



presents

Matthew Polenzani, *tenor*
with Natalia Katyukova, *pianist*

IN RECITAL

PROGRAM

Im Frühling Frühlingsglaube Der Einsame Ständchen ("Leise flehen meine lieder") Im Abendrot	Franz Schubert (1797 - 1828)
<i>A Young Man's Exhortation</i> , Op. 14 Part 1 A Young Man's Exhortation Part 1 Ditty Part 1 Budmouth Dears Part 1 Her Temple Part 1 The Comet at Yell'ham Part 2 Shortening Days Part 2 The Sigh Part 2 Former Beauties Part 2 Transformations Part 2 The Dance Continued	Gerald Finzi (1901 - 1956)
<i>Liederkreis</i> , Op. 24 Morgens steh' ich auf und frage Es treibt mich hin Ich wandelte unter den Bäumen Lieb' Liebchen Schöne Wiege meiner Leiden Warte, warte wilder Schiffmann Berg und Burgen schaun herunter Anfangs wollt' ich fast verzagen Mit Myrten und Rosen	Robert Schumann (1810 - 1856)
<i>Fiançailles pour rire</i> La Dame d'André Dans l'herbe Il vole Mon cadavre est doux comme un gant Violon Fleurs	Francis Poulenc (1899 - 1963)
Feldeinsamkeit The World's Highway Memories: A. Very Pleasant & B. Rather Sad The Greatest Man When Stars are in the Quiet Skies	Charles Ives (1874 - 1954)

ABOUT THE PROGRAM

Notes by Arthur Smith

Tenor **Matthew Polenzani** and pianist **Natalia Katjukova** open their Vocal Arts DC recital at the heart of the lieder tradition with some of the best loved songs by Franz Schubert (1797-1828). "Im Frühling" (published March 1826) sets a poem by Ernst Schulze (1789-1817). Its story of lost love, "joy remembered, sadness regained," in the words of Schubert biographer John Reed, is embodied in a melody of surpassing beauty, moving gently but urgently through variations as the singer appeals to nature for solace. Nature is, of course, the backdrop to much romantic song, and the next songs portray this world from their opening measures: the gentle rustle of the breeze sets the stage in "Frühlingsglaube", and a cricket merrily chirps through the 79 measures of the "Der Einsame", providing a bit of wistful company for someone who has turned away from the world. "Ständchen," from 1827-8, is Schubert's answer to Don Giovanni's "Serenade," wherein he drops the libertine's smirk, but offers vulnerable ardor in the form of a vocal line that weaves around the strumming of the piano part, with the major and minor key inflections that this composer so loved. The set closes with "Im Abendrot" ("In Evening's Glow"). Here, thanksgiving for the beauties of nature and a restoration of faith, unfolding at sunset with a song of simple chords, is supported by a melody of hymn-like calm.

The British composer Gerald Finzi (1901-1956) was active across a wide range of musical genres, but songs were at the heart of his work. He wrote during that great English flowering of song in the first decades of the 20th century with a style that grew out of his affection for Edward Elgar and Ralph Vaughan Williams. In *A Young Man's Exhortation*, he sets texts from Thomas Hardy (1840-1928), a lifelong inspiration for the composer. Finzi wrote of Hardy's collected poems, "If I had to be cut off from everything, that would be the one book I would choose." These texts, by a poet in his twenties, newly arrived and making his way in London, no doubt appealed to a composer in the same situation a lifetime later. Hardy's "portrait of an artist as a young man" waxes philosophical at times, becoming ardently romantic as well. Finzi sets the texts with simple syllabic clarity (not for him the ornate word setting of his peers) with the piano generally providing beautiful support, with the occasional foreground moment. The event referred to in the fifth song, "The Comet at Yell'ham," refers to Comet Encke, which Hardy saw in 1858 in Yellowham Wood in Wessex. Here, Finzi creates evocative night music, with the sounds seeming to come from a great distance.

Robert Schumann's (1810-56) *Liederkreis*, Op. 24, comes from 1840, that miraculous year of lieder, when songs poured forth from the composer who was separated from his beloved Clara Wieck. This set, to texts by Heinrich Heine, was among the first works that year, and became part of a wedding gift to Clara when the two had overcome the opposition of her father Friedrich Wieck (incidentally, Robert's piano teacher) to their union. If Clara occasioned the compositions, it is the spirit of Schubert that glows in the songs. The older composer had been an obsession of Schumann since his late teens (he found in Schubert's E-Flat Trio a path to a "new poetic life in music" and in the Great C-Major Symphony the inspiration for his own first work in that form, The "Spring" Symphony). This set is indeed Schubertian, with strophic texts on familiar themes of love's sorrowful complications. The piano writing, although not quite the equal dramatic partner that it was to become in his later cycles, is full of harmonic surprises, and ironic asides; note the smiling closing gestures of many songs. Schumann's lovelorn hero is perhaps a bit more earnest than the one in Heine's texts, but the emotional details of each scene are beautifully depicted. And gorgeous details abound; note the birds singing in "Ich wandelte unter den Bäumen" and the crashing waves in "Warte, warte wilder Schiffmann." Eris in that song refers to the Greek Goddess of disorder whose gift of a golden apple to be awarded to the fairest goddess leads to the Trojan War. Sounds like a plot for an opera!

We move next to Francis Poulenc (1899-1963), whose light touch and piquant harmonies come as a palette cleanser after the rich Romantic textures of Schumann and Schubert. Vocal music (both opera and song) inspired Poulenc throughout his life, in part resulting from his long musical partnership with baritone Pierre Bernac. *Fiançailles pour rire* (translated alternately as "Light-hearted engagement" or "Betrothal for Laughs"), comes from 1939 and is a far cry from the courtship agonies of 19th-century German lieder. The poems are by Marie Louise de Vilmorin (1902-1969), a poet much admired by Poulenc who found in her works a "sensitive impertinence," not a bad summing up of his style as well. The texts are quick sketches (both poet and composer venerated Matisse, seeking the simplicity of

line he showed in his paintings) offering a slightly off-kilter take (thematic and harmonically) on matters amorous. The third song, "Il vole," plays on the word's dual senses of theft or flight.

