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Gabriel Fauré
(1845-1924)

Francis Poulenc
(1899-1963)

Thanks to the dominant position of Paris, French musical life long enjoyed a powerful sense of continuity—and, despite inevitable rivalries and factionalism, of community as well. While enduring institutions such as the Paris Opéra and Conservatory played an important role in this, so did the intricate web of personal relations that flourished in the hothouse of the capital city among composers, performers, and patrons. Spanning a half-century and several generations of composers, the works in the present recital, however various in style and technique, vividly illustrate and embody that strong sense of continuity and tradition.

Gabriel Fauré (1845-1924) began the cycle *La bonne Chanson* in 1892, while in the throes of an intimacy with Emma, wife of the banker Sigismund Bardac. In 1883, following an extended and evidently pleasurable bachelorhood, Fauré had married suddenly—virtually an arranged marriage, and one that proved unsuccessful. The charming, witty Emma (for whose daughter Héléne, known as "Dolly," Fauré wrote his eponymous suite for piano duet) maintained a salon open to progressive artists, and was known for her talents as a singer—and also for her loves, apparently tolerated by her husband. In 1904, when Emma had run off with Debussy, Pierre Louÿs described Bardac's reaction: "He's quite used to his wife running away and when people ask about her he smiles and says: 'She's just treating herself to the latest fashion in composers; but I'm the one with the money. She'll be back.'" (This time he was wrong; she stayed with Debussy, and Bardac eventually granted her a divorce.)

By the time he undertook *La bonne Chanson*, Fauré had occupied himself with the poetry of Paul Verlaine for several years, so much so that in 1891, after finishing the Five Songs ("Venise"), Op. 58, he announced that he had "exhausted the musical possibilities of Verlaine." But the next year he returned to him—indeed, to the same group of poems used in Op. 58, written for the poet's fiancée Mathilde Mauté (whose mother taught piano to Debussy). Fauré chose a sequence of eight poems, omitting stanzas from several of them; during the course of composition, he shifted them around somewhat and in February 1894, some months after engraving had begun for the first printing, added a ninth and final song.

Emma's role in the cycle appears to have been more than that of muse. Fauré recalled, thirty years later, that "I've never written anything as spontaneously as I did *La bonne Chanson*. I may say, indeed I must, that I was helped by a similar degree of comprehension on the part

of the singer who was to remain its most moving interpreter. The pleasure of feeling those little sheets of paper come alive as I brought them to her was one I have never experienced since." That singer was Emma, and according to Fauré's pupil Roger Ducasse, "Every evening Fauré used to...show her what he had written that day. And frequently, quite frequently, she used to send him back to make corrections."

Performed privately in April 1894 and publicly a year, *La bonne Chanson* perplexed some listeners with the almost symphonic complexity of its motivic relationships and the variety of its textures, some of them recalling the songs of Schumann, of whose piano music Fauré was an admired interpreter. Marcel Proust, who "adored" the cycle, listed Debussy among those who found it "needlessly complicated etc., very inferior to the rest [of Fauré's songs]," while Saint-Saëns asserted that his former pupil had gone "completely mad."

Among the students Fauré introduced to Emma Bardac's salon was Maurice Ravel (1875-1937), who apparently failed to reciprocate the lady's amorous interest. (Ravel may have been sending a message with the dedication of "L'Indifférent," the third song of his 1903 orchestral cycle *Shéhérazade*, to Emma.) In 1905, the Paris Conservatory's authorities failed for the fourth time to award Ravel—by now an established, recognized composer—the prestigious Prix de Rome, and the resulting scandal, which forced the resignation of the director and his replacement by Fauré, left part of Paris's musical establishment profoundly resentful of the original and prickly young composer.

A form of revenge was taken at the premiere of the song cycle *Histoire naturelle*, setting poems by Jules Renard, on January 12, 1907. The composer Charles Koechlin described the occasion, at which Ravel accompanied the singer Jane Bathori: "To start with, one part of the audience was hostile. It behaved itself with execrable taste at this humor, which it judged 'devoid of music'; the silent bars of 'Grillon,' above all, called forth jeers. And when, at the opening bars of the mysterious and marvelous 'Martin-pêcheur' Jane Bathori sang the phrase 'Ça n'a pas mordu, ce soir,' with what low and coarse laughter it was received..."

The humorous point of Ravel's music was widely missed at the time, though Renard's poems (published in 1895) were well-known, and had been illustrated by artists such as Toulouse-

Lautrec and Bonnard. Their title refers to Buffon's pioneering forty-four-volume zoological treatise *Histoire naturelle* (1749-1804), of which Renard charmingly remarked, "Buffon described animals in order to give pleasure to men," adding: "As for me, I would wish to be pleasing to the animals themselves. Were they able to read my miniature *Histoires naturelles*, I should wish that it would make them smile." That could also describe Ravel's settings, which descend in part from Chabrier and Mussorgsky, the naturalistic declamation set alongside brilliantly realized onomatopoeic effects in both voice and piano.

