

WIGMORE HALL

Sunday 9 June 2024
3.00pm

Cyrille Dubois tenor
Tristan Raës piano

Henri Duparc (1848-1933)

L'invitation au voyage (1870)
Extase (1874)
Phidylé (1882)
Soupir (1869)

Benjamin Britten (1913-1976)

Seven Sonnets of Michelangelo Op. 22 (1940)
*Sonnetto XVI • Sonnetto XXXI • Sonnetto XXX • Sonnetto LV •
Sonnetto XXXVIII • Sonnetto XXXII • Sonnetto XXIV*

Francis Poulenc (1899-1963)

Air grave from *Airs chantés* (1927-8)
La belle jeunesse from *Chansons gaillardes* (1926)
Bleuet (1939)
C from *2 poèmes de Louis Aragon* (1943)
Couplets bachiques from *Chansons gaillardes*

Franz Liszt (1811-1886)

3 sonetti di Petrarca S270/1 (1842-6)
*Pace non trovo (Sonnet No. 104) • Benedetto sia'l giorno
(Sonnet No. 47) • I' vidi in terra angelici costumi (Sonnet
No. 123)*



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Duparc lived to the age of 85, yet his surviving works number fewer than 40, mostly songs. (In his late 30s he suffered from debilitating mental illness, and in his 50s became blind. He destroyed much of his music.) As a result, there is a jewel-like rarity to his compositions. He was broadly contemporary with Fauré, but his songs are strikingly different: somehow both grander and more intimate than Fauré's melodies, touched with 'Wagnérisme', yet in thrall to the voluptuous French poetry of Baudelaire and Lahor.

In 'L'invitation au voyage' a shimmering piano motif evokes evocativeness itself, as the poet/singer invites 'mon enfant, ma sœur' to join him. Other than the still, monotone refrain of 'luxe, calme et volupté' the singer can luxuriate in both the sumptuous imagery and the increasingly soaring vocal lines. The piano takes on much of the 'ecstasy' in 'Extase'. Opening with a chromatic, climbing introduction, the voice joins in only briefly, as if giving voice to the sentiments the piano is already expressing. Exhausted after only a verse and a half, the voice leaves the piano to complete the thought. 'Phidylé' opens with a Fauré-like serenity but – following a beautifully-controlled build for both piano and voice – ends in truly epic, Wagnerian style. In the melancholy 'Soupir' the piano sighs a falling figure nearly throughout, shifting from minor to major. The voice, similarly yearning, eventually lands on a serene A major at 'toujours': the consolation of eternal love, even if thwarted.

Britten's *Seven Sonnets of Michelangelo* is a masterclass in both overt passion and its own concealment. The poetry was written by Michelangelo to his lover, and composed in 1940 by Britten for his own lover more than 25 years before homosexuality was partially decriminalised. As he had with his French settings *Les Illuminations* the previous year, Britten lets his hair down, somewhat, in the safety of less well-known language, and premièred the *Sonnets* with Peter Pears at Wigmore Hall in September 1942.

The *Sonnets* may be love songs, but they have fire at their centre. The keys are mostly on the sharp side (the first starts in a brisk A major), giving the work as a whole a sparkling energy. The cycle embraces a full, lived experience: philosophical musings on the nature of love and art, followed by the agonies of love, leading to one of Britten's most exquisite musical utterances, 'Sonnetto XXX', with its serene arpeggios in voice and piano conjuring up wave after wave of ecstatic tenderness. The most turbulent song is the penultimate, in a crashing C sharp minor, resolving – finally – onto a blissful D major in the finale, as if we have been waiting for it all along. The piano is in majestic form here, ceremonial octaves rising through the registers. It is very like, in style and content, the opening of Ravel's 'Le paon' (featuring

the absurd peacock who is perpetually jilted by his 'fiancée'), but given a sincere Romanticism here, especially when the voice joins with the piano in a series of melting chords.

Poulenc's great collaborator Pierre Bernac wrote that Poulenc 'only felt musically at ease with poets whom he knew personally', and indeed most of the verse he sets is by friends or near-contemporaries (Éluard, Aragon and Apollinaire, among others). So it comes as something of a surprise that in *Airs chantés* he set the words of Jean Moréas (the pseudonym of Greek poet Ioannis Papadiamantopoulos) for whom he had little love or respect – a curious act of sarcasm rather than a meeting of artistic minds. 'Air grave' takes the 'grave' sentiment to heart in its solemn, declamatory nature; Poulenc is clearly poking fun at the histrionics of the poem.