We return, somewhat surprisingly, to the world of German lieder with the final set of songs by that grandfatherly American iconoclast, Charles Ives (1874-1954). Although mostly known now for his innovative orchestral works, often dubbed the first distinctively American symphonic music, Ives' musical life is endlessly surprising. The maverick behind the massive Fourth Symphony and its knotty tone clusters was also the sentimentalist who loved the songs of Stephen Foster. The insurance agent and "amateur composer" who couldn't be bothered to publish his music, filing it away in a box, was also a professional organist for 14 years and a serious composition student of a leading composer of the day, Horatio Parker. One aspect of that study was an assignment from Parker to set texts already used in famous lieder (this was a period in which the German musical styles and forms were revered above all in many American musical quarters). Ives tried his hand at many familiar texts such as "Ich Grolle Nicht," and tonight's opener from 1898, "Feldeisnsamkeit", a poem by Hermann Allmers, is the fruit of this study. Ives makes a lovely, if conventional, lied from the poem, with an accompaniment of arpeggios that sets off the text elegantly. (Ironically, Ives now sounds more conservative than Brahms' version.) The remaining songs in this set show the range of Ives' musical program. The 'Americana' Ives comes through in "The World's Highway," setting a text by his wife Harmony Twitchell Ives. This is followed by "Memories: A. Very Pleasant, and B. Rather Sad," to his own text, which switches from Vaudeville humor to aching nostalgia in a heartbeat. "The Greatest Man" from 1921, is a sentimental boast about his father, with a text by Anne Timoney Collins. The last song, "When Stars Are in the Quiet Skies," returns to themes from the beginning of the program. This poem by Edward Bulwer-Lytton (he of "It was a dark and stormy night" fame) is a nighttime ramble through longing and remembrance that both Finzi and Schubert would recognize.

TEXTS AND TRANSLATIONS

Schubert: Selected songs

Texts by various authors | Translations by Ellen Goodnight

Im Frühling (D. 882)

Text by Ernst Schulze

Still sitz ich an des Hügels Hang,
Der Himmel ist so klar,
Das Lüftchen spielt im grünen Tal,
Wo ich beim ersten Frühlingsstrahl
Einst, ach, so glücklich war.

Wo ich an ihrer Seite ging
So traulich und so nah,
Und tief im dunkeln Felsenquell
Den schönen Himmel blau und hell,
Und sie im Himmel sah.

Sieh, wie der bunte Frühling schon
Aus Knosp' und Blüte blickt!
Nicht alle Blüten sind mir gleich,
Am liebsten pflückt' ich von dem Zweig,
Von welchem sie gepflückt.

Denn alles ist wie damals noch,
Die Blumen, das Gefild;
Die Sonne scheint nicht minder hell,
Nicht minder freundlich schwimmt im Quell
Das blaue Himmelsbild.

Es wandeln nur sich Will und Wahn,
Es wechseln Lust und Streit,

In Spring

Translation by Ellen Goodnight

Quietly I sit on the hillside,
The sky is so clear,
A breeze plays in the green valley,
Where at the first ray of Spring
Once, oh, I was so happy.

Where I walked by her side
So intimate and so close,
And deep in the dark rocky spring
Was the beautiful sky, blue and bright,
And I saw her in that sky.

See how the colorful Spring already
Peeks out from bud and blossom!
Not every blossom is the same to me,
I prefer to pick from the branch
From which she picked hers.

For all is as it was back then,
The flowers, the field;
The sun shines no less bright,
Nor does the stream reflect any less friendly
The image of the blue sky.

Only will and delusion change,
And joy alternates with strife,

Vorüber flieht der Liebe Glück,
Und nur die Liebe bleibt zurück,
Die Lieb' und ach, das Leid!

O wär ich doch ein Vöglein nur
Dort an dem Wiesenhang!
Dann blieb' ich auf den Zweigen hier,
Und säng ein süßes Lied von ihr,
Den ganzen Sommer lang.

Frühlingsglaube (D. 686)

Text by Johann Ludwig Uhland

Die linden Lüfte sind erwacht,
Sie säuseln und weben Tag und Nacht,
Sie schaffen an allen Enden.
O frischer Duft, o neuer Klang!
Nun, armes Herze, sei nicht bang!
Nun muss sich Alles, Alles wenden.

Die Welt wird schöner mit jedem Tag,
Man weiss nicht, was noch werden mag,
Das Blühen will nicht enden.
Es blüht das fernste, tiefste Tal:
Nun, armes Herz, vergiss der Qual!
Nun muss sich Alles, Alles wenden.

Der Einsame (D. 800)

Text by Karl Lappe

Wenn meine Grillen schwirren,
Bei Nacht, am spät erwärmten Herd,
Dann sitz' ich mit vergnügtem Sinn
Vertraulich zu der Flamme hin,
So leicht, so unbeschwert.

Ein trautes, stilles Stündchen
Bleibt man noch gern am Feuer wach,
Man schürt, wenn sich die Lohe senkt,
Die Funken auf und sinnt und denkt:
„Nun abermal ein Tag!“

Was Liebes oder Leides
Sein Lauf für uns dahergebracht,
Es geht noch einmal durch den Sinn;
Allein das Böse wirft man hin,
Es störe nicht die Nacht.

Zu einem frohen Träume,
Bereitet man gemach sich zu,
Wenn sorgenlos ein holdes Bild
Mit sanfter Lust die Seele füllt,
Ergibt man sich der Ruh.

Oh, wie ich mir gefalle
In meiner stillen Ländlichkeit!
Was in dem Schwarm der lauten Welt
Dar irre Herz gefesselt hält,
Gibt nicht Zufriedenheit.

The happiness of love flies passed
And only love remains,
The love and alas, the sorrow!

