

Dialogo in partenza

Anima del mio core,
Tu parti?

Io parto.

E prenderatti, o Dio,
Dimmi, un picciolo oblio
Giamai del nostro
amore?

Fonte della mia vita,
Tu resti

Io resto.

E dubitar potrai, In sì dura
partita,
Della mia fede mai?

No, no, la nostra gelosia si
spenga.

Sì, sì, rasciuga quei begli
occhi mesti.

E dove andar (restar) potrò
che tu
Non venga
(resti),
S'hanno la stanza usata
I nostri cuor cangiata?

Mentre parto, o mio
bene,
Il mio qui resta.

E'l mio teco sen viene.
Mentre resto, o mia speme,
Il tuo qui resta.

E'l tuo meco sen
viene.

ardent lover: what can he
say about suffering
that is really true?
The smughead who took
her down those pegs
bows insincerely.
It appears that
what the heart reviles, the
tongue adores.
Beauty has privilege:
a beautiful woman
makes both war and peace.

Parting words

Soul of my heart,
are you leaving?

Yes, I'm leaving.

And will you take with you
some small souvenir
to remind you always of
our love?

Source of my life,
are you staying?

Yes, I'm staying.

And can you ever doubt, in
such harsh separation,
my faithfulness?

No. Let our jealousy be
calmed.

Dry those beautiful sad
eyes.

And where could I
go
that you would not be
with me?
Our hearts are exchanged
permanently.

Although I'm leaving, my
love,
my heart is staying.

And mine is going with you.
And although I'm staying
your heart is staying too.

And yours is coming with
me.

Canto di bella bocca

Che dolce udire una
leggiadra bocca
Tutta lieta cantar versi
d'amore.
Vaga, vezzosa voce
Con passaggio veloce
T'alletta, ti circonda, anzi ti
tocca
E dentro va quasi a baciarti il
core.
Che dolce udire una
leggiadra bocca
Tutta lieta cantar versi
d'amore,
Mentre musico labbro
Spiega d'amore i pregi.
Altro non dice
Quel canoro felice
Che le gioie che senti;
Altro non dice
Che i dilette che provi;
Altro non dice
Che i tuoi piaceri nuovi,
I tuoi vecchi contenti.
Dillo, o mio core,
Che dolce udir una leggiadra
bocca
Tutta lieta cantar versi
d'amore.
Quell'aura armonizzata
Da una gorga canora
Ti ravviva e ristora,
Ti fa l'anima beata.
Folle sei se non godi e non
cominci,
Qua giù ristretto in un
caduco velo,
Tirsi, a gustar le melodie del
Cielo.

Al Battitor di Bronzo della sua crudellissima Dama

Quante volte ti bacio, o
bronzo amato,
Nuntio importun
di mal graditi
amori,
Ch'hanno i miei baci in sì
cocenti ardori
Il segno delle labbra in te
lasciato.

Song from a beautiful mouth

How sweet it is to hear a
beautiful mouth
full joyful sing verses of
love.
A lyrical, charming voice
with fleet-foot melody
teases you, encircles you,
touches you,
enters you as if to kiss
your heart.
How sweet it is to hear a
beautiful mouth
full joyful sing verses of
love.
Musical lips
confirm Love's virtues.
That happy song
speaks of nothing
but the happiness you feel;
speaks of nothing
but the delights you prove;
speaks of nothing
but your present pleasure
and your past content.
Say it heart,
how sweet it is to hear a
beautiful mouth
full joyful sing verses of
love.
This harmonious breath
from a sweet-voiced throat
revives you, restores you,
blesses your soul.
You'd be a fool, Thyrsis,
not to enjoy yourself,
not to begin, imprisoned
here as a mortal,
to hear the music of
paradise.

To his cruel lady's brass door-knocker

How often have I kissed
you, lovely brass,
unrelenting broker of
thankless love that you
are,
my kisses
burnt
the mark of my lips on
you.

Quante volte di lagrime
bagnato
Testimonio ti fo de' miei
dolori,
Quando escluso e deluso
errar di fuori
L'ira mi fa d'un demone
adorato.

Quanti la notte e' l di teco
ritorno,
Sdegnato a replicar colpi
gelosi,
Con tuo danno, altrui
riso e nostro
scorno.

Ma tu perdona a gl'impeti
amorosi,
Che spero alfin che
vendicate un giorno
Vedrò l'ingiurie mie ne' tuoi
riposi.

Dal pianto de gli amanti scherniti

Mordeva un bianco lino Aci
dolente,
E come è l'uso de' scherniti
amanti,
Alla sua bella schernitrice
avanti
Di mal trattar
gode a tela
innocente.

Ma quel ch'irato lacerava il
dente
Non mai restavan
d'ammollire i pianti,
Che trito homai da tanti
morsi e tanti,
Liquido il rese al fin l'occhio
gemente.

Tela non sembra
più, ma foglie
sparte:
Onde tu prima c'insegnasti
Amore,
Col fiero esempio a fabbricar
le carte.

Se nacque già dal feminil rigore
D'una donna crudel sì nobil
arte,
Che produrrà la cortesia d'un
core?

How often have my
tears
bathed you, born witness
to my suffering
when, rejected, deceived,
I was shut out
by the angry she-devil I
love.

How often have I beaten
you, in day or darkness,
scorned, jealous, caring
nothing
for your damage, others'
derision, our shared
shame.

But you forgive the
passions of love,
I hope one day we will see
my wounds avenged
in your
stillness.

