

# WIGMORE HALL

Tuesday 7 March 2023  
7.30pm

Supported by The Woolbeding Charity

## Tell me the Truth about Love

Roderick Williams baritone  
Iain Burnside piano

Robert Schumann (1810-1856) Dichterliebe Op. 48 (1840)

*Im wunderschönen Monat Mai • Aus meinen Tränen sprissen •  
Die Rose, die Lilie, die Taube, die Sonne • Wenn ich in deine  
Augen seh • Ich will meine Seele tauchen • Im Rhein, im heiligen  
Strome • Ich grolle nicht • Und wüssten's die Blumen, die kleinen •  
Das ist ein Flöten und Geigen • Hör' ich das Liedchen klingen •  
Ein Jüngling Liebt ein Mädchen • Am leuchtenden  
Sommermorgen • Ich hab im Traum geweinet • Allnächtlich  
im Traume • Aus alten Märchen • Die alten, bösen Lieder*

Interval

Roger Quilter (1877-1953)

7 Elizabethan Lyrics Op. 12 (1908)

*My Life's Delight • Damask Roses •  
The Faithless Shepherdess • Brown is my love •  
Weep you no more • By a Fountainside •  
Fair House of Joy*

Clara Schumann (1819-1896)

Liebst du um Schönheit Op. 12 No. 2 (1841)

Fanny Mendelssohn (1805-1847)

Nähe des Geliebten II (1826)

Josephine Lang (1815-1880)

Abschied Op. 10 No. 6 (1837)

Robert Schumann (1810-1856)

Er, der Herrlichste von allen from *Frauenliebe und -leben*  
Op. 42 (1840)

Caroline Shaw (b.1982)

How do I find you (2020)

Sally Beamish (b.1956)

Nightingale from *4 Songs from Hafez* (2007)

Cheryl Frances-Hoad (b.1980)

The Pros and The Cons from *One Life Stand* (2011)

Gerald Finzi (1901-1956)

I said to love from *I said to love* Op. 19b (1956)

Benjamin Britten (1913-1976)

Tell me the Truth about Love from *Cabaret songs* (1937-9)

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'Some say it makes the world go round/and some say that's absurd'. Auden's poem *Tell me the truth about love* speculates widely (even wildly) on the nature of love: from a positive force, as necessary as oxygen, to an absurd folly, to an unstoppable power like the weather, to something that might have political views ('does it think Patriotism enough?') or smell like llamas. The songs in this programme, similarly, cover myriad types of love - tortured, glorious, unrequited, nourishing, living and dead - and span the period from 1821 to 2020, with the most recent a meditation on love in a time of COVID.

The 19th-century songs are all from Germany, beginning with **Robert Schumann's** *Dichterliebe*. It is a series of mainly very short songs, the pithiest of which is the tongue-twisting third at only 30 seconds or so. The final song is by far the longest, in which love is buried in a coffin, and which concludes with a lengthy postlude. The cycle was composed in little more than a week in May 1840, Schumann taking 16 poems from Heinrich Heine's *Lyrisches Intermezzo*, and tracing the passing of love in language that turns from flowers, sunshine, and diamonds to graves, cypresses and a bier for the coffin.

The musical language is richly varied and highly responsive to both each individual song and to the darkening emotions across the cycle. In the first song, the piano begins as if halfway through a thought, and it ends on an unresolved question. The first five songs are generally delicate, but have a foreshadowing melancholy. Numbers 6 to 9 are considerably more turbulent, representing a transition into the more sombre poetic tone of the second half of the cycle, with the almost operatic 'Ich grolle nicht' reaching the highest note of the whole piece. The piano writing throughout is virtuosic and very much engaged in the poetic 'work' - ferociously demanding in number 8, vividly to the fore in the wedding-dance of number 9, and taking the spotlight in the numerous postludes.

For a composer who had largely specialised in instrumental works up until this point, it is a remarkably confident piece; and, composed only a few months before marrying Clara Wieck, deeply personal. In July of the same year he composed *Frauenliebe und -leben* which relates the story of a woman's life and love through giddy romance, marriage, motherhood and bereavement. 'Er, der Herrlichste von allen' is a joyful catalogue of the beloved's attributes.

**Clara Schumann's** 'Liebst du um Schönheit', also written in 1840, is a skilful setting of a Rückert poem. Each verse, suggesting ways in which *not* to love the poet, is slightly modified - until the final paean to love for love's sake, with its gently emphatic final line. **Fanny Mendelssohn's** 'Nähe des geliebten' is shot through with yearning, with its subtle minor inflections perhaps representing the physical separation between the lovers. The less well-known **Josephine Lang** struggled with a lack of formal

education and financial troubles throughout her life. She was supported by friends such as Clara Schumann, and marked out as a special talent by both Robert Schumann and Felix Mendelssohn. 'Abschied', from a group of songs written in 1837, is utterly serene and flowing with glorious, long-breathed vocal lines.