The five songs bear individual dedications: to Bathori, their first interpreter (No. 1), and her husband Emile Engel, a singer and voice teacher (No. 4); Ravel's colleague Roger Ducasse (No. 5); his friend Misia Edwards, a notable Parisian artistic hostess of the time, married then to Alfred Edwards, publisher of *Le Monde* and later to the painter José Maria Sert (No.3); and a Mlle. Madeleine Picard (No.2).

Francis Poulenc (1899-1963) studied piano with Ravel's friend Riccardo Viñes and later, having dabbled at composition, approached Ravel for formal instruction; when this didn't work out, Poulenc worked instead with Koechlin. Throughout his life, he remained active as a pianist, especially in collaboration with his friend the baritone Pierre Bernac; together, they performed and recorded not only *La Fraîcheur et le feu* but also both *La bonne Chanson* and *Histoires naturelles*. Song was perhaps Poulenc's most successful medium, and many of his cycles and individual songs have entered the international recital repertory.

Poulenc responded vividly to a number of contemporary poets, but his greatest attention was to the works of the fantastical symbolist Guillaume Apollinaire and the surrealist Paul Éluard. As early as 1917, he met and "at once took a liking to Éluard. Firstly, because he was the only surrealist poet who could tolerate music. And next because the whole of his work is musical vibration." However, not until 1935, when preparing his first recital with Bernac, did Poulenc set words by Éluard--and eventually composed 34 songs on his poems, as well as important choral works, notably the eloquent wartime cantata *Figure humaine*.

The cycle *La Fraîcheur et le feu* was written between April and July 1950, setting poems published in 1940 under the title *Vue donne vue*--a title Poulenc didn't like, preferring an

alternative suggested by Éluard. In his *Diary of My Songs*, the composer describes the group as "indisputably the most integrated of my songs cycles...If these [songs] are successful, and I believe they are, it is because a technical problem stimulated my appetite. In reality it is not so much a cycle as one single poem set to music in separate sections exactly as the poem is printed. A rhythmic unity (two tempi, one rapid, one slow) lies at the base of the construction. The admirable progression of the poem made it easy for me to take as the culminating point the last song but one ('Homme au sourire tendre'). There is something of the litany in Éluard, which blends with my own religious feeling. There is, besides, a mystical purity in Éluard."

That consistency of tempos is emphasized by a stern footnote at the beginning of the score: "the metronome markings to be strictly respected." The persistent sixteenth-note movement in the piano parts of the first two songs gives way when the slower tempo takes over in the third, returning again in the fourth song and the seventh, where the cycle's abrupt initial gesture also recurs. The cycle is dedicated to Igor Stravinsky, whom Poulenc had known during the interwar years in Paris, and whose work continued to tangibly influence his style, as in the opera *Dialogues des Carmélites* (1957).

Least-known among these composers, Henri Dutilleux (b. 1916) can trace his ancestry back up our Parisian line of continuity: his maternal grandfather Julien Koszul was a classmate of Fauré's at the École Niedermeyer. Dutilleux himself studied at the Conservatory with Maurice Emmanuel and received the Prix de Rome in 1938, later working at the Opéra and the French Radio: in 1961 he became teacher of composition at the École Normale de Musique, and in 1970 moved to the Conservatory--a life defined by the musical institutions of Paris. Many of his early works he destroyed, evidently finding them excessively derivative (principally of Ravel, the overwhelming presence in French music during his youth); others, having been published, escaped suppression. Since World War II, Dutilleux has concentrated almost exclusively on instrumental and orchestral music, which has been rather widely played and recorded.

By contrast, his few songs are little known, and the present recording may well be the first ever of the *Quatre Mélodies*, composed in 1942 and published the following year; designated

for either mezzo or baritone, the collection also exists in an orchestral version. The dedication is yet another link to predecessors: the baritone Charles Panzéra and his wife the pianist Magdeleine Panzéra-Baillet were the leading interpreters of French song in the interwar years; Fauré's last cycle, *L'Horizon chimérique*, is also dedicated to Panzéra, and in 1936 the couple made the first recording ever of the original version of *La bonne Chanson*. Though Dutilleux used poems by four different authors, the *Quatre Mélodies* offer a symmetry of moods and colors. Even in these miniatures, one notes a characteristic of Dutilleux's later and larger works, the continuing development of musical material as part of a single unfolding gesture, whether in the dance of the moonlit fairies, the steadily rising line in the piano underlying the lament for lost love, the rhythms of the funereal procession, or the grotesqueries of the Mardi Gras.