Oh, if only I were a little bird
There on the meadow slope!
Then I would stay on these branches here,
And sing a sweet song for her,
The whole summer long.

Faith in Spring

Translation by Ellen Goodnight

The gentle breezes are awakened,
They whisper and weave day and night,
And everywhere creative.
O fresh scent, O new sound!
Now, poor heart, do not be afraid.
Now everything, everything must change.

The world becomes more beautiful each day,
One cannot know what is still to come,
The blooming does not want to end.
The most distant blooms, the deepest valley:
Now, poor heart, forget the agony!
Now everything, everything must change.

The lonely one

Translation by Ellen Goodnight

When my crickets chirp,
At night, by my late-burning hearth,
Then I sit with a cheerful mind
Confiding in the flame,
So light, so untroubled.

A cozy, quiet hour
If one enjoys remaining awake by the fire,
One stokes it when the blaze sinks down,
The sparks fly and one ponders and thinks:
“Now, yet another day!”

What love or sorrow
Has brought to us over the course of the day,
Goes through the mind once more;
Only the evil is discarded,
lest it disturb the night.

To a happy dream,
One prepares for well,
When carefree, a sweet image
Fills the soul with gentle pleasure,
If one surrenders to the rest.

Oh, how happy I am
In my quiet, rustic life!
In the swarm of the noisy world,
That which keeps the restless heart chained
Does not bring contentment.

Zirpt immer, liebe Heimchen,
In meiner Klause eng und klein.
Ich duld' euch gern: ihr stört mich nicht,
Wenn euer Lied das Schweigen bricht,
Bin ich nicht ganz allein.

Ständchen (D. 957)

Text by Ludwig Rellstab

Leise flehen meine Lieder
Durch die Nacht zu Dir;
In den stillen Hain hernieder,
Liebchen, komm' zu mir!

Flüsternd schlanke Wipfel rauschen
In des Mondes Licht;
Des Verräters feindlich Lauschen
Fürchte, Holde, nicht.

Hörst die Nachtigallen schlagen?
Ach! sie flehen Dich,
Mit der Töne süßen Klagen
Flehen sie für mich.

Sie verstehn des Busens Sehnen,
Kennen Liebesschmerz,
Rühren mit den Silbertönen
Jedes weiche Herz.

Lass auch Dir die Brust bewegen,
Liebchen, höre mich!
Bebend harr' ich Dir entgegen!
Komm', beglücke mich!

Im Abendrot (D. 799)

Text by Karl Lappe

O wie schön ist deine Welt,
Vater, wenn sie golden strahlet!
Wenn dein Glanz herniederfällt,
Und den Staub mit Schimmer malet;
Wenn das Rot, das in der Wolke blinkt,
In mein stilles Fenster sinkt!

Könnt' ich klagen, könnt' ich zagen?
Irre sein an dir und mir?
Nein, ich will im Busen tragen
Deinen Himmel schon allhier.
Und dies Herz, eh' es zusammenbricht,
Trinkt noch Glut und schlürft noch Licht.

Chirp on, dear little crickets,
In my room cramped and small.
I tolerate you gladly: you do not bother me.
When your song breaks the silence,
Then I am not completely alone.

Serenade

Translation by Ellen Goodnight

Softly my songs plead
Through the night to you;
In the silent grove below,
Beloved, come to me!

Slender treetops whisper and rustle
In the moonlight;
My dear, do not fear
the hostile betrayer will overhear us.

Do you not hear the nightingales call?
Ah, they call to you;
with their sweet, plaintive songs
they call to you for me.

They understand the heart's yearning,
They know the pain of love;
With their silvery notes
They touch every tender heart.

Let your heart also be moved,
Beloved, hear me!
Trembling, I wait for you!
Come, make me happy!

At dusk

Translation by Ellen Goodnight

O how beautiful is your world,
Father, when she shines with golden beams!
When your gaze descends,
And paints the dust with a shimmer;
When the red, that flashes in the clouds,
Upon my silent window sinks!

How could I complain? What could I say?
How could I lose faith in you or in myself?
No, I want to carry in my breast
Your Heaven that is already here.
And this heart, before it breaks,
Still drinks the embers and savors the light.

Finzi: *A Young Man's Exhortation*, Op. 14
Text by Thomas Hardy

Part 1 A Young Man's Exhortation

Call off your eyes from care
By some determined deftness; put forth joys
Dear as excess without the core that cloy,
And charm Life's lours fair.

Exalt and crown the hour
That girdles us, and fill it full with glee,
Blind glee, excelling aught could ever be,
Were heedfulness in power.

Send up such touching strains
That limitless recruits from Fancy's pack
Shall rush upon your tongue, and tender back
All that your soul contains.

For what do we know best?
That a fresh love-leaf crumpled soon will dry,
And that men moment after moment die,
Of all scope dispossess.

If I have seen one thing
It is the passing preciousness of dreams;
That aspects are within us; and who seems
Most kingly is the King.

Part 1 Ditty

Beneath a knap where flown
Nestlings play,
Within walls of weathered stone,
Far away
From the files of formal houses,
By the bough the firstling browses,
Lives a Sweet: no merchants meet,
No man barter, no man sells
Where she dwells.

Upon that fabric fair
'Here is she!'
Seems written everywhere
Unto me.
But to friends and nodding neighbours,
Fellow wights in lot and labours,
Who descry the times as I,
No such lucid legend tells
Where she dwells.

Should I lapse to what I was
Ere we met;
(Such will not be, but because
Some forget
Let me feign it) – none would notice
That where she I know by rote is
Spread a strange and withering change,
Like a drying of the wells

Where she dwells.

To feel I might have kissed –
Loved as true –
Otherwhere, nor Mine have missed
My life through,
Had I never wandered near her,
Is a smart severe – severer
In the thought that she is nought,
Even as I, beyond the dells
Where she dwells.