More fun was had with the *Chansons gaillardes*, which boisterously celebrate the joys of drinking and adultery. The two here are fiendishly difficult for both singer and pianist: they need to be somehow insouciant, as well as ribald, while navigating tongue-twisting text and virtuosic capering on the keyboard. In between these romps from Poulenc's 20s is the considerably more serious 'C', one of his most celebrated songs, composed in the middle of World War II. This solemn, sensitive setting of Louis Aragon's text is both an elegy for the France of the past (with its dukes, moats and castles) and a tragic depiction of its wartime devastation, peaking at 'O ma France ô ma délaissée' ('O my France, O my forsaken one').

The 3 *sonetti di Petrarca* by **Liszt** are surprising on many counts. Liszt's songs (which number around 70) are relatively seldom heard on the concert platform. Less surprisingly, perhaps, Liszt later transcribed them for piano. But even in the song versions the piano has a great deal to do, beginning with a dramatic introduction then providing a lengthy, lyrical interlude in the first song, not unlike Liszt's famous *Liebestraum No. 3*. Liszt composed the songs after travelling in Italy with Marie, Countess d'Agoult in 1838-9, during which travels they read Petrarch's poetry together. The verses – inspired by Petrarch seeing a beautiful woman called Laura in a church – range from ardent, to blissful, to reverential. The first song is operatic in its scope, with an optional high D flat (if the tenor so chooses), as the poet realises how Laura has disturbed his peace. The second is in more regular strophes, the poet counting his many blessings, yet still retains the quality of an extended aria. The final song is more serene, a hymn to Laura's 'angelic' beauty, with exquisite vocal lines and including a high, suitably celestial-sounding interlude for the piano.

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Henri Duparc (1848-1933)

L'invitation au voyage Invitation to journey

(1870)

Charles Baudelaire

Mon enfant, ma sœur,
Songe à la douceur
D'aller là-bas vivre ensemble!
to journey there and live together!

Aimer à loisir,
Aimer et mourir
Au pays qui te ressemble!
in the land that is like you!
Les soleils mouillés
The watery suns
De ces ciels brouillés
of those hazy skies
Pour mon esprit ont les
hold for my spirit
charmes
the same mysterious charms
Si
mystérieux
as your treacherous eyes
De tes traîtres yeux,
shining through their
Brillant à travers leurs
tears.
larmes.

Là, tout n'est qu'ordre et
There – nothing but order
beauté,
and beauty dwell,
Luxe, calme et
abundance, calm and
volupté.
sensuous delight.

Vois sur ces canaux
See on those canals
Dormir ces vaisseaux
those vessels sleeping,
Dont l'humeur est
vessels with a restless
vagabonde;
soul;
C'est pour assouvir
to satisfy
Ton moindre désir
your slightest desire
Qu'ils viennent du
they come from the ends
bout du monde.
of the earth.
– Les soleils couchants
The setting suns
Revêtent les champs,
clothe the fields,
Les canaux, la ville entière,
canals and all the town
D'hyacinthe et d'or;
with hyacinth and gold;
Le monde s'endort
the world falls asleep
Dans une chaude lumière.
in a warm light.

Là, tout n'est qu'ordre et
There – nothing but order
beauté,
and beauty dwell,
Luxe, calme et
abundance, calm and
volupté.
sensuous delight.

Extase (1874)

Jean Lahor

Sur un lys pâle mon
On a pale lily my heart is
cœur dort
sleeping
D'un sommeil doux comme
a sleep as sweet as death:
la mort:
exquisite death, death
Mort exquise, mort parfumée
perfumed
Du souffle de la
by the breath of the
bien-aimée:
beloved:

Sur ton sein pâle mon cœur
on your pale breast my
dort ...
heart is sleeping ...

Phidylé (1882)

Charles-Marie-René Leconte de Lisle

L'herbe est molle au sommeil
The grass is soft for sleep
sous les frais peupliers,
beneath the cool
poplars

Aux pentes des sources
on the banks of the
moussues
mossy springs
Qui, dans les prés en fleur
that flow in flowering
germant par
meadows from a
mille issues,
thousand sources,
Se perdent sous les noirs
and vanish beneath dark
halliers.
thickets.