Notes by David Hamilton

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TEXTS & TRANSLATIONS

Histoires naturelles (Jules Renard)

Le Paon

Il va sûrement se marier aujourd'hui.
Ce devait être pour hier.
En habit de gala, il était prêt.
Il n'attendait que sa fiancée.
Elle n'est pas venue.
Elle ne peut tarder.
Glorieux, il se promène avec une
allure de prince indien
et porte sur lui les riches
présents d'usage.
L'amour avive éclat de ses couleurs

Natural histories

The Peacock

He will surely be married today.
It should have been yesterday.
In full dress he was ready.
He only waited for his fiancée.
She has not come.
She cannot be long now.
Gloriously, he struts with the
demeanor of an Indian prince
wearing about him the
customary rich presents.
Love heightens the brilliance of his colors

et son aigrette tremble
comme une lyre.

La fiancée n'arrive pas.

Il monte au haut du toit et regarde
du côté du soleil.

Il jette son cri diabolique:

Léon! Léon!

C'est ainsi qu'il appelle sa fiancée.

Il ne voit rien venir et personne
ne répond.

Les volailles habituées ne levent
même point la tête.

Elles sont lasses de l'admirer.

Il redescend dans le cour, si sûr

d'être beau qu'il est

incapable de rancune.

Son mariage sera pour demain.

Et, ne sachant que faire du reste

de la journée, il se dirige

vers le perron.

Il gravit les marches, comme des

marches de temple,

d'un pas officiel.

Il relève sa robe à queue toute

lourde des yeux qui n'ont pu

se détacher d'elle.

Il répète encore une fois la cérémonie.

Le Grillon

C'est l'heure où, las d'errer, l'insecte
nègre revient de promenade
et répare avec soin le désordre
de son domaine.

D'abord il ratisse ses étroites

allées de sable.

Il fait du bran de scie qu'il écarte

and his crest trembles
like a lyre.

His fiancée doesn't show.

He climbs to the roof

and looks toward the sun.

He utters his diabolical cry:

Léon! Léon!

Thus he calls his fiancée.

He sees nothing coming and

no one responds.

The fowl, used to him, never

even raise their heads.

They are tired of admiring him.

He comes back down to the yard,

so sure of being beautiful that he is

incapable of a grudge.

His marriage will be tomorrow.

And not knowing what to do with

the rest of the day, he heads

for the steps.

He climbs, as though they were

the steps of a temple,

with an official gait.

He lifts his robe, its train weighted

with the eyes which could

not tear themselves away from it.

Once again he repeats the ceremony.

The Cricket

This is the hour when, tired of
straying, the black insect returns
from his outing and carefully puts
his home in order.

First he rakes his narrow

sandy lanes.

He makes sawdust which he spreads

au seuil de sa retraite.
Il lime la racine de cette grande
herbe propre à la harceler.
Il se repose.
Puis il remonte sa minuscule montre.
A-t-il fini? est elle cassée?
Il se repose encore un peu.
Il rentre chez lui et ferme sa porte
Longtemps il tourne sa clef dans
la serrure délicate.
Et il écoute:
Point d'alarme dehors.
Mais il ne se trouve pas en sûreté.
Et comme par une chaînette dont
la poulie grince, il descend
jusqu'au fond de la terre.
On n'entend plus rien.
Dans la campagne muette, les
peupliers se dressent
comme des doigts en l'air
et désignent la lune.

Le Cygne

Il glisse sur le bassin, comme un
traîneau blanc, de nuage en nuage.
Car il n'a faim que des nuages
floconneux qu'il voit naître, bouger
et se perdre dans l'eau.
C'est l'un deux qu'il désire.
Il vise du bec, et il plonge tout
à coup son col vêtu de neige.
Puis, tel un bras de femme sort
d'une manche, il le retire.
Il n'a rien.
Il regarde: les nuages effarouchés
ont disparu.

on the threshold of his shelter.
He files down the root of that grass
which might annoy him.
He rests.
Then he rewinds his tiny watch.
Has he finished? Is it broken?
He rests again for a bit.
He goes back inside and closes the door.
For a long while he turns the key
in the delicate lock.
And he listens:
Not a noise outside.
But still he does not feel safe.
And, as if by a little chain
with a creaking pulley, he lowers
himself into the heart of the earth
Nothing more is heard.
In the silent countryside, the
poplars rise
like fingers straight in the air
pointing to the moon.

The Swan

He glides on the pond like a white
sleigh, from cloud to cloud.
For he hungers only for the fleecy
clouds that he sees forming,
moving and dissolving in the water.
It is one of these he desires.
He aims with his beak and suddenly
plunges his snowy neck into the water.
Then, as a woman's arm emerges
from a sleeve, he draws it back.
He has caught nothing.
He looks: the startled clouds
have disappeared.