And Devotion droops her glance
To recall
What bond-servants of Chance
We are all.
I but found her in that, going
On my errant path unknowing,
I did not out-skirt the spot
That no spot on earth excels –
Where she dwells!

Part 1 Budmouth Dears

When we lay where Budmouth Beach is,
O, the girls were fresh as peaches,
With their tall and tossing figures and their eyes of blue and brown!
And our hearts would ache with longing
As we paced from our sing-singing,
With a smart Clink! Clink! up the Esplanade and down.

They distracted and delayed us
By the pleasant pranks they played us,
And what marvel, then, if troopers, even of regiments of renown,
On whom flashed those eyes divine, O,
Should forget that countersign, O,
As we tore Clink! Clink! back to camp above the town.

Do they miss us much, I wonder,
Now that war has swept us sunder,
And we roam from where the faces smile to where the faces frown?
And no more behold the features
Of the fair fantastic creatures,
And no more Clink! Clink! past the parlours of the town?

Shall we once again there meet them?
Falter fond attempts to greet them?
Will the gay sling-jacket glow again beside the muslin gown? –
Will they archly quiz and con us
With a sideway glance upon us,
While our spurs Clink! Clink! up the Esplanade and down?

Part 1 Her Temple

Dear, think not that they will forget you:
– If craftsmanly art should be mine
I will build up a temple, and set you
Therein as its shrine.

They may say: 'Why a woman such honour?'

– Be told, ‘O so sweet was her fame,
That a man heaped this splendour upon her;
None now knows his name.’

Part 1 The Comet at Yell'ham

It bends far over Yell'ham Plain,
And we, from Yell'ham Height,
Stand and regard its fiery train,
So soon to swim from sight.

It will return long years hence, when
As now its strange swift shine
Will fall on Yell'ham; but not then
On that sweet form of thine.

Part 2 Shortening Days

The first fire since the summer is lit, and is smoking into the room:
The sun-rays thread it through, like woof-lines in a loom.
Sparrows spurt from the hedge, whom misgivings appal
That winter did not leave last year for ever, after all.
Like shock-headed urchins, spiny-haired,
Stand pollard willows, their twigs just bared.

Who is this coming with pondering pace,
Black and ruddy, with white embossed,
His eyes being black, and ruddy his face
And the marge of his hair like morning frost?
It's the cider-maker,
And appletree-shaker,
And behind him on wheels, in readiness,
His mill, and tubs, and vat, and press.

Part 2 The Sigh

Little head against my shoulder,
Shy at first, then somewhat bolder,
And up-eyed;
Till she, with a timid quaver,
Yielded to the kiss I gave her;
But, she sighed.

That there mingled with her feeling
Some sad thought she was concealing
It implied.

– Not that she had ceased to love me,
None on earth she set above me;
But she sighed.

She could not disguise a passion,
Dread, or doubt, in weakest fashion
If she tried:
Nothing seemed to hold us sundered,
Hearts were victors; so I wondered
Why she sighed.
Afterwards I knew her thoroughly,
And she loved me staunchly, truly,
Till she died;
But she never made confession

Why, at that first sweet concession,
She had sighed.

It was in our May, remember;
And though now I near November
And abide
Till my appointed change, unfretting,
Sometimes I sit half regretting
That she sighed.

Part 2 Former Beauties

These market-dames, mid-aged, with lips thin-drawn,
And tissues sere,
Are they the ones we loved in years ago,
And courted here?

Are these the muslined pink young things to whom
We vowed and swore
In nooks on summer Sundays by the Froom,
Or Budmouth shore?

Do they remember those gay tunes we trod
Clasped on the green;
Aye; trod till moonlight set on the beaten sod
A satin sheen?

They must forget, forget! They cannot know
What once they were,
Or memory would transfigure them, and show
Them always fair.

Part 2 Transformations

Portion of this yew
Is a man my grandsire knew,
Bosomed here at its foot:
This branch may be his wife,
A ruddy human life
Now turned to a green shoot.

These grasses must be made
Of her who often prayed,
Last century, for repose;
And the fair girl long ago
Whom I often tried to know
May be entering this rose.

So, they are not underground,
But as nerves and veins abound
In the growths of upper air,
And they feel the sun and rain,
And the energy again
That made them what they were!

Part 2 The Dance Continued

Regret not me;
Beneath the sunny tree
I lie uncaring, slumbering peacefully.

Swift as the light
I flew my faery flight;
Ecstatically I moved, and feared no night.

I did not know
That heydays fade and go,
But deemed that what was would be always so.

I skipped at morn
Between the yellowing corn,
Thinking it good and glorious to be born.

I ran at eves
Among the piled-up sheaves,
Dreaming, 'I grieve not, therefore nothing grieves'.

Now soon will come
The apple, pear, and plum,
And hinds will sing, and autumn insects hum.

Again you will fare
To cider-makings rare,
And junketings; but I shall not be there.

Yet gaily sing
Until the pewter ring
Those songs we sang when we went gipsying.

And lightly dance
Some triple-timed romance
In coupled figures, and forget mischance;

And mourn not me
Beneath the yellowing tree;
For I shall mind not, slumbering peacefully.

Schumann: *Liederkreis*, Op. 24

Texts by Heinrich Heine | Translations by Ellen Goodnight

Morgens steh' ich auf und frage

Morgens steh' ich auf und frage:
Kommt feins Liebchen heut?
Abends sink' ich hin und klage:
Ausblieb sie auch heut.

In der Nacht mit meinem Kummer
Lieg' ich schlaflos, lieg' ich wach;
Träumend, wie im halben Schlummer,
Wandle ich bei Tag.

Es treibt mich hin

Es treibt mich hin, es treibt mich her!
Noch wenige Stunden, dann soll ich sie schauen,
Sie selber, die schönste der schönen Jungfrauen—
Du armes Herz, was pochst du so schwer?

Every morning I wake and ask

Every morning I wake and ask:
Will my sweetheart come today?
Every evening I sink down and lament:
She stayed away again today.