Repose, ô Phidylé! Midi sur
Rest, O Phidylé! Noon on
les feuillages
the leaves
Rayonne, et t'invite au
is gleaming, inviting you
sommeil.
to sleep.
Par le trèfle et le thym,
By the clover and thyme,
seules, en
alone, in the bright
plein soleil,
sunlight,
Chantent les abeilles
the fickle bees are
volages.
humming.

Un chaud parfum
A warm fragrance
circule au détour
floats about the
des sentiers;
winding paths,
La rouge fleur des
the red flowers of the
blés s'incline;
cornfield droop;
Et les oiseaux, rasant
and the birds, skimming
de l'aile la
the hillside with their
colline,
wings,
Cherchent l'ombre des
seek the shade of the
églantiers.
eglantine.

Mais quand l'Astre, incliné
But when the sun, low on
sur sa courbe éclatante,
its dazzling curve,
Verra ses ardeurs s'apaiser,
sees its brilliance wane,
Que ton plus beau sourire et
let your loveliest smile
ton meilleur baiser
and finest kiss
Me récompensent de
reward me for my waiting!
l'attente!

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

Soupir (1869)

Sully Prudhomme

Ne jamais la voir ni
l'entendre,
Ne jamais tout haut la
nommer,
Mais, fidèle, toujours
l'attendre,
Toujours l'aimer.

Sigh

Never to see or
hear her,
never to utter her name
aloud,
but faithful, always to wait
for her,
always to love her.

Ouvrir les bras et, las
d'attendre,
Sur le néant les
refermer,
Mais encor toujours les lui
tendre,
Toujours l'aimer.

To open my arms and,
weary of waiting,
to close them again on a
void,
yet always to hold them
out again,
always to love her.

Ah! ne pouvoir que les lui
tendre,
Et dans les pleurs se
consumer,
Mais ces pleurs toujours les
répandre,
Toujours l'aimer.

Ah, able only to hold
them out
and to waste away in
tears,
yet always to shed those
tears,
always to love her.

Ne jamais la voir ni
l'entendre,
Ne jamais tout haut la
nommer,
Mais d'un amour toujours
plus tendre
Toujours l'aimer.

Never to see or
hear her,
never to utter her name
aloud,
but with a love always
more tender
always to love her.

Benjamin Britten (1913-1976)

Seven Sonnets of Michelangelo Op. 22

(1940)

Michelangelo

Sonetto XVI

Si come nella penna e nell'
inchiostro
E l'alto e'l basso e'l
mediocre stile,
E ne'marmi l'imagin
riccae vile,
Secondo che'l sa
trar l'ingegno
nostro;
Così, signior mie car, nel
petto vostro
Quante l'orgoglio, è forse
ogni atto umile:

Just as there is a high, a
low, and a middle
style in pen and ink, and
as within
the marble are images
rich and poor,
according as our fancy
knows how to draw
them forth;
so within your heart, dear
love, there are
perhaps, as well as pride,
some humble feelings:

Maio sol quel c'a me
propio è simile
Ne traggo, come fuor nel
viso mostro.
Chi semina sospir, lacrime
e doglie
L'umor dal ciel terrestre,
scietto e solo,
A' vari semi vario si
converte,
Però pianto e dolor ne miete
e coglie:
Chi mira altà beltà con sì
gran duolo,
Dubbie speranze, e pene
acerbe e certe.
Signior mie car.

but I draw thence only
what is my desert
and like to what I show
outside on my face.
Whoever sows sighs,
tears, and lamentations
(Heaven's moisture on
earth, simple and pure,
adapts itself differently to
different seeds)
reaps and gathers grief
and sadness:
whoever looks on
high beauty
with so great a grief reaps
doubtful hopes
and sure and bitter pain.

Sonetto XXXI

A che più debb' i'o mai
l'intensa voglia
Sfogar con pianti o con
parole meste,
Se di tal sorte 'l ciel, che
l'alma veste,
Tard'o per tempo alcun mai
non ne spoglia?
A che 'l cor lass'a piu morir
m'invoglia,
S'altri pur dee morir? Dunche
per queste
Luci l'ore del fin fian men
moleste;
Ch' ogn' altro ben val men ch'
ogni mia doglia.
Però se 'l colpo ch'io ne rub'
e 'nvolò,
Schifar non poss'; almen, s' è
destinato,
Chi entreran fra
la dolcezza e
'l duolo?
Se vint' e pres' i'
debb'esser
beato,
Maraviglia non è se,
nud'e solo
Resto prigion d'un
cavalier armato.