In amongst the Lieder are **Quilter's** *7 Elizabethan Lyrics*. His songs share with the Lied tradition an emotional intelligence across both piano and voice, and a seemingly endless supply of singable melody. The words, and their settings, are a mix of 'sweet' and 'fair' love, as well as the more painful variety, and all have a palpable sense of wistful nostalgia. Quilter's biographer Valerie Langfield writes that his songs have a 'very English sense of Autumn sorrow', which is particularly evident in 'Weep you no more' and 'By a Fountainside'. Yet the expansive final song seems to shine through the autumnal mists and is one of Quilter's most celebrated, with its far-reaching vocal line, richly harmonised throughout.

In a completely different world is **Caroline Shaw's** 'How do I find you'. It is the opening track and title number of a collection of songs commissioned by Sasha Cooke, who in 2020 asked 17 composers to respond to their locked-down state in song. Shaw's hymn-like piece, with its gentle, repeated vocal figures and 'ticking-clock' in the piano is both tender and startlingly reminiscent of that strange, static time in our recent history. **Sally Beamish's** *4 Songs from Hafez* describe longing for the beloved in the form of various creatures, including nightingales, peacocks and hoopoes. The nightingale here 'sings' in the high reaches of the piano, under an ardent, liquid vocal line. **Cheryl Frances-Hoad** updates Schumann's 'woman's life and love' in 'The Pros and The Cons' from *One Life Stand*. The cycle was composed in response to mezzo-soprano Jennifer Johnston's wish to sing something more reflective of a contemporary woman's experience: in 'The Pros and The Cons', Frances-Hoad's heroine is experiencing the very modern dating dilemma of who should call first, set to an appropriately ruminating style, a beguiling mix of cabaret and recitative.

'I said to love' is **Finzi's** vigorous response to a poem by his favourite poet, Thomas Hardy, with a declamatory vocal line and cadenza-like piano interlude. It was found among Finzi's unpublished songs after his untimely death in 1956 and has become one of his most performed. **Britten's** *Tell me the Truth about Love* is also a posthumous publication, appearing in 1980 more than 40 years after its composition. It is one of Britten's many settings of WH Auden, in heavily ironic mode, with its constant demands for the truth; Britten's witty, loose-limbed accompaniment repeatedly fails to provide an answer.

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## Robert Schumann (1810-1856)

### Dichterliebe Op. 48 (1840)

Heinrich Heine

#### Im wunderschönen Monat Mai

Im wunderschönen Monat  
Mai,  
Als alle Knospen sprangen,

Da ist in meinem Herzen  
Die Liebe aufgegangen.

Im wunderschönen Monat  
Mai,  
Als alle Vögel  
sangen,  
Da hab' ich ihr  
gestanden  
Mein Sehnen und Verlangen.

#### Aus meinen Tränen spriessen

Aus meinen Tränen spriessen  
Viel blühende Blumen  
hervor,  
Und meine Seufzer werden  
Ein Nachtigallenchor.

Und wenn du mich lieb hast,  
Kindchen,  
Schenk' ich dir die Blumen  
all',  
Und vor deinem Fenster soll  
klingen  
Das Lied der Nachtigall.

#### Die Rose, die Lilie, die Taube, die Sonne

Die Rose, die Lilie, die Taube,  
die Sonne,  
Die liebt' ich einst alle in  
Liebeswonne.  
Ich lieb' sie nicht mehr, ich  
liebe alleine  
Die Kleine, die Feine, die  
Reine, die Eine;  
Sie selber, aller Liebe Wonne,  
  
Ist Rose und Lilie und Taube  
und Sonne.

#### In the wondrous month of May

In the wondrous month of  
May,  
when all buds were  
bursting into bloom,  
then it was that in my heart  
love began to blossom.

In the wondrous month of  
May,  
when all the birds were  
singing,  
then it was I confessed to  
her  
my longing and desire.

#### From my tears will spring

From my tears will spring  
many blossoming  
flowers,  
and my sighs will become  
a choir of nightingales.

And if you love me,  
child,  
I'll give you all the flowers,  
  
and at your window shall  
sound  
the nightingale's song.

#### Rose, lily, dove

Rose, lily, dove,  
sun,  
I loved them all once in  
the bliss of love.  
I love them no more, I  
only love  
she who is small, fine,  
pure, rare;  
she, most blissful of all  
loves,  
is rose and lily and dove  
and sun.