From the tears of rejected lovers

In his grief, Acis bit on a
white linen cloth,
this is what happens with
disdained lovers,
deprived of their beautiful
disdainers
they comfort themselves
by abusing innocent
material.

Not that it helped, in this
case
the angry tearing of his teeth
didn't stop the tears,
which only served to
liquify what was left
of the shredded
cloth.

Indeed it's now no longer
cloth at all, but scraps
of straw:
You've made
paper
and in doing so, shown us
Love.

If such a noble art
was born from a woman's
hardness and cruelty,
what might kindness
produce?

L'Affetto Umano

Vago, instabil, leggiro è il
nostro affetto,
Si cangiano i desir cangiando
gl'anni;
Ché di quel che fanciul tanto
t'affanni,
Superbetto Garzon non hai
diletto.

Di colei che si dolce hor
m'arde il petto,
La più matura età scuopre
gl'inganni;
Ma gl'andati piacer, vecchio,
condanni
Ch'a lasciar i piacer ti vedi
astretto.

Così col tempo andiam
di voglie in
voglie:
Gioco, vezzi, delitie,
amori e
studi
Son finti scherzi e
mascherate doglie;

E la sorte chiamando e i cieli
crudi,
Caduchi più de le caduche
foglie.
Nudi venghiamo e ce
n'andiamo ignudi.

Consiglio amoroso

O soffrire o fuggire o tacer
sempre,
Ma con lieto
sembiante
L'offeso deve, e
mal gradito
amante.
Pianti, lamenti, dimostranze
acerbe
Non faranno cangiar costumi
o tempore
A tiranne superbe.
Onde conviene, in tante
amare pene,
O soffrirle o fuggirle o tacer
sempre.
Ma di che ci dogliam ch'un
incostante

Human Affection

Fleeting, unreliable, fickle
– such is our love,
desire decreases with the
passing years;
what might please you as
a baby
gives no pleasure as a
youth.

And what sets your heart
on fire today
will be a damp squib
tomorrow;
we get over old flames as
we age
and find ourselves forced
to abandon them.

Thus as time passes we
move from desire to
desire:
playfulness, charms,
delights, loves, even
the things we study,
all false nothings,
sadness in disguise.

And though we bemoan the
cruelty of fate and gods
we are as sure to fall as
autumn leaves.
Naked we came here, and
naked we'll leave.

Amorous advice

To suffer, to flee, to be
silent
and all with a smile on his
face,
this is the fate of the
mistreated,
unwelcomed lover.
Cries, laments, angry
rants,
these change nothing in
the ways and wiles
of proud tyrannical women.
So it's advisable, in the
face of pain,
to suffer, to flee, to be
silent.
Why complain when an
unfaithful woman

Ci sprezz e ci abbandoni?
Ah, frena l'ire,
Placati, incauto amante; ah,
soffri e taci,
E se vuoi dona instabile
punire,
Puniscila coi doni,
Castigala coi baci.

Gli amanti falliti

Amor, Amor, noi ricorriamo a te,
Supplichevoli avanti,
Senza credito o fè, falliti
amanti.

Se di forze ci spoglia
Grave cadente età,
S'andiam ogni hora in
giù,

Se non potiamo più,
La tua pietà ci toglia
Da dura servitù.

Amor, Amor, noi ricorriamo a te.
S'a noi manca ogni splendida
ricchezza,
Se miseri e dolenti,
D'ogni nostra bellezza
Miriamo i fior languenti,
E se non ritroviam chi più ci
guardi,
Frena, Amor, i tuoi
dardi;
Non bersagliar invano,
Ch'il dar morte a manchevoli
Sarebbe scorno della tua
mano.

scorns and leaves us?
Contain your anger
reckless lover, be calm;
suffer, be silent,
and if you want to punish
your fickle lady
punish her with gifts,
upbraid her with kisses.

Fading lovers

Love, we turn to you,
suppliant,
without confidence or hope.
We are fading lovers.

As advancing age
deprives us of strength,
as with every hour that
passes we lose more
strength
and our capacities,
be merciful: release us
from this harsh servitude.

Love, we turn to you
unburdened by
resplendent riches,
wretched, suffering,
witnessing the flowers
of our beauty fade,
observed by no
one,
re-quiver your arrows,
Cupid;
do not waste them,
to give death to the weak
dishonours your bow.

Il ritorno

The return

È tornato il mio bene	My love has returned
Hai riavuto il core	Your heart is revived
Son uscita di pene	My suffering is over
T'ha rattivata Amore	It's Love that's revived you
M'ha rattivata Amore.	It's Love that's revived me
Al gioir, non più parole, È tornato il mio (tuo) ben, Venne il mio (tuo) sole.	Rejoice, no more words, our love has returned, our sun is risen.
O beato ritorno	Blessed return
Hai quel che brami in seno	Your heart's desire is here
O soave soggiorno	Sweet respite
Sei consolata appieno	Complete is your consolation
Son consolata appieno	Complete is my consolation
Al gioir, non più lamenti: Quand'ho (Mentr'hai) le gioie in sen Lieti ho (hai) gli accenti.	Rejoice, no more complaining: when we feel joy in our hearts happiness is ours.
O risorte venture	Fortunes rekindled
O stabiliti honori	Honour re-established
O dolcezze sicure	Tenderness assured
O confermati Amori	Love re-confirmed
O confermati Amori.	Love re-confirmed
Al gioir, non più querele: Il raggio del mio (tuo) sol, raggio è fedele.	Rejoice, no more arguing: the rays of our sun are constant again.