Why must I go on venting
my ardent desire
in tears and melancholy
words,
if Heaven that dresses
the soul in grief,
never, soon or late,
allows relief.
Why should my weary
heart long for death
since all must die? So to
these eyes
my last hours will be less
painful,
all my grief being greater
than any joy.
If, therefore, I cannot
avoid these blows,
nay, even seek them,
since it is my fate,
who is the one that
stands always between
joy and grief?
If to be happy I must be
conquered and held
captive,
no wonder then that I,
unarmed and alone,
remain the prisoner of a
Cavalier in arms.

Sonetto XXX

Veggio co' bei vostri occhi
un dolce lume,
Che co' miei ciechi già veder
non posso.

With your lovely eyes I
see a sweet light
that yet with my blind
ones I cannot see;

Porto co' vostri piedi un pondo addosso,	with your feet I carry a weight on my back
Che de' mie zoppi non è già costume.	which with my lame ones I cannot;
Volo con le vostr'ale senza piume,	with your wings I, wingless, fly;
Col vostr'ingegno al ciel sempre son mosso;	with your spirit I move forever heavenward;
Dal vostr'arbitrio son pallido e rosso,	at your wish I blush or turn pale,
Freddo al sol, caldo alle più fredde brume.	cold in the sunshine, or hot in the coldest midwinter.
Nel voler vostro è sol la voglia mia,	My will is in your will alone,
I miei pensier nel vostro cor si fanno,	my thoughts are born in your heart,
Nel vostro fiato son le mie parole.	my words are on your breath.
Come luna da sè sol par ch'io sia;	Alone, I am like the moon in the sky
Che gli occhi nostri in ciel veder non sanno,	which our eyes cannot see
Se non quel tanto che n'accende il sole.	save that part which the sun illumines.

Sonetto LV

Tu sa' ch'io so, signor mie, che tu sai,	Thou know'st, beloved, that I know thou know'st
Ch'i' vengo per goderti più da presso,	that I am come nearer to enjoy thee more;
E sai ch'i' so, che tu sa', ch'i' son desso:	and thou know'st that I know thou know'st that I am still the same.
A che piu indugio a salutarci omai?	Why, then, do I hesitate to greet thee?
Se vera è la speranza che mi dai,	If the hope thou givest me is true,
Se vero è 'l gran desio che m'è concesso	if true the strong desire that is granted me,
Rompasi il mur fra l'uno e l'altro messo,	the wall between us crumbles,
Chè doppia forza hann'i celati guai.	for secret griefs have double force.
S'i' amo sol di te, Signor mio caro,	If I love in thee, beloved, only what
Quel che di te più ami, non ti sdegni,	thou lovest most, do not be angry;
Che l'un dell'altro spirto s'innamora.	for so one spirit is enamoured of another.
Quel che nel tuo bel volto bramo e'imparo,	That which in thy lovely face I yearn for and seek to grasp,
E mal compres'è degli umani ingegni,	is but ill understood by human kind,
Chi 'l vuol veder convien che prima mora.	and he that would see it, first must die.

Sonetto XXXVIII

Rendete a gli occhi miei, o fonte o fiume,	Give back to my eyes, you fountains and rivers,
L'onde della non vostra e salda vena,	the waves of those strong currents that are
Che più v'innalza e cresce, e con più lena	not yours, which make you swell and grow
Che non è 'l vostro natural costume.	with greater power than is your natural way.
E tu, folt'air, che 'l celeste lume	And thou, heavy air, that dims the heavenly
Tempri a' trist'occhi, de' sospir mie' piena,	light to my sad eyes, so full of sighs art thou,
Rendigli al cor mio lasso, e rasserena	give them back to my weary heart and
Tua scura faccia al mio visivo acume.	lighten thy dark face to my eye's keen sight.
Renda la terra i passi alle mie piante,	Earth, give me back my footsteps that the
C'ancor l'erba germogli, che gli è tolta,	grass may sprout again where it was trod;
E 'l suono eco, già sorda a' mie' lamenti;	and Echo, yet deaf to my laments, give back thy sound;
Gli sguardi a gli occhi mie', tue luci sante;	and you blest pupils give back to my eyes their glances;
Ch'i' possa altra bellezza un'altra volta	that I another time may love another beauty,
Amar, po' che di me non ti contenti.	since with me you are not satisfied.