All night with my grief
I lie sleepless, I lie awake;
Dreaming, as if half asleep,
I wander through the day.

I am driven here

I am driven here, I'm driven there!
A few more hours, and I shall see her,
She, herself, the fairest of the fair young women—
You poor heart, why are you beating so hard?

Die Stunden sind aber ein faules Volk!
Schleppen sich behaglich träge,
Schleichen gähnend ihre Wege—
Tummle dich, du faules Volk!

Tobende Eile mich treibend erfasst!
Aber wohl niemals liebten die Horen—
Heimlich im grausamen Bunde verschworen,
Spotten sich tückisch der Liebenden Hast.

Ich wandelte unter den Bäumen

Ich wandelte unter den Bäumen
Mit meinem Gram allein;
Da kam das alte Träumen,
Und schlich mir ins Herz hinein.

Wer hat euch dies Wörtlein gelehret,
Ihr Vöglein in luftiger Höh?
Schweigt still! wenn mein Herz es höret,
Dann tut es noch einmal so weh.

„Es kam ein Jungfräulein gegangen,
Die sang es immerfort,
Da haben wir Vöglein gefangen
Das hübsche, goldne Wort.“

Das sollt ihr mir nicht erzählen,
Ihr Vöglein wunderschlau;
Ihr wollt meinen Kummer mir stehlen,
Ich aber niemanden trau’.

Lieb’ Liebchen

Lieb Liebchen, leg’s Händchen aufs Herze mein;
Ach, hörst du, wie ‘s pochet im Kämmerlein?
Da hauset ein Zimmermann schlimm und arg,
Der zimmert mir einen Totensarg.

Es hämmert und klopft bei Tag und bei Nacht;
Es hat mich schon längst um den Schlaf gebracht.
Ach! sputet Euch, Meister Zimmermann,
Damit ich balde schlafen kann.

Schöne Wiege meiner Leiden

Schöne Wiege meiner Leiden,
Schönes Grabmal meiner Ruh’,
Schöne Stadt, wir müssen scheiden—
Lebe wohl! ruf’ ich dir zu.

Lebe wohl, du heil’ge Schwelle,
Wo da wandelt Liebchen traut;
Lebe wohl! du heil’ge Stelle,
Wo ich sie zuerst geschaut.

Hätt’ ich dich doch nie gesehen,
Schöne Herzenskönigin!
Nimmer wär es dann geschehen,
Dass ich jetzt so elend bin.

But the hours are a lazy breed!
They drag themselves comfortably and sluggishly,
Sneaking, yawning on their way—
Get a move on, you lazy folk!

Raging hurry seizes and drives me onward!
But the Hearing could never have loved—
Secretly, in cruel alliance conspired,
They spitefully mock a lover’s haste.

I wandered among the trees

I wandered among the trees,
Alone with my grief,
Then came that old dream,
And it crept into my heart.

Who taught you this little word,
You little birds up there in the breeze?
Be silent! If my heart hears it,
Then my pain will return.

“A young woman once passed by,
She sang it again and again,
And so we birds captured it,
That lovely golden word.”

You should not tell me such things,
You cunning little birds,
You thought to steal my grief from me,
But I trust no one now.

Dear darling

Dear darling, lay your hand on my heart;
Oh, do you hear it knocking in that little room?
Inside there lives a carpenter, wicked and evil,
He is making me a coffin.

He hammers and knocks all day and night,
And has long since kept me from sleep.
Oh! Hurry up, master carpenter,
So that I can soon find rest.

Lovely cradle of my sorrows

Lovely cradle of my sorrows,
Lovely tombstone of my peace,
Lovely city, we must part—
Farewell! I call to you.

Farewell, you holy threshold,
Where my darling treads,
Farewell! you sacred place,
Where I first saw her.

If I had never seen you,
Fair queen of my heart!
Never would it then have happened,
That I am now so wretched.

Nie wollt' ich dein Herze rühren,
Liebe hab' ich nie erfleht;
Nur ein stilles Leben führen
Wollt' ich, wo dein Odem weht.

Doch du drängst mich selbst von hinnen,
Bitter Worte spricht dein Mund;
Wahnsinn wühlt in meinen Sinnen,
Und mein Herz ist krank und wund.

Und die Glieder matt und träge
Schlepp' ich fort am Wanderstab,
Bis mein müdes Haupt ich lege
Ferne in ein kühles Grab.

Warte, warte, wilder Schiffmann

Warte, warte, wilder Schiffmann,
Gleich folg' ich zum Hafen dir;
Von zwei Jungfrauen nehm' ich Abschied,
Von Europa und von Ihr.

Blutquell, rinn' aus meinen Augen,
Blutquell, brich aus meinem Leib,
Dass ich mit dem heißen Blute
Meine Schmerzen niederschreib'.

Ei, mein Lieb, warum just heute
Schaudert dich, mein Blut zu sehn?
Sahst mich bleich und herzeblutend
Lange Jahre vor dir stehn!

Kennst du noch das alte Liedchen
Von der Schlang' im Paradies,
Die durch schlimme Apfeligabe
Unsern Ahn ins Elend stiess?

Alles Unheil brachten Äpfel!
Eva bracht' damit den Tod,
Eris brachte Trojas Flammen,
Du bracht'st beides, Flamm' und Tod.

Berg und Burgen schaun herunter

Berg' und Burgen schaun herunter
In den spiegelhellen Rhein,
Und mein Schiffchen segelt munter,
Rings umglänzt von Sonnenschein.

Ruhig seh' ich zu dem Spiele
Goldner Wellen, kraus bewegt;
Still erwachen die Gefühle,
Die ich tief im Busen hegt'.

Freundlich grüßend und verheißend
Lockt hinab des Stromes Pracht;
Doch ich kenn' ihn, oben gleissend,
Bringt sein Innres Tod und Nacht.