#### Wenn ich in deine Augen seh

Wenn ich in deine Augen  
seh',  
So schwindet all mein Leid  
und Weh;  
Doch wenn ich küsse deinen  
Mund,  
So werd ich ganz und gar  
gesund.

Wenn ich mich lehn' an deine  
Brust,  
Kommt's über mich wie  
Himmelslust;  
Doch wenn du sprichst: Ich  
liebe dich!  
So muss ich weinen bitterlich.

#### Ich will meine Seele tauchen

Ich will meine Seele tauchen  
In den Kelch der Lilie hinein;  
Die Lilie soll klingend hauchen  
Ein Lied von der Liebsten mein.

Das Lied soll schauern und  
beben,  
Wie der Kuss von ihrem Mund,  
Den sie mir einst gegeben  
In wunderbar süsser  
Stund'.

#### Im Rhein, im heiligen Strome

Im Rhein, im heiligen Strome,  
  
Da spiegelt sich in den  
Well'n,  
Mit seinem grossen Dome,  
Das grosse, heilige Köln.

Im Dom da steht ein  
Bildnis,  
Auf goldenem Leder gemalt;  
In meines Lebens Wildnis  
Hat's freundlich  
hineingestrahlt.

Es schweben Blumen und  
Englein  
Um unsre liebe Frau;  
Die Augen, die Lippen, die  
Wänglein,  
Die gleichen der Liebsten  
genau.

#### When I look into your eyes

When I look into your  
eyes,  
all my pain and sorrow  
vanish;  
but when I kiss your  
lips,  
then I am wholly  
healed.

When I lay my head  
against your breast,  
heavenly bliss steals over  
me;  
but when you say: I love  
you!  
I must weep bitter tears.

#### Let me bathe my soul

Let me bathe my soul  
in the lily's chalice;  
the lily shall resound  
with a song of my love.

The songs shall tremble  
and quiver  
like the kiss her lips  
once gave me  
in a sweet and wondrous  
hour.

#### In the Rhine, the holy river

In the Rhine, the holy  
river,  
there is reflected in the  
waves,  
with its great cathedral,  
great and holy Cologne.

In the cathedral hangs a  
picture,  
painted on gilded leather;  
into my life's wilderness  
it has cast its friendly  
rays.

Flowers and cherubs  
hover  
around Our beloved Lady;  
her eyes, her lips, her little  
cheeks  
are the image of my  
love's.

## Ich grolle nicht

Ich grolle nicht, und wenn  
das Herz auch bricht,  
Ewig verlornes Lieb! ich  
grolle nicht.  
Wie du auch strahlst in  
Diamantenpracht,  
Es fällt kein Strahl in deines  
Herzens Nacht.

Das weiss ich längst. Ich sah  
dich ja im Traume,  
Und sah die Nacht in deines  
Herzens Raume,  
Und sah die Schlang', die dir  
am Herzen frisst,  
Ich sah, mein Lieb, wie sehr  
du elend bist.

## Und wüssten's die Blumen, die kleinen

Und wüssten's die Blumen,  
die kleinen,  
Wie tief verwundet mein  
Herz,  
Sie würden mit mir weinen,  
Zu heilen meinen Schmerz.

Und wüssten's die Nachtigallen,  
Wie ich so traurig und krank,  
Sie liessen fröhlich  
erschallen  
Erquickenden Gesang.

Und wüssten sie mein Wehe,  
Die goldenen Sternelein,  
Sie kämen aus ihrer  
Höhe,  
Und sprächen Trost mir  
ein.

Sie alle können's nicht  
wissen,  
Nur Eine kennt meinen  
Schmerz;  
Sie hat ja selbst zerrissen,  
Zerrissen mir das Herz.

## I bear no grudge

I bear no grudge, though  
my heart is breaking,  
O love forever lost! I bear  
no grudge.  
However you gleam in  
diamond splendour,  
no ray falls in the night of  
your heart.

I've known that long. For I  
saw you in my dreams,  
and saw the night within  
your heart,  
and saw the serpent  
gnawing your heart –  
I saw, my love, how pitiful  
you are.

## If the little flowers knew

If the little flowers  
knew  
how deeply my heart is  
hurt,  
they would weep with me  
to heal my pain.

If the nightingales knew  
how sad I am and sick,  
they would joyfully make  
the air resound  
with refreshing song.

And if they knew of my grief,  
those little golden stars,  
they would come down  
from the sky  
and console me with their  
words.

But none of them can  
know,  
my pain is known to one  
alone;  
for she it was who broke,  
broke my heart in two.