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

Sonetto XXXII

S'un casto amor, s'una pietà
superna,
S'una fortuna infra dua
amanti equale,
S'un'aspra sorte all'un
dell'altro cale,
S'un spirto, s'un voler duo
cor governa;
S'un'anima in due corpi è
fatta eterna,
Ambo levando al cielo
e con pari ale.
S'a Amor d'un colpo e d'un
dorato strale
Le viscer di due petti arda e
discerna;
S'amar l'un l'altro e nessun se
medesimo
D'un gusto e
d'un diletto, a tal
mercede,
C'a un fin voglia l'uno
e l'altro porre:
Se mille e
mille non sarien
centesimo
A tal nodo d'amore,
a tanta fede;
E sol l'isdegno il può
rompere e sciorre.

If love be chaste, if pity
heavenly,
if fortune equal between
two lovers;
if a bitter fate is shared by
both;
and if one spirit, one will
rules two hearts;
if in two bodies one soul
is made eternal,
raising both to heaven on
the same wings;
if at one stroke and with a
gilded arrow
love burns and pierces
two hearts to the core;
if in loving one another,
forgetting one's self,
with one pleasure and
one delight there is
such reward
that both wills strive for
the same end;
if thousands and
thousands do not make
one hundredth part
to such a bond of love, to
such constancy,
can, then, mere anger
break and dissolve it?

Sonetto XXIV

Spirto ben nato, in cui si
specchia e vede
Nelle tue belle membra
oneste e care
Quanto natura e 'l ciel
tra no' puo fare,
Quand'a null'altra sua
bell'opra cede:
Spirto leggiadro,
in cu' si spera e
crede
Dentro, come di fuor nel
viso appare,
Amor, pietà, mercè, c
ose si rare,
Che ma' furn' in beltà con
tanta fede;
L'amor mi prende, e la beltà
mi lega;
La pietà, la mercè con dolci
sguardi
Ferma speranz'al cor par che
ne doni.

Noble soul, in whose
chaste and dear limbs
are reflected all that
nature and heaven
can achieve with
us,
the paragon of
their works:
graceful soul, within
whom one hopes and
believes
Love, Pity and Mercy are
dwelling,
as they appear in your
face; things so rare
and never found in
beauty so truly:
Love takes me captive,
and Beauty binds me;
Pity and Mercy with
sweet glances
fill my heart with a strong
hope.

Qual uso o qual governo al
mondo nega,
Qual crudeltà per tempo o
qual più tardi,
C'a si bel viso
morte non
perdoni?

What law or earthly
government,
what cruelty now or to
come,
could forbid Death to
spare such a lovely
face?

Francis Poulenc (1899-1963)

Air grave from *Airs chantés* (1927-8)

Jean Moréas

Ah! fuyez à présent,
Malheureuses pensées!
O! colère, ô remords!
Souvenirs qui
m'avez
Les deux tempes pressées,
De l'etreinte des
morts.

Sentiers de mousse pleins,
Vaporeuses fontaines,
Grottes profondes, voix
Des oiseaux et du vent
Lumières incertaines
Des sauvages sous-bois.

Insectes, animaux,
Beauté future,
Ne me repousse pas
O divine nature,
Je suis ton suppliant

Ah! fuyez à présent,
Colère, remords!

La belle jeunesse from *Chansons gaillardes*

(1926)

Anonymous

Il faut s'aimer toujours
Et ne s'épouser guère.
Il faut faire l'amour
Sans curé ni notaire.

Cessez, messieurs, d'être
épouseurs,
Ne visez qu'aux tirelires,
Ne visez qu'aux
tourelours,

Grave Air

Ah! begone now,
unhappy thoughts!
O anger! O remorse!
Memories that oppressed
my two temples
with the embrace of the
dead.

Paths full of moss,
vaporous fountains,
deep grottoes, voices
of birds and wind,
fitful lights
of the wild undergrowth.

Insects, animals,
beauty to come –
do not repulse me,
O divine nature,
I am your suppliant.