Oben Lust, in Busen Tücken,

I never wished to touch your heart,
I never begged for love,
All I wished was to lead a quiet life
And to breathe the air you breathed.

Yet you yourself, you pushed me away,
Your lips speak bitter words;
Madness rages in my mind,
And my heart is sick and sore.

And my limbs, heavy and sluggish,
I drag forward on my walking stick,
Until I lay my weary head
In a cool and distant grave.

Wait, wait, wild shipman

Wait, wait, wild shipman,
Soon I'll follow to the harbor;
From two young maids I take my leave,
From Europe and from Her.

Stream of blood, run from my eyes,
Stream of blood, break from my body,
That with this hot blood
I may write down my pains.

Oh, my love, why today
Do you shudder to see my blood?
You've seen me, pale and with bleeding heart,
Stand before you for many years!

Do you remember that old song
Of the serpent in Paradise,
Who, through the evil gift of an apple,
Threw our ancestors into misery?

The apple has caused every ill!
Eve brought death with it,
Eris brought flames to Troy,
And you brought both, flame and death.

Mountains and castles gaze down

Mountains and castles gaze down
Into the mirror-bright Rhine,
And my little boat sails merrily,
The sunshine glistening all around it.

Calmly I watch the play
Of golden, ruffled waves surging;
Silently feelings awaken in me
That I have kept deep in my heart.

With friendly greetings and promises,
The river's splendor beckons;
But I know it, gleaming above
It conceals within both Death and Night.

Above, pleasure; at heart, malice;

Strom, du bist der Liebsten Bild!
Die kann auch so freundlich nicken,
Lächelt auch so fromm und mild.

Anfangs wollt' ich fast verzagen

Anfangs wollt' ich fast verzagen,
Und ich glaubt', ich trüg' es nie;
Und ich hab' es doch getragen—
Aber fragt mich nur nicht, wie?

Mit Myrten und Rosen

Mit Myrthen und Rosen, lieblich und hold,
Mit duft'gen Zypressen und Flittergold,
Möcht' ich zieren dies Buch wie 'nen Totenschrein,
Und sargen meine Lieder hinein.

O könnt' ich die Liebe sargen hinzu!
Auf dem Grabe der Liebe wächst Blümlein der Ruh',
Da blüht es hervor, da pflückt man es ab,
Doch mir blüht's nur, wenn ich selber im Grab.

Hier sind nun die Lieder, die einst so wild,
Wie ein Lavaström, der dem Ätna entquillt,
Hervorgestürzt aus dem tiefsten Gemüt,
Und rings viel blitzende Funken versprüht!

Nun liegen sie stumm und totengleich,
Nun starren sie kalt und nebelbleich,
Doch aufs neu' die alte Glut sie belebt,
Wenn der Liebe Geist einst über sie schwebt.

Und es wird mir im Herzen viel Ahnung laut:
Der Liebe Geist einst über sie taut;
Einst kommt dies Buch in deine Hand,
Du süßes Lieb im fernen Land.

Dann löst sich des Liedes Zauberbann,
Die blassen Buchstaben schaun dich an,
Sie schauen dir flehend ins schöne Aug',
Und flüstern mit Wehmut und Liebeshauch.

River, you are the image of my beloved!
She can nod with just as much friendliness,
And smile so pious and mild.

At first, I almost despaired

At first, I almost despaired,
And I thought I would never bear it;
Yet even so, I have borne it—
But do not ask me how.

With myrtles and roses

With myrtles and roses, lovely and gentle,
With fragrant cypresses and golden tinsel,
I should like to adorn this book like a casket,
And bury my songs inside.

O if only I could bury my love here too!
On Love's grave grows the flower of peace,
There it blossoms, there it is plucked,
But will only bloom for me, when I am in the grave.

Here are the songs which were once so wild,
Like a stream of lava pouring from Etna,
Rushed out from the depths of my soul,
And scattered glittering sparks all around!

Now they lie mute, as if they were dead,
Now they stare coldly, pale as mist,
But the old embers revive them once more,
When the spirit of Love floats over them.

And a thought grows loud within my heart,
That the spirit of Love will one day thaw them;
One day this book will fall into your hands,
You sweet love, in a distant land.

Then shall the song's magic spell be broken,
And the pale letters shall gaze at you,
They gaze imploringly into your beautiful eyes,
And whisper with sadness and a touch of love.

Poulenc: *Fiançailles pour rire*

Text by Marie Louise de Vilmorin | Translations by Ellen Goodnight

La dame d'André

André ne connaît pas la dame
Qu'il prend aujourd'hui par la main.
A-t-elle un cœur à lendemains,
Et pour le soir a-t-elle une âme?

Au retour d'un bal campagnard
S'en allait-elle en robe vague
Chercher dans les meules la bague
Des fiançailles du hasard?

A-t-elle eu peur, la nuit venue,

André's lady

André does not know the lady
That he took by the hand today.
Has she a heart for the tomorrows,
And for the evening has she a soul?

On returning from a country ball
Did she leave in a flowy dress
To search in the haystacks for the ring
From the chance engagement?

Was she afraid, when night came,

Guettée par les ombres d'hier,
Dans son jardin, lorsque l'hiver
Entraîné par la grande avenue?

Il l'a aimée pour sa couleur,
Pour sa bonne humeur de Dimanche.
Pâlira-t-elle aux feuilles blanches
De son album des temps meilleurs?

Dans l'herbe

Je ne peut plus rien dire
Ni rien faire pour lui.
Il est mort de sa belle
Il est mort de sa mort belle
Dehors
Sous l'arbre de la Loi
En plein silence
En plein paysage
Dans l'herbe.

Il est mort inaperçu
En criant son passage
En appelant, en m'appelant.
Mais comme j'étais loin de lui
Et que sa voix ne portait plus
Il est mort seul dans les bois
Sous son arbre d'enfance.
Et je ne peux plus rien dire
Ni rien faire pour lui.