Il ne reste qu'un instant désabusé,
car les nuages tardent peu à
revenir, et là-bas, où meurent
les ondulations de l'eau,
en voici un qui se reforme.
Doucement, sur son léger coussin
de plumes, le cygne rame
et s'approche.
Il s'épuise à pêcher de vains
reflets, et peut-être qu'il mourra
victime de cette illusion, avant
d'attraper un seul
morceau de nuage.
Mais qu'est-ce que je dis?
Chaque fois qu'il plonge, il fouille
du bec la vase nourrissante
et ramène un ver.
Il engraisse comme une oie

Le Martin-Pêcheur

Ça n'a pas mordu ce soir, mais
je rapporte une rare émotion.
Comme je tenais ma perche de
ligne tendue, un martin-pêcheur
est venu s'y poser.
Nous n'avons pas d'oiseaux
plus éclatant.
Il semblait une grosse fleur bleue
au bout d'une longue tige.
Ma perche pliait sous le poids.
Je ne respirais plus, tout fier
d'être pris pour un arbre par
un martin-pêcheur.
Et je suis sûr qu'il ne s'est pas
envolé de peur, mais qu'il a cru
qu'il ne faisait que passer

He is disillusioned only for a moment,
for the clouds are not slow to
reappear, and there where the rippling
water subsides, there is
one already reforming.
Softly, upon his light cushion of
feathers, the swan paddles and
draws near.
He is exhausted by fishing for empty
reflections, and perhaps he will
die a victim to that illusion,
having never caught a single
piece of cloud.
But what am I talking about?
Each time he dives, he digs his
beak into the nourishing mud
and brings out a worm.
He grows as fat as a goose.

The Kingfisher

Not a bite this evening, but I had
a compelling experience.
As I was holding out my fishing rod
a kingfisher came
and perched on it.
We have no other bird
more brilliant.
He resembled a big, blue flower
on the tip of a long stalk.
My rod bent beneath the weight.
I held my breath, very proud
to be taken for a tree by
a kingfisher.
And I am sure that he did not
fly away out of fear, but believed
that he was merely passing

d'une branche à une autre.

from one branch to another.

La Pintade

C'est la bossue de ma cour.

Elle ne rêve que plaies
à cause de sa bosse.

Les poules ne lui disent rien:

Brusquement, elle se
précipite et les harcèle.

Puis elle baisse la tête, penche
le corps, et de toute la vitesse
de ses pattes maigres, elle
court frapper, de son bec dur,
juste au centre
de la roue d'une dinde.

Cette poseuse l'agaçait.

Ainsi, la tête bleue, ses barbillons
à vif, cocardière, elle rage
du matin au soir.

Elle se bat sans motif, peut-être
parce qu'elle s' imagine toujours
qu'on se moque de sa taille,
de son crâne chauve
et de sa queue basse.

Et elle ne cesse de jeter un
cri discordant qui perce
l'air comme une pointe.

Parfois elle quitte la cour
et disparaît.

Elle laisse aux volailles
pacifiques un moment de répit.
Mais elle revient plus turbulent
et plus crierde.

Et, frénétique, elle se vautre par terre.
Qu'a-t-elle donc?

La sournoise fait une farce.

The Guinea-Fowl

She's the hunchback of my barnyard.

She thinks of nothing but fighting
because of her hump.

The hens say nothing to her:

Suddenly she leaps
and harrasses them.

Then she lowers her head, bends
forward, and with all the speed
her skinny feet can gain, she runs
and smites with her hard beak
right at the center
of the turkey hen's tail.

The poseur provoked her.

Thus, her head bluish, her
wattles lively, blustering,
she rages from morn to night.

She fights without reason, perhaps
because she always imagines that
someone mocks her figure,
her bald head
and her low, mean tail.

And incessantly she utters a
discordant cry, piercing
the air like a knife.

Sometimes she leaves the barnyard
and disappears.

She grants the peace-loving fowls
a moment of respite.

But she returns more boisterous
and more scolding.

And, frenzied, she wallows in the dirt.
What's with her?

The sneak has played a trick.

Elle est allée pondre son
oeuf à la campagne.

Je peux la chercher si ça m'amuse.

Et elle se roule dans la poussière
comme une bossue.

She went to lay her egg
in the countryside.

I may look for it if I so desire.

And she rolls around in the dust
like a hunchback.

translation by Patrick Mason

Quatre Mélodies

Féerie au clair de lune (Raymond Genty)

Un grillon fait un signal
Sur un timbre de cristal,
Et dans la pénombre chaude
Où les parfums sont grisants
La rampe des vers luisants
S'allume, vert émeraude.

Un ballet de moucherons
Tourne, glisse, fait des ronds,
Dans la lumière changeante.
Un grande papillon de nuit
Passe en agitant sans bruit
Son éventail qui s'argente

Les parfums des grands lys blancs
Montent plus forts, plus troublants,
Dans cette ombre où l'on conspire.
Mais dans cette ombre il y a
Obéron, il y a Titania,
Il y a du Shakespeare.