Ah! begone now,
anger, remorse!

Gilded youth

You should love always
and seldom marry.
You should make love
without priest or notary.

Cease, good Sirs, to be
marrying men,
only aim at the tirelires,
only aim at the
tourelours,

Cessez, messieurs, d'être épouseurs, Ne visez qu'aux cœurs. Cessez, messieurs, d'être épouseurs, Holà, messieurs, ne visez plus qu'aux cœurs.	cease, good Sirs, to be marrying men, only aim at the hearts. Cease, good Sirs, to be marrying men, enough, good Sirs, only aim at the hearts.
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Pourquoi se marier, Quand les femmes des autres Ne se font pas prier Pour devenir les nôtres. Quand leurs ardeurs, Quand leurs faveurs, Cherchent nos tirelires, Cherchent nos tourelours, Cherchent nos cœurs.	Why marry, when the wives of others need no persuasion to become ours. When their ardours, when their favours, seek our tirelires, seek our tourelours, seek our hearts.
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Bleuet (1939)

Guillaume Apollinaire

Jeune homme De vingt ans Qui as vu des choses si affreuses Que penses-tu des hommes de ton enfance	Young man of twenty you who have seen such terrible things what do you think of the men from your childhood
Tu connais la bravoure et la ruse	You know what bravery is and cunning
Tu as vu la mort en face plus de cent fois	You have faced death more than a hundred times
Tu ne sais pas ce que c'est que la vie	you do not know what life is
Transmets ton intrépidité A ceux qui viendront Après toi	Hand down your fearlessness to those who shall come after you
Jeune homme Tu es joyeux ta mémoire est ensanglantée Ton âme est rouge aussi De joie	Young man you are joyous your memory is steeped in blood your soul is red also with joy
Tu as absorbé la vie de ceux qui sont morts près de toi	you have absorbed the life of those who died beside you
Tu as de la décision Il est 17 heures et tu saurais Mourir Sinon mieux que tes aînés	You are resolute it is 1700 hrs and you would know how to die if not better than your elders

Rookie

Du moins plus pieusement Car tu connais mieux la mort que la vie O douceur d'autrefois Lenteur immémoriale	at least with greater piety for you are better acquainted with death than life O sweetness of bygone days slow-moving beyond all memory
---	--

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C from 2 poèmes de *Louis Aragon* (1943) *Louis Aragon*

J'ai traversé les ponts de Cé C'est là que tout a commencé	I have crossed the bridges of Cé it is there that everything began
	a song of bygone days tells of a knight who injured lay
	of a rose upon the carriage-way and a bodice with an unlaced stay
	and the castle of an insane duke and swans in castle moats
	and of the meadow where an eternal fiancée comes to dance
	and I have drunk the long lay of false glories like icy milk
	the Loire bears my thoughts away with the overturned jeeps
	and the unprimed arms and the ill-dried tears
	O my France, O my forsaken one I have crossed the bridges of Cé

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

**Couplets bachiques
from Chansons
gaillardes**
Anonymous

Bacchic verses

Je suis tant que dure le jour Et grave et badin tour à tour. Quand je vois un flacon sans vin, Je suis grave, je suis grave, Est-il tout plein, je suis badin.	Throughout the livelong day I'm sad and merry in turn. When I see a flagon without wine I'm sad, I'm sad, when it's brimful I'm merry.
Je suis tant que dure le jour Et grave et badin tour à tour.	Throughout the livelong day I'm sad and merry in turn.
Quand ma femme me tient au lit, Je suis sage, je suis sage, Quand ma femme me tient au lit Je suis sage toute la nuit.	When I'm in bed with my wife, I behave, I behave, when I'm in bed with my wife, I behave all night long.
Si catin au lit me tient Alors je suis badin Ah! belle hôtesse, versez- moi du vin, Je suis badin, badin, badin.	If I'm in bed with a prostitute, then I'm merry. Ah! fair hostess, pour me some wine, I'm merry, merry, merry.