## Das ist ein Flöten und Geigen

Das ist ein Flöten und  
Geigen,  
Trompeten schmettern  
darein;  
Da tanzt wohl den  
Hochzeitreigen  
Die Herzallerliebste  
mein.

Das ist ein Klingen und  
Dröhnen,  
Ein Pauken und ein  
Schalmei'n;  
Dazwischen schluchzen und  
stöhnen  
Die lieblichen  
Engelein.

## Hör' ich das Liedchen klingen

Hör' ich das Liedchen  
klingen,  
Das einst die Liebste sang,  
So will mir die Brust zerspringen  
Von wildem Schmerzdrang.

Es treibt mich ein dunkles  
Sehnen  
Hinauf zur Waldeshöh',  
Dort löst sich auf in  
Tränen  
Mein übergrosses Weh.

## Ein Jüngling Liebt ein Mädchen

Ein Jüngling liebt ein Mädchen,  
Die hat einen andern erwählt;  
Der andre liebt eine andre,  
Und hat sich mit dieser  
vermählt.

Das Mädchen nimmt aus Ärger  
Den ersten besten Mann,  
Der ihr in den Weg gelaufen;  
Der Jüngling ist übel dran.

Es ist eine alte Geschichte,  
Doch bleibt sie immer neu;  
Und wem sie just passieret,  
Dem bricht das Herz entzwei.

## What a fluting and fiddling

What a fluting and  
fiddling,  
what a blaring of  
trumpets;  
that must be my dearest  
love  
dancing at her wedding  
feast.

What a booming and  
ringing,  
what a drumming and  
piping;  
with lovely little  
angels  
sobbing and groaning  
between.

## When I hear the little song

When I hear the little  
song  
my beloved once sang,  
my heart almost bursts  
with the wild rush of pain.

A dark longing drives  
me  
up to the wooded heights,  
where my overwhelming  
grief  
dissolves into tears.

## A boy loves a girl

A boy loves a girl  
who chooses another;  
he in turn loves another  
and marries  
her.

The girl, out of pique,  
takes the very first man  
to come her way;  
the boy is badly hurt.

It's an old story,  
yet remains ever new;  
and he to whom it happens,  
it breaks his heart in half.

## Am leuchtenden Sommermorgen

Am leuchtenden  
Sommermorgen  
Geh' ich im Garten herum.  
Es flüstern und sprechen die  
Blumen,  
Ich aber wandle stumm.

Es flüstern und sprechen die  
Blumen,  
Und schau'n mitleidig mich an:  
Sei unsrer Schwester nicht  
böse,  
Du trauriger, blasser Mann.

## Ich hab im Traum geweinet

Ich hab' im Traum geweinet,  
Mir träumte, du lägest im  
Grab.  
Ich wachte auf, und die Träne  
Floss noch von der Wange  
herab.

Ich hab' im Traum geweinet,  
Mir träumt', du verliessest  
mich.  
Ich wachte auf, und ich weinte  
Noch lange bitterlich.

Ich hab' im Traum geweinet,  
Mir träumte, du wärest mir  
noch gut.  
Ich wachte auf, und noch immer  
Strömt meine Tränenflut.

## Allnächtlich im Traume

Allnächtlich im Traume seh'  
ich dich,  
Und sehe dich freundlich  
grüssen,  
Und laut aufweinend stürz'  
ich mich  
Zu deinen süssen Füssen.

Du siehest mich an  
wehmütiglich  
Und schüttelst das blonde  
Köpfchen;  
Aus deinen Augen  
schleichen sich  
Die Perletränenröpfchen.

## One bright summer morning

One bright summer  
morning  
I walk round the garden.  
The flowers whisper and  
talk,  
but I move silently.

The flowers whisper and  
talk,  
and look at me in pity:  
be not angry with our  
sister,  
you sad, pale man.

## I wept in my dream

I wept in my dream,  
I dreamt you lay in your  
grave.  
I woke, and tears  
still flowed down my  
cheeks.

I wept in my dream,  
I dreamt you were leaving  
me.

I woke, and wept on  
long and bitterly.

I wept in my dream,  
I dreamt you loved me  
still.

I woke, and still  
my tears stream.

## Nightly in my dreams

Nightly in my dreams I  
see you,  
and see your friendly  
greeting,  
and weeping loud, I hurl  
myself  
down at your sweet feet.

Wistfully you look at  
me,  
shaking your fair little  
head;  
tiny little pearl-like  
tears  
trickle from your eyes.

Du sagst mir heimlich ein  
leises Wort,  
Und gibst mir den Strauss  
von Zypressen.  
Ich wache auf, und der  
Strauss ist fort,  
Und's Wort hab' ich  
vergessen.