Les moustiques éveillés
Bruissent autour des oeillets
Tout baignés de crépuscule;
Acteurs liliputiens,
Chorégraphes aériens,
Mille insectes verts et bleus,

Four Songs

Enchantment in the moonlight

A cricket signals
With a crystal tone
And in the warm half-light
Where the perfumes are intoxicating
The footlight of fireflies
Lights up, emerald green.

A ballet of gnats
Turns, slides, circles
In the changing light.
A large moth
Passes without a sound, fluttering
Its fan which becomes silver.

The scent of the large, white lilies
Rises stronger, more unsettling
In this shadow where one conspires.
But in this shadow there is
Oberon, there is Titania,
There is Shakespeare!

The roused mosquitoes
Rustle around the carnations,
Awash in twilight;
Liliputian actors,
Aerial choreographers,
A thousand green and blue insects,

Mille insecte merveilleux
Tourment autour des oeillets
Et font une ronde effrénée.

Puis, ayant tourné longtemps
Sous les roseaux des étangs,
Sous le hêtre et sous l'yeuse,
Les petits danseurs ailés
Soudain se sont en allés
Dans l'ombre mystérieuse.
Tout se tait, seul, par moment,
Le léger sautilllement
D'une oiselle à longue queue.
Puis, plus rien, plus aucun bruit...
Il n'y a plus que la nuit.
Magnifique, immense et bleue.

Pour une amie perdue (Edmond Borsent)

J'ai fait pour t'oublier
tout ce que je pouvais.
C'est fini, c'est fini...
Je serais vainqueur
si je n'entendais pas,
si je n'entendais plus
le son charmant
qu'avait ta petite voix
dans mon cœur

Regards sur l'Infini (la Comtesse Anna de Noailles)

Lors que la mort succédant à l'ennui,
M'accordera sa secourable nuit,
Douce au souhait que j'eus de cesser d'être,
Je veux qu'en paix l'on ouvre la fenêtre
Sur ce morceau de ciel où mon regard
A tant prié l'injurieux hasard

A thousand wondrous insects
Circle about the carnations
And make an unrestrained dance.

Then, having whirled for so long
Under the reeds of the ponds,
Under the beech and holm-oak,
The little winged dancers
Suddenly go off
Into the mysterious night.
All is quiet, except, for the moment,
The light hopping
Of a tiny bird with a long tail.
Then, nothing else, not another sound...
There is nothing but the night,
Magnificent, immense and blue.

For a lost love

I have done everything to forget you
that I possibly could.
It is over, it is over...
I would be the victor
if I didn't hear,
if I didn't keep hearing
the charming sound
Of your small voice
in my heart.

Gazing Upon the Infinite

When death, following boredom,
Will grant me its propitious night,
Kind towards the desire I had of ceasing to be,
I wish that, in peace, the window would open
On that piece of heaven where my gaze
Has pleaded so much with injurious chance

De m'épargner dans les joies ou les peines
Dont j'ai connu la suffocante haleine.
Qu'à mes côtés se reposent mes mains,
Mes mains calmes ainsi que les sages étoiles
(Qu'à mes côtés se reposent mes mains)
Et sur mon front que l'on abaisse un voile
Pour l'honneur dû aux visages humains.

Fantasio (André Bellessort)

La mort t'ayant surpris en travesti de bal,
Pauvre Fantasio, de folles jeunes filles
Te firent un linceul de leurs blanches mantilles,
Et tu fus enterré le soir du carnaval.
Sous un léger brouillard du ciel occidental
Le mardigras folâtre éparpillait ses trilles.
Et ton glas voltigeant sur de lointains quadrilles
Détachait dans la nuit ses notes de cristal.
Des coin du corbillard le feu
des girandoles
Éclairait tout un choeur d'étranges farandoles.
Nul n'avait pris le temps de revêtir le deuil.
Et tous faisaient jouer derrière ton cercueil
Une marche funèbre à leurs tambours de basque

La bonne Chanson (Paul Verlaine)

I
Une Sainte en son auréole,
Une Chatelaine en son tour,
Tout ce que contient la parole
Humaine de grâce et d'amour,

La note d'or que fait entendre
Le cor dans le lointain des bois,
Mariée à la fierté tendre
Des noble Dames d'autrefois;

To spare me the joys and sorrows
Of which I have known the suffocating breath.
May my hands rest by my side,
My calm hands, wise as the stars,
(May my hands rest by my side)
And on my forehead may a veil be lowered
For the honor due to human countenances.