Franz Liszt (1811-1886)

3 sonetti di Petrarca S270/1 (1842-6)

Petrarch

Pace non trovo (Sonnet No. 104) I find no peace

Pace non trovo, e non ho da far guerra, E temo, e spero, ed ardo, e son un ghiaccio: E volo sopra 'l cielo, e giaccio in terra; E nulla stringo, tutto 'l mondo abbraccio.	I find no peace, and am not inclined for war; and I fear, and I hope, and burn, and am turned to ice, and I soar in the air, and lie upon the ground; and I hold nothing, though I embrace the world.
Tal m'ha in prigion, che non m'apre, né serra, Né per suo mi ritien, né scioglie il laccio,	Love has me in a prison, which he neither opens nor locks; he neither claims me for his own, nor loosens my halter;

E non m'accide Amor, e non
mi sferra;
Né mi vuol vivo,
né mi trahe
d'impaccio.

and Love neither slays
me, nor unshackles me;
he would not have me
live, yet he torments
me.

Veggio senz'occhi; e non ho
lingua e grido;
E bramo di perir, e
cheggio aita;
Ed ho in odio me stesso, ed
amo altrui:

I see without eyes; and
cry without a tongue;
I long to perish, and plead
for help;
I hate myself and love
another:

Pascomi di dolor; piangendo
rido;
Egualemente mi spiace morte
e vita.
In questo stato son, Donna,
per Voi.

I feed on grief; weeping I
laugh;
death, like life, repels
me.
You have reduced me,
my lady, to this state.

**Benedetto sia'l giorno
(Sonnet No. 47)**

Blessed be the day

Benedetto sia 'l giorno, e 'l
mese, e l'anno,
E la stagione, e
'l tempo, e l'ora, e
'l punto
E 'l bel paese
e 'l loco, ov'io
fui giunto
Da' duo begli occhi che
legato m'anno;

Blessed be the day, the
month, the year,
and the season, and the
time, and the hour, and
the moment,
and the lovely landscape,
and the spot where I
was enthralled
by two lovely eyes that
have enslaved me.

E benedetto il primo dolce
affanno
Ch'i' ebbero ad esser con Amor
congiunto,
E l'arco e la saetta ond' i' fui
punto,
E le piaghe, ch'infino al cor
mi vanno.

And blessed be the first
sweet pang I suffered,
when Love overwhelmed
me,
the bow and the arrows
which stung me,
and the wounds which
penetrate my heart.

Benedette le
voci tante,
ch'io
Chiamando il nome di mia
Laura ho sparte,
E i sospiri e le lagrime
e 'l desio.

Blessed be the many
voices that have
echoed
when I have called my
Laura's name,
and the sighs and the
tears, and the longing.

E benedette sian
tutte le carte
Ov'io fama le
acquisto, e il pensier
mio,
Ch'è sol di lei, sì, ch'altra non
v'ha parte.

And blessed be all those
writings,
in which I have spread her
fame, and my thoughts,
which stem from her
alone.

I' vidi in terra angelici
costumi (Sonnet No.
123)

I beheld on earth
angelic grace

I' vidi in terra angelici
costumi,
E celesti bellezze
al mondo
sole;
Tal che di rimembrar mi
giova, e dole:
Che quant'io miro, par
sogni, ombre,
e fumi.

I beheld on earth angelic
grace
and heavenly beauty
unmatched in this
world,
such as rejoice and pain
my memory,
which is clouded with
dreams, shadows,
mists.

E vidi lagrimar que'
duo bei lumi,
Ch'han fatto mille volte
invidia al sole;
Ed udi'
sospirando dir
parole
Che farian gir i
monti, e stare
i fiumi.

And I beheld tears spring
from those lovely eyes,
which many a time have
put the sun to shame.
And I heard words
uttered with such sighs,
that mountains would be
moved and rivers
halted.

Amor! senno! valor, pietate,
e doglia
Facean piangendo un più
dolce concerto
D'ogni altro, che nel mondo
udir si soglia.

Love! wisdom! valour, pity
and grief
created in that lament a
sweeter concert
than any other to be
heard on earth.

Ed era 'l cielo all'armonia
s'intento
Che non si vedea in ramo
mover foglia.
Tanta dolcezza avea pien
l'aer e 'l vento.

And heaven was so intent
on that harmony,
that not a leaf was seen to
move on the bough;
such sweetness had filled
the air and the wind.

Translations of Duparc, 'Bleuet' and 'C' by Richard Stokes from A French Song Companion (Johnson/Stokes) published by OUP. Britten by Elizabeth Mayer and Peter Pears. Liszt and all other Poulenc by Richard Stokes.