## Aus alten Märchen

Aus alten Märchen winkt es  
Hervor mit weisser Hand,  
Da singt es und da klingt  
es  
Von einem Zauberland;

Wo bunte Blumen  
blühen  
Im goldnen Abendlicht,  
Und lieblich duftend  
glühen,  
Mit bräutlichem Gesicht;

Und grüne Bäume singen  
Uralte Melodein,  
Die Lüfte heimlich  
klingen,  
Und Vögel schmetter'n drein;

Und Nebelbilder steigen  
Wohl aus der Erd' hervor,  
Und tanzen luft'gen Reigen  
Im wunderlichen Chor;

Und blaue Funken brennen  
An jedem Blatt und Reis,  
Und rote Lichter rennen  
Im irren, wirren Kreis;

Und laute Quellen brechen  
Aus wildem Marmorstein,  
Und seltsam in den  
Bächen  
Strahlt fort der Widerschein.

Ach, könnt ich dorthin  
kommen,  
Und dort mein Herz  
erfreu'n,  
Und aller Qual entnommen,  
Und frei und selig sein!

Ach! jenes Land der Wonne,  
Das seh' ich oft im Traum,  
Doch kommt die Morgensonne,  
Zerfliesst's wie eitel Schaum.

You whisper me a soft  
word  
and hand me a wreath of  
cypress.  
I wake up and the wreath  
is gone,  
and I cannot remember  
the word.

## A white hand beckons

A white hand beckons  
from fairy tales of old,  
where there are sounds  
and songs  
of a magic land;

Where brightly coloured  
flowers  
bloom in golden twilight,  
and glow sweet and  
fragrant  
with a bride-like face;

And green trees  
sing primeval melodies,  
mysterious breezes  
murmur,  
and birds warble;

And misty shapes rise up  
from the very ground,  
and dance airy dances  
in a strange throng;

And blue sparks blaze  
on every leaf and twig  
and red fires race  
madly round and round;

And loud springs gush  
from wild marble cliffs.  
And strangely in the  
streams  
the reflection shines on.

Ah, could I but reach that  
land,  
and there make glad my  
heart,  
and be relieved of all pain,  
and be blissful and free!

Ah, that land of delight,  
I see it often in my dreams,  
but with the morning sun  
it melts like mere foam.

## Die alten, bösen Lieder    The bad old songs

Die alten, bösen Lieder,  
Die Träume böß und arg,  
Die lasst uns jetzt begraben,  
Holt einen grossen Sarg.

The bad old songs,  
the bad and bitter dreams,  
let us now bury them,  
fetch me a large coffin.

Hinein leg' ich gar manches,  
Doch sag' ich noch nicht was;

I have much to put in it,  
though what I won't yet  
say;

Der Sarg muss sein noch  
grösser  
Wie's Heidelberger Fass.

the coffin must be even  
larger  
than the Vat at Heidelberg.

Und holt eine Totenbahre,  
Und Bretter fest und dick;  
Auch muss sie sein noch  
länger,  
Als wie zu Mainz die Brück'.

And fetch a bier  
made of firm thick timber:  
and it must be even  
longer  
than the bridge at Mainz.

Und holt mir auch zwölf  
Riesen,  
Die müssen noch stärker  
sein,  
Als wie der starke  
Christoph,  
Im Dom zu Köln am  
Rhein.

And fetch for me twelve  
giants,  
they must be even  
stronger  
than Saint Christopher  
the Strong  
in Cologne cathedral on  
the Rhine.

Die sollen den Sarg  
forttragen,  
Und senken in's Meer hinab;  
Denn solchem grossen Sarge  
Gebührt ein grosses Grab.

They shall bear the coffin  
away,  
and sink it deep into the sea;  
for such a large coffin  
deserves a large grave.

Wisst ihr, warum der Sarg  
wohl  
So gross und schwer mag  
sein?  
Ich senkt' auch meine Liebe  
Und meinen Schmerz hinein.

Do you know why the  
coffin  
must be so large and  
heavy?  
I'd like to bury there my love  
and my sorrow too.

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## Interval

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### Roger Quilter (1877-1953)

#### 7 Elizabethan Lyrics Op. 12 (1908)

##### My Life's Delight

*Thomas Campion*

Come, O come, my life's delight!  
Let me not in languor pine:  
Love loves no delay, thy sight  
The more enjoyed, the more divine.  
O come, and take from me  
The pain of being deprived of thee.

Thou all sweetness dost enclose,  
Like a little world of bliss:  
Beauty guards thy looks:  
the rose in them pure and eternal is.  
Come then! and make thy flight  
As swift to me as heavenly light!