Fantasio

Death, catching you by surprise at the masked ball,
Poor Fantasio, crazy young girls
Made you a shroud of their white mantillas
And you were buried in the evening of Carnival.
Under a light mist of the western sky
The playful mardi-gras scattered its trills.
And your knell fluttering over distant quadrilles
Sent forth into the night its crystal notes.
From the corners of the hearse, the flame
of the fireworks
Illumined a whole choir of strange farandoles.
No one took the time to put on mourning.
And behind your coffin everyone played
A funeral march on their Basque tambourines.
translation by Ann Kinney

The Good Song

I
A saint in her halo,
A chatelaine in her tower,
All that a human word can contain
Of grace and love;

The golden note which is heard
From the horn in the distant woods,
Linked with the tender pride
Of the noble ladies of long ago;

Avec cela le charme insigne
D'un frais sourire triomphant
Éclos dans des candeurs de cygne
Et des rougeurs de femme-enfant;

Des aspects nacrés, blancs et roses,
Un doux accord patricien:
Je vois, j'entends toutes ces choses
Dans son nom Carolingien.

II

Puisque l'aube grandit, puisque voici l'aurore,
Puisque, après m'avoir fui longtemps,
l'espoir veut bien
Revoler devers moi qui l'appelle et l'implore,
Puisque tout ce bonheur veut bien être le mien,
Je veux, guidé par vous, beaux yeux
aux flammes douce,
Par toi conduit, ô main où tremblera ma main,
Marcher droit, que ce soit par
des sentiers de mousses
Ou que rocs et cailloux encombrant le chemin;

Et comme, pour bercer les lenteurs de la route,
Je chanterai des airs ingénus, je me dis
Qu'elle m'écouterait sans déplaisir
sans doute;
Et vraiment je ne veux pas d'autre Paradis.

III

La lune blanche
Luit dans les bois,
De chaque branche
Part une voix
Sous la ramée...

O bien-aimée.

And with this, the rare charm
Of a fresh, triumphant smile
Coming forth in the purity of a swan
And the blushes of a woman-child;

The appearance of pearl, white and rose,
A sweet patrician harmony:
I see, I hear all these things
In her Carolingian name.

II

Since dawn is breaking, since sunrise is here,
Since, having left me for so long,
hope is ready
To return to me, who calls and implores,
Since all this happiness is to be mine,
I desire, (guided by you, lovely eyes
with gentle flames,
Led by you, o hand, in which my hand trembles.)
To walk ahead, be it through
paths of moss
Or ways made rough by rocks and stones;

And, as if to while away the long journey,
I shall sing simple songs, and tell myself,
Not doubting, that she will listen without
displeasure;
And truly, I desire no other Paradise.

III

The white moon
Shines in the forest;
From every branch
Comes a voice
Under the boughs...

Oh, beloved.

L'étang reflète,
Profond miroir,
La silhouette
Du saule noir
Où le vent pleure...

Rêvons, c'est l'heure.

Un vaste et tendre
Apaisement
Semble descendre
Du firmament
Que l'astre irise...

C'est l'heure exquise.

IV

J'allais par des chemins perfides,
Douloureusement incertain.
Vos chères mains furent mes guides.

Si pâle à l'horizon lointain
Luisait un faible espoir d'aurore;
Votre regard fut le matin.

Nul bruit, sinon son pas sonore,
N'encourageait le voyageur.
Votre voix me dit: 'Marche encore!'

Mon coeur craintif, mon sombre coeur
Pleurait, seul, sur la triste voie;
L'amour, délicieux vainqueur,

Nous a réunis dans la joie.

V

J'ai presque peur, en vérité,

The pond reflects,
Deep mirror,
The silhouette
Of a black willow
Where the wind weeps...

Let us dream, this is the hour.

A vast and tender
Peacefulness
Seems to descend
from the heavens
Made iridescent by the star...

This is the exquisite hour.

IV

I walked along treacherous paths,
Painfully insecure.
Your dear hands were my guides.

Very pale on the distant horizon
Shone a faint hope of dawn;
Your eyes were the morning.

No sound but that of his own steps
Encouraged the traveler.
Your voice said to me: 'Go on!'

My fearful heart, my despondent heart
Wept, lonely, on the sad road;
Love, delightfully victorious,

Has reunited us in joy.

V

I am almost afraid, in truth,

Tant je sens ma vie, enlacée
A la radieuse pensée
Qui m'a pris l'âme l'autre été,

Tant votre image, à jamais chère,
Habite en ce coeur tout à vous,
Ce coeur uniquement jaloux
De vous aimer et de vous plaire;

Et je tremble, pardonnez-moi
D'aussi franchement vous le dire,
A penser qu'un mot, qu'un sourire
De vous est désormais ma loi,

Et qu'il vous suffirait d'un geste,
D'une parole ou d'un clin d'oeil,
Pour mettre tout mon être en deuil
De son illusion céleste.

Mais plutôt je ne veux vous voir,
L'avenir dût-il m'être sombre
Et fécond en peine sans nombre,
Qu'a travers un immense espoir,

Plongé dans ce bonheur suprême
De me dire encore et toujours,
En dépit de mornes retours,
Que je vous aime, que je t'aime!