Il vole

En allant se coucher le soleil
Se reflète au vernis de ma table:
C'est le fromage rond de la fable
Au bec de mes ciseaux de vermeil.
– Mais où est le corbeau? – Il vole.

Je voudrais coudre mais un aimant
Attire à lui toutes mes aiguilles.
Sur la place les joueurs de quilles
De belle en belle passent le temps.
– Mais où est mon amant? – Il vole.

C'est un voleur que j'ai pour amant,
Le corbeau vole et mon amant vole,
Voleur de cœur manque à sa parole
Et voleur de fromage est absent.
– Mais où est le bonheur? – Il vole.
Je pleure sous le saule pleureur
Je mêle mes larmes à ses feuilles
Je pleure car je veux qu'on me veuille
Et je ne plais pas à mon voleur.
– Mais où donc est l'amour? – Il vole.

Trouvez la rime à ma déraison
Et par les routes du paysage
Ramenez-moi mon amant volage
Qui prend les cœurs et perd ma raison.

Watched by the shadows of the past,
In her garden, when winter
Entered by the wide avenue?

He loved her for her color,
For her good humor on Sunday.
Will she fade upon the white pages
Of his album of better days?

In the grass

I can say nothing more
Nor do anything for him.
He died for his beautiful one
He died a beautiful death
Outside
Beneath the tree of Law
In complete silence
In open country
In the grass.

He died unnoticed
Crying out his passing
Calling out, calling out for me
But since I was far from him
And since his voice no longer carried
He died alone in the woods
Beneath his childhood tree
And I can say nothing more
Nor do anything for him.

He flies

The sun, as it sets
Is reflected in the varnish of my table:
It is the round cheese of the fable
In the beak of my silver scissors.
But where is the crow? It flies.

I'd like to sew but a magnet
Attracts all my needles to it.
In the square the skittle-players
Pass the time playing game after game.
But where is my lover? He flies.

I've a thief for a lover,
The crow flies and my lover thieves,
Thief of my heart breaks his word
And the thief of cheese is absent.
But where is happiness? It flies.
I cry under the weeping willow
I mingle my tears with her leaves
I cry because I want to be wanted
And my thief does not care for me.
But where, then, is love? It flies.

Find the rhyme in my unreason
And along the country roads
Bring me back my fickle lover
Who steals hearts and steals my reason.

Je veux que mon voleur me vole.

I want my thief to steal me.

Mon cadavre est doux comme un gant

Mon cadavre est doux comme un gant
Doux comme un gant de peau glacée
Et mes prunelles effacées
Font de mes yeux des cailloux blancs.

Deux cailloux blancs dans mon visage
Dans le silence deux muets
Ombres encore d'un secret
Et lourds du poids mort des images.

Mes doigts tant de fois égarés
Sont joints en attitude sainte
Appuyés au creux de mes plaintes
Au nœud de mon cœur arrêté.

Et mes deux pieds sont les montagnes,
Les deux derniers monts que j'ai vus
À la minute où j'ai perdu
La course que les années gagnent.

Mon souvenir est ressemblant,
Enfants emportez-le bien vite,
Allez, allez, ma vie est dite.
Mon cadavre est doux comme un gant.

Violon

Couple amoureux aux accents méconnus
Le violon et son joueur me plaisent.
Ah! j'aime ces gémissements tendus
Sur la corde des malaises.
Aux accords sur les cordes des pendus
À l'heure où les Lois se taisent
Le cœur, en forme de fraise,
S'offre à l'amour comme un fruit inconnu.

Fleurs

Fleurs promises, fleurs tenues dans tes bras,
Fleurs sorties des parenthèses d'un pas,
 Qui t'apportait ces fleurs l'hiver
 Saupoudrées du sable des mers?

Sable de tes baisers, fleurs des amours fanées
Les beaux yeux sont de cendre et dans la cheminée
 Un cœur enrubanné de plaintes
 Brûle avec ses images saintes.

My corpse is as limp as a glove

My corpse is as limp as a glove
Limp as a glove of icy skin
And my hidden pupils
Make my eyes like white pebbles.

Two white pebbles in my face
In the silence two mutes
Still shadowed by a secret
And heavy with the burden of things seen.

My fingers so often lost
Are joined in a saintly pose
Resting on the hollow of my groans
At the knot of my still heart.

And my two feet are the mountains
The last two mountains that I saw
At the moment I lost
The race that the years win.

My memory resembles this,
Children bear it quickly away,
Go, go, my life is done.
My corpse is as limp as a glove.

Violin

Loving couple with unrecognized accents
The violin and its player please me.
Ah! I love these long wailings
Upon the cord of discomfort.
To the chords on the ropes of the hanged
At the hour when Law is silent
The heart, shaped like a strawberry,
Offers itself to love like an unknown fruit.

Flowers

Flowers promised, flowers held in your arms,
Flowers from the bracket of a step,
 Who brought you these flowers in winter
 Sprinkled with the sand of the sea?

Sand of your kisses, flowers of faded loves
Your lovely eyes are ashes and in the hearth
 A heart wrapped in lament
 Burns with its sacred images.

Ives: Selected songs
Texts by various authors

Feldeinsamkeit

Text by Hermann Allmers

Ich ruhe still im hohen grünen Gras
Und sende lange meinen Blick nach oben,
Von Grillen rings umschwirrt ohn Unterlaß,
Von Himmelsbläue wunderschön umwoben.

Und schönen weiße Wolken ziehn dahin
Durchs tiefe Blau, wie schöne stille Träume;
Mir ist, als ob ich längst gestorben bin
Und ziehe selig mit durch ew'ge Räume.

In summer fields

Translation by Ellen Goodnight

I rest at peace in tall green grass
And gaze steadily aloft,
Surrounded by unceasing crickets,
Wondrously interwoven with blue sky.

The lovely white clouds go drifting by
Through the deep blue, like lovely silent dreams;
I feel as if I have long been dead,
Drifting happily with them through eternal space.