##### Damask Roses

*Anonymous*

Lady, when I behold the roses sprouting,  
Which clad in damask mantles deck the arbours,  
And then behold your lips where sweet love harbours,  
My eyes present me with a double doubting;  
For, viewing both alike, hardly my mind supposes  
Whether the roses be your lips or your lips the roses.

##### The Faithless Shepherdess

*Anonymous*

While that the sun with his beams hot  
Scorchèd the fruits in vale and mountain,  
Philon, the shepherd, late forgot,  
Sitting beside a crystal fountain,  
In shadow of a green oak tree,  
Upon his pipe this song play'd he:  
Adieu, Love, adieu, Love, untrue Love,  
Untrue Love, untrue Love, adieu, Love!  
Your mind is light, soon lost for new love.

So long as I was in your sight  
I was your heart, your soul, your treasure;  
And evermore you sobb'd and sigh'd  
Burning in flames beyond all measure:  
-- Three days endured your love to me  
And it was lost in other three!  
Adieu, Love, adieu, Love, untrue Love,  
Untrue Love, untrue Love, adieu, Love!  
Your mind is light, soon lost for new love.

##### Brown is my love

*Anonymous*

Brown is my Love, but graceful,  
And each renownèd whiteness,  
Matched with her lovely brown, loseth its brightness.

Fair is my Love, but scornful,  
Yet have I seen despisèd  
Dainty white lilies, and sad flowers well prizèd.

## Weep you no more

*Anonymous*

Weep you no more, sad fountains;  
What need you flow so fast?  
Look how the snowy mountains  
Heaven's sun doth gently waste!  
But my sun's heavenly eyes  
View not your weeping,  
That now lies sleeping,  
Softly now, softly lies  
Sleeping.

Sleep is a reconciling,  
A rest that peace begets;  
Doth not the sun rise smiling  
When fair at even he sets?  
Rest you, then, rest, sad eyes!  
Melt not in weeping,  
While she lies sleeping,  
Softly now, softly lies  
Sleeping.

## By a Fountainside

*Ben Jonson*

Slow, slow, fresh fount, keep time with my salt tears:  
Yet slower, yet; O faintly, gentle springs:  
List to the heavy part the music bears,  
Woe weeps out her division when she sings.  
Droop herbs and flowers,  
Fall grief in showers,  
Our beauties are not ours;  
Or I could still  
Like melting snow upon some craggy hill,  
Drop, drop, drop, drop,  
Since nature's pride is, now, a withered daffodil.

## Fair House of Joy

*Anonymous*

Fain would I change that note  
To which fond Love hath charm'd me  
Long, long to sing by rote,  
Fancying that that harm'd me:

Yet when this thought doth come  
'Love is the perfect sum  
Of all delight!'  
I have no other choice  
Either for pen or voice  
To sing or write.

O Love! they wrong thee much  
That say thy sweet is bitter,  
When thy rich fruit is such  
As nothing can be sweeter.

Fair house of joy and bliss,  
Where truest pleasure is,  
I do adore thee:  
I know thee what thou art,  
I serve thee with my heart,  
And fall before thee.

## Clara Schumann (1819-1896)

Liebst du um  
Schönheit Op. 12 No. 2  
(1841)

*Friedrich Rückert*

Liebst du um Schönheit,  
O nicht mich liebe!  
Liebe die Sonne,  
Sie trägt ein goldnes Haar.  
Liebst du um Jugend,  
O nicht mich liebe!  
Liebe den Frühling,  
Der jung ist jedes Jahr.

Liebst du um Schätze,  
O nicht mich liebe!  
Liebe die Meerfrau,  
Sie hat viel Perlen  
klar.  
Liebst du um Liebe,  
O ja mich liebe!  
Liebe mich immer,  
Dich lieb' ich immerdar.

If you love for  
beauty

If you love for beauty,  
O love not me!  
Love the sun,  
she has golden hair.  
If you love for youth,  
O love not me!  
Love the spring  
which is young each year.

If you love for riches,  
O love not me!  
Love the mermaid  
who has many shining  
pearls.  
If you love for love,  
ah yes, love me!  
Love me always,  
I shall love you ever more.