VI

Avant que tu ne t'en ailles,
Pâle étoile du matin;
-Milles cailles
Chantent, chantent dans le thyme!-

Tourne devers le poète,
Dont les yeux sont pleins d'amour,

So closely do I feel my life bound
To the radiant thought
Which possessed my soul last summer,

So much does your dear image
Inhabit this heart, which is completely yours,
This heart, anxious only
To love and please you.

And I tremble, forgive me for
Telling you so frankly,
Because one word, one smile
From you is now my law,

And that a gesture would suffice,
One word, a mere glance,
To plunge my entire being into grief
Over my divine illusion.

Still, I will not see you,
Though my future be dark
And filled with countless sorrow,
Except through a great hopefulness,

Immersed in the supreme happiness
Of saying to myself again and again,
Despite the recurring dejection,
That I love you, I love you!

VI

Before you fade
Pale morning star;
-A thousand quails
Are singing, singing in the thyme!-

Turn towards the poet
Whose eyes are full of love;

-L'alouette
Monte au ciel avec le jour!-

Tourne ton regard que noie
L'aurore dans son azur;
-Quelle joie
Parmi les champs de blé mûr!-

Et fais luire ma pensée
Là-bas, bien loin, oh! bien loin!
-La rosée
Gaiement brille sur le foin!-

Dans le doux rêve où s'agite
Ma mie endormie encore...
-Vite, vite,
Car voici le soleil d'or!-

VII

Donc, ce sera par un clair jour d'été;
Le grand soleil complice de ma joie,
Fera, parmi le satin et le soie,
Plus belle encore votre chère beauté;

Le ciel tout bleu, comme une haute tente,
Frissonnera somptueux a long plis
Sur nos deux fronts qu'auront pâlis
L'émotion du bonheur et l'attente;

Et quand le soir viendra, l'air sera doux
Qui se jouera, caressant, dans vos voiles,
Et les regards paisibles des étoiles
Bienvenuellement souriront aux époux.

VIII

N'est ce pas? nous irons, gais et lents, dans la voie
Modeste que nous montre en souriront l'Espoir

-The lark
Rises to heaven with the day!-

Turn your glance which drowns
The dawn with its blue;
-What joy
Among the fields of ripened grain!-

And make my thoughts shine
Yonder, far away, oh! far away!
-The dew
Glistens brightly on the hay!-

In the sweet dream where, troubled,
My love still sleeps...
-Quickly, quickly,
For here is the golden sun!-

VII

So it will be, on a clear summer's day:
The great sun, accomplice to my joy,
Will make, in silks and satin,
Your beauty even lovelier,

The blue sky, spread like a high tent,
Will tremble sumptuously in long folds
Over our two brows, pale
With the emotions of happiness and expectation;

And when evening comes, the air will be sweet
Which plays, caressingly, among your veils,
And the peaceful gaze of the stars
Will smile benevolently on the married lovers.

VIII

Is it not so? we will walk, happy and slow, down
The modest path shown us by smiling hope,

Peu soucieux qu'on nous ignore ou qu'on nous voie.

Isolés dans l'amour ainsi qu'en un bois noir,
Nos deux coeurs, exhalant leur tendresse paisible,
Seront deux rossignols qui chantent dans le soir.

Sans nous préoccuper de ce que nous destine
Le Sort, nous marcherons pourtant de même pas,
Et la main dans la main, avec l'âme enfantine

De ceux qui s'aime sans mélange, n'est-ce pas?

IX

L'hiver a cessé, la lumière est tiède
Et danse, du sol au firmament clair,
Il faut que le coeur le plus triste cède
A l'immense joie éparse dans l'air.

J'ai depuis un an le printemps dans l'âme
Et le vert retour du doux floral,
Ainsi qu'une flamme entoure une flamme,
Met de l'idéal sur mon idéal.

Le ciel bleu prolonge exhausse et couronne
L'immuable azur où rit mon amour.
La saison est belle et ma part est bonne
Et tous mes espoirs ont enfin leurs tour.

Que vienne l'été! que viennent encore
L'automne et l'hiver! Et chaque saison
Me sera charmante, ô Toi que décore
Cette fantaisie et cette raison!

Not caring if we are noticed or not.

Isolated in love, as in a dark forest,
Our two hearts, breathing peaceful tenderness,
Shall be two nightingales singing at eventide.

Without thoughts of our future,
We shall walk with even tread,
Hand in hand, with the child-like soul

Of those whose love is sincere, is it not so?

IX

Winter is over, the light is warm
And it dances up from earth to clear sky,
The saddest heart must yield
To the great joy filling the air.

For a year I have had Spring in my soul
And the return of this flowering time,
Like a flame about a flame,
Adds perfection to perfection.

The blue sky expands, rises and crowns
The immutable azure where my love smiles.
The Season is lovely, and my lot is pleasant,
And all my hopes have at last come to pass.