The World's Highway

Text by Charles Ives

For long I wander'd happily
Far out on the world's highway
My heart was brave for each new thing and I loved the far away.

I watch'd the gay bright people dance,
We laughed, for the road was good.
But Oh! I passed where the way was rough
I saw it stained with blood.

I wander'd on till I tired grew,
Far on the world's highway
My heart was sad for what I saw
I feared, I feared the far away, the far away.

So when one day, O sweetest day,
I came to a garden small,
A voice my heart knew called me in
I answered its blessed call;

I left my wand'ring far and wide
The freedom and far away
But my garden blooms with sweet content
That's not on the world's highway.

Memories

Text by Charles Ives

A. Very Pleasant

We're sitting in the opera house;
We're waiting for the curtain to arise
With wonders for our eyes;
We're feeling pretty gay,
And well we may,
"O, Jimmy, look!" I say,
"The band is tuning up
And soon will start to play."
We whistle and we hum,
Beat time with the drum.

We're sitting in the opera house;
We're waiting for the curtain to arise

B. Rather Sad

From the street a strain on my ear doth fall,
A tune as threadbare as that "old red shawl,"
It is tattered, it is torn,
It shows signs of being worn,
It's the tune my Uncle hummed from early morn,
'Twas a common little thing and kind 'a sweet,
But 'twas sad and seemed to slow up both his feet;
I can see him shuffling down
To the barn or to the town,
A humming.

With wonders for our eyes,
A feeling of expectancy,
A certain kind of ecstasy,
Expectancy and ecstasy... Sh's's's. "Curtain!"

The Greatest Man

Text by Anne Collins

My teacher said us boys should write
about some great man, so I thought last night
'n thought about heroes and men
that had done great things,
'n then I got to thinkin' 'bout my pa;
he ain't a hero 'r anything but pshaw!
Say! He can ride the wildest hoss
'n find minners near the moss
down by the creek; 'n he can swim
'n fish, we ketched five new lights, me 'n him!
Dad's some hunter too - oh, my!
Miss Molly Cottontail sure does fly
when he tromps through the fields 'n brush!
(Dad won't kill a lark 'r thrush.)
Once when I was sick 'n though his hands were rough
he rubbed the pain right out. "That's the stuff!"
he said when I winked back the tears. He never cried
but once 'n that was when my mother died.
There're lots o' great men: George Washinton 'n Lee,
but Dad's got 'em all beat holler, seems to me!

When Stars are in the Quiet Skies

Text by Edward George Earle Lytton Bulwer-Lytton

When stars are in the quiet skies,
Then most I long for thee;
O bend on me then thy tender eyes
As stars lookdown upon the peaceful sea.
For thoughts, like waves that glide by night,
Are stillest when they shine;
All my love lies hush'd in light
Beneath the heaven of thine.

There is an hour when holy dreams
Through slumber fairest glide;
And in that mystic hour it seems
Thou shouldst be ever, ever at my side.

The thoughts of thee too sacred are
For daylight's common beam:
I can but know thee as my star,
My guiding star, my angel and my dream;

ABOUT THE ARTISTS



Matthew Polenzani (tenor) has graced virtually every significant opera house, symphony orchestra and concert platform in North American and Europe. Recent engagements have taken him to the Metropolitan Opera for three leading tenor roles during the recent 2019-2020 season, to Madrid's Teatro Real for a company debut in Verdi's *La traviata*, and to the Bavarian State Opera in Munich for *Carmen*. During the 2021-2022 season, his roles at the Metropolitan Opera will include the title character in the company's new production of Verdi's *Don Carlos*, the first time in Met history that the opera will be performed both in French and in five acts, as originally conceived by the composer. His enviable and extensive videography and discography include DVDs preserving many of his signature roles first transmitted worldwide to movie theaters via the Met's Live in HD series (Nemorino in Donizetti's *L'elisir d'amore*, Tamino in *Die Zauberflöte*, Nadir in *Les pêcheurs de perles*, Ernesto in *Don Pasquale* among them), and solo CDs on the Wigmore Hall label with pianist Julius Drake and on VAI with pianist Roger Vignoles.



Natalia Katyukova (pianist) is an alumna of the Moscow State Conservatory, The Juilliard School, and the Metropolitan Opera's Lindemann Young Artist Development Program. After her graduation from the latter two institutions, she has joined the faculty at The Juilliard School and become both an assistant conductor and coach for young artists in the Met's Lindemann Program. Among the many singers she has accompanied in recital throughout Europe and North America are mezzo-sopranos Irina Arkhipova and Ekaterina Semenchuk, tenor Paul Appleby, and bass-baritones Ildar Abdrazakov and Bryn Terfel. She has also served on the faculties of summer festivals including Ravinia's Steans Institute of Music and the Tanglewood Festival.



ABOUT VOCAL ARTS DC

The mission of VADC, now celebrating our 30th anniversary season, is to nurture and promote the classical voice recital genre and to introduce new audiences to the richness, cultural diversity, and beauty of the classical song literature. VADC is the only organization anywhere in North America, and one of the few in the world, which presents a full concert season solely devoted to classical voice recitals. As such, it has made Washington DC a magnet for the world's greatest stars of the opera and concert stage. VADC presents a season of six to eight recitals, usually in the Kennedy Center's Terrace Theater, occasionally in other venues. These generally feature world-renowned singers, although VADC also attempts to introduce to its audience emerging artists whom it considers to be on the threshold of international stardom. Beginning with our 25th anniversary season of 2015-2016, Vocal Arts DC made a firm commitment to broaden the contemporary library of solo vocal works by commissioning new works from living composers. Toward that goal, we have presented world premieres of new works by Jake Heggie, Gregory Spears, and Lowell Liebermann, and will offer first hearings of new pieces by Caroline Shaw and Tyshawn Sorey during our 2020-2021 season. In addition to its main stage performances, VADC operates an in-school educational program for secondary and high school students in collaboration with the Duke Ellington School of the Arts in Washington, DC.

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