## Fanny Mendelssohn (1805-1847)

### Nähe des Geliebten II (1826)

Johann Wolfgang von  
Goethe

### Nearness of the Beloved

Ich denke dein, wenn mir der Sonne Schimmer Vom Meere strahlt; Ich denke dein, wenn sich des Mondes Flimmer In Quellen mahlt.	I think of you when sunlight glints from the sea; I think of you when the moon's glimmer is reflected in streams.
Ich sehe dich, wenn auf dem fernen Wege Der Staub sich hebt; In tiefer Nacht, wenn auf dem schmalen Stege Der Wanderer bebt.	I see you when, on distant roads, dust rises; in the depths of night, when on the narrow bridge the traveller trembles.
Ich höre dich, wenn dort mit dumpfem Rauschen Die Welle steigt. Im stillen Haine geh' ich oft zu lauschen, Wenn alles schweigt.	I hear you when, with a dull roar, the waves surge up. I often go to listen in the tranquil grove when all is silent.
Ich bin bei dir, du seyst auch noch so ferne, Du bist mir nah! Die Sonne sinkt, bald leuchten mir die Sterne. O wärst du da!	I am with you, however far away you are. You are close to me! The sun sets, soon the stars will shine for me. Would that you were here!

## Josephine Lang (1815-1880)

### Abschied Op. 10 No. 6 (1837)

Ernst Schulze

### Farewell

Ich liebte dich, und ach, ich muss entsagen! Nicht zürn' ich dir, ich zürne dem Geschick. Wirst du mich je um meiner Tränen fragen, So gieb nur selbst die Antwort dir zurück!	I loved you, and ah, I must renounce! I do not blame you, I blame my fate. Should you ever ask why I am weeping, you yourself must make reply.
Ich liebte dich, ich will es nicht verhehlen, War auch nur Schmerz der langen Sehnsucht Ziel; Ist Liebe nicht ein Anteil schöner Seelen, Und lohnet nicht Gefühl sich durch Gefühl?	I loved you, I shall not conceal it, pain was the goal of all our longing; is love not the portion of beautiful souls, and is not feeling rewarded by feeling?

Ich liebe dich, und kann dich  
nicht vergessen;  
Doch schweigen will ich mit  
verhalmtem Schmerz,  
Will allen Gram in eine Träne  
pressen,  
In einen Seufzer mein  
zerdrücktes Herz.

I love you and cannot  
forget you;  
but I'll be silent and  
suppress my pain,  
I'll compress all my grief  
into a single tear,  
and my crushed heart  
into a sigh.

## Robert Schumann (1810-1856)

### Er, der Herrlichste von allen from *Frauenliebe und -leben* Op. 42 (1840)

Adelbert von Chamisso

### He, the most wonderful of all

Er, der Herrlichste von allen, Wie so milde, wie so gut! Holde Lippen, klares Auge, Heller Sinn und fester Mut.	He, the most wonderful of all, how gentle and loving he is! Sweet lips, bright eyes, a clear mind and firm resolve.
So wie dort in blauer Tiefe, Hell und herrlich, jener Stern, Also er an meinem Himmel, Hell und herrlich, hehr und fern.	Just as there in the deep- blue distance that star gleams bright and brilliant, so does he shine in my sky, bright and brilliant, distant and sublime.
Wandle, wandle deine Bahnen; Nur betrachten deinen Schein, Nur in Demut ihn betrachten, Selig nur und traurig sein!	Wander, wander on your way; just to gaze on your radiance, just to gaze on in humility, to be but blissful and sad!
Höre nicht mein stilles Beten, Deinem Glücke nur geweiht; Darfst mich niedre Magd nicht kennen, Hoher Stern der Herrlichkeit!	Do not heed my silent prayer, uttered for your happiness alone; you shall never know my lowly self, you noble star of splendour!
Nur die Würdigste von allen Darf beglücken deine Wahl, Und ich will die Hohe segnen, Viele tausendmal.	Only the worthiest woman of all may your choice bless, and I shall bless that exalted one many thousands of times.
Will mich freuen dann und weinen, Selig, selig bin ich dann; Sollte mir das Herz auch brechen, Brich, o Herz, was liegt daran?	I shall then rejoice and weep, blissful, blissful I shall be; even if my heart should break, break, O heart, what does it matter?



**Caroline Shaw** (b.1982)

### **How do I find you** (2020)

*Caroline Shaw*

How do I find you?  
When do I blind you?  
Do I remind you,  
Bind or confine you,  
Shine and confide  
In your counter side,  
Co-sign your anxiety and  
Comfort you silently.

While tenderly pretending  
That nothing is ending,  
We fend off the sendoff,  
Suspending the mending.

Tending a garden is always a labor.  
The weeds and the wilds of human behavior  
Fill up the earth with a bittersweet synonym  
For what we contain in a world that is brimming  
With light that is dimming but fighting to hum  
Its hymn to tomorrow and what is to come.

Tending a garden is mending a love  
For the weeds and the wilds climbing above  
The earth and its history.  
Will tomorrow forget that it once was a mystery?

How do I  
How

How you remind me  
To realign the elastic  
Shine from a light that confides  
In a garden that hums—  
With all that may come.