Let Summer come! let come again
Autumn and even Winter! And every season
Will delight me, o you, adorned by
This fancy and this understanding!

translation by Patrick Mason

La Fraîcheur et le Feu (Paul Éluard)

I

Rayons des yeux et des soleils
Des ramures et des fontaines
Lumières du sol et du ciel
De l'homme et de l'oubli de l'homme
Un nuage couvre le sol
Un nuage couvre le ciel
Soudain la lumière m'oublie
La mort seule demeure entière
Je suis une ombre je ne vois plus
Le soleil jaune le soleil rouge
Le soleil blanc le ciel changeant
Je ne sais plus
La place du bonheur vivant
Au bord de l'ombre sans ciel ni terre

II

Le matin les branches attisent
Le bouillonnement des oiseaux
Le soir les arbres sont tranquilles
Le jour frémissant se repose.

III

Tout disparu même le toit même le ciel
Même l'ombre tombée des branches
Sur les cimes des mousses tendres
Même les mots et les regards bien accordés
Soeurs miroitières de mes larmes
Les étoiles brillaient autour de ma fenêtre
Et les yeux referment leurs ailes pour le nuit
Vivaient d'un univers sans bornes.

IV

Dans les ténèbres du jardin
Viennent des filles invisible
Plus fines qu'à midi l'ondée

The Coolness and the Fire

I

Rays of eyes and of suns
Of branches and of fountains
Lights of the sun and of heaven
Of man and of the oblivion of man
A cloud covers the sun
A cloud covers the heavens
Suddenly the light forgets me
Death alone remains whole
I am a shadow I no longer see
The yellow sun the red sun
The white sun the changing heavens
I no longer know
The place of living happiness
On the edge of the shadow without heaven or earth.

II

Morning the branches wave in turmoil
The agitation of the birds
Evening the trees are tranquil
Day trembling settles down.

III

All disappeared even the roofs even the sky
Even the shadow fallen from the branches
Onto the peaks of the tender mosses
Even the words and the concordant looks
Sisters making mirrors of my tears
The stars were shining around my window
And my eyes closing again their wings for the night
Were living in a boundless universe.

IV

Into the gloom of the garden
Come invisible girls
Finer than the midday rainshower

Mon sommeil les a pour amies
Elles m'envirent en secret
De leurs complaisances aveugles.

V

Unis la fraîcheur et le feu
Unis tes lèvres et tes yeux
De ta folie attends sagesse
Fais image de femme et d'homme.

VI

Homme au sourire tendre
Femme aux tendres paupières
Homme aux joues rafraîchies
Femme aux bras doux et frais
Homme aux prunelles calmes
Femme aux lèvres ardentes
Homme aux paroles pleines
Femme aux yeux partagés
Homme aux deux mains utiles
Femme aux mains de raison
Homme aux astres constants
Femme aux seins de durée

Il n'est rien qui vous retient
Mes maîtres de m'éprouver.

VII

La grande rivière qui va
Grande au soleil et petite à la lune
par tous chemins à l'aventure
Ne m'aura pas pour la montrer du doigt

Je sais le sort de la lumière
J'en ai assez pour jouer son éclat
Pour me parfaire au dos de mes paupières
Pour que rien ne vive sans moi.

My sleep has them for friends
They intoxicate me secretly
With their blind complaisance.

V

United the coolness and the fire
United your lips and your eyes
From your madness expect wisdom
Make a likeness of woman and of man.

VI

Man of tender smile
Woman of tender eyelids
Man of freshened cheeks
Woman of sweet fresh arms
Man of calm pupils
Woman of burning lips
Man of full words
Woman of shared eyes
Man of two useful hands
Woman of reasonable hands
Man of constant stars
Woman of enduring breasts

Nothing holds you back
My masters from testing me.

VII

The large river which flows
Big in the sun and small in the moon
By all paths at random
Will not have me point it out

I know the fate of the light
I have had enough of playing in its brilliance
To perfect myself behind my eyelids
So that nothing might live without me.

translation by Ann Kinney

The distinguished American baritone **Patrick Mason** began his career performing Renaissance and avant-garde music while attending the Peabody Conservatory of Music, where he was a student of Francesco Valentini, Flore Wend and Ellen Mack Senofsky. Mr. Mason is a much admired early music soloist, having extensively performed and recorded with ensembles including the Waverly Consort, the Boston Camerata and Schola Antiqua. Patrick Mason has performed in concert and on recordings with a number of leading composers including Leonard Bernstein, Elliott Carter, Stephen Sondheim, Krzysztof Penderecki, and George Crumb. His performance of the twin leading roles in Tod Machover's opera *VALIS*, won critical acclaim on stage (in Tokyo and Boston) as well as on the CD recording, which was awarded 'Best of the Year' by the *New York Times* (Bridge BCD 9007). Mr. Mason sings regularly with the New York Festival of