**Sally Beamish** (b.1956)

### **Nightingale from 4 Songs from Hafez** (2007)

*Hafez, trans. Jila Peacock*

Roaming the dawn garden  
I heard the call of a nightingale

Forlorn like me he loved the rose  
And in that cry surged all his warbling grief

I drifted in that garden's timeless moment  
Balancing the plight of rose and bird

For endless roses flower each day  
Yet no man plucks a single bloom  
Without the risk of thorn

O Hafez, seek no gain from the orbit of this wheel  
It has a thousand failings and no concern for you

**Cheryl Frances-Hoad** (b.1980)

### **The Pros and The Cons from *One Life Stand*** (2011)

*Sophie Hannah*

He'll be pleased if I phone to ask him how he is.  
It will make me look considerate and he likes considerate  
people.

He'll be reassured to see that I haven't lost interest,  
Which might make him happy and then I'll have done him a  
favour.

If I phone him right now I'll get to speak to him sooner  
Than I will if I sit around waiting for him to phone me.

He might not want to phone me from work in case  
someone hears him  
And begins (or continues) to suspect there's something  
between us.

If I want to and don't, aren't I being a bit immature?  
We're both adults. Does it matter, with adults, who makes  
the first move?

But there's always the chance he'll back off if I come on too  
strong.  
The less keen I appear, the more keen he's likely to be,

And I phoned him twice on Thursday and once on Friday.  
He must therefore be fully aware that it's his turn, not mine.

If I make it too easy for him he'll assume I'm too easy,  
While if I make no effort, that leaves him with more of a  
challenge.

I should demonstrate that I have a sense of proportion.  
His work must come first for a while and I shouldn't mind  
waiting.

For all I know he could have gone off me already  
And if I don't phone I can always say, later, that I went off  
him first.

## Gerald Finzi (1901-1956)

### I said to love from *I said to love Op. 19b* (1956)

Thomas Hardy

I said to Love,  
'It is not now as in old days  
When men adored thee and thy ways  
All else above;  
Named thee the Boy, the Bright, the One  
Who spread a heaven beneath the sun,'  
I said to Love.

I said to him,  
'We now know more of thee than then;  
We were but weak in judgement when,  
With hearts abrim,  
We clamoured thee that thou would'st please  
Inflict on us thine agonies,'  
I said to him.

I said to Love,  
'Thou art not young, thou art not fair,  
No elfin darts, no cherub air,  
Nor swan, nor dove  
Are thine; but features pitiless,  
And iron daggers of distress,'  
I said to Love.

'Depart then, Love! ...  
Man's race shall perish, threatenest thou,  
Without thy kindling coupling-vow?  
The age to come the man of now  
Know nothing of?—  
We fear not such a threat from thee;  
We are too old in apathy!  
Mankind shall cease.—So let it be,'  
I said to Love.

## Benjamin Britten (1913-1976)

### Tell me the Truth about Love from *Cabaret songs* (1937-9)

WH Auden

Some say that love's a little boy, and some say it's a bird.  
Some say it makes the world go round, and some say that's  
absurd.  
But when I asked the man next door, who looked as if he  
knew,  
his wife was very cross indeed, and said it wouldn't do.

Does it look like a pair of pyjamas, or the ham in a  
temperance hotel?  
O tell me the truth about love!  
Does its odour remind one of llamas, or has it a comforting  
smell?  
O tell me the truth about love!

Is it prickly to touch as a hedge is, or soft as eiderdown  
fluff?

Is it sharp or quite smooth at the edges?

O tell me the truth about love!

I looked inside the summer-house, it wasn't ever there,  
I've tried the Thames at Maidenhead and Brighton's  
bracing air;  
I don't know what the blackbird sang or what the roses  
said,  
But it wasn't in the chicken-run or underneath the bed.

Can it pull extraordinary faces, is it usually sick on a swing?

O tell me the truth about love!

Does it spend all its time at the races, or fiddling with  
pieces of string?

O tell me the truth about love!

Has it views of its own about money, does it think  
Patriotism enough?

Are its stories vulgar but funny?

O tell me the truth about love!

Your feelings when you meet it I'm told you can't forget.  
I've sought it since I was a child, but haven't found it yet.  
I'm getting on for thirty-five, but still I do not know  
what kind of creature it can be that bothers people so.

When it comes, will it come without warning just as I'm  
picking my nose?

O tell me the truth about love!

Will it knock on my door in the morning, or tread in the bus  
on my toes?

O tell me the truth about love!

Will it come like a change in the weather? Will its greeting  
be courteous or bluff?

Will it alter my life altogether?

O tell me the truth about love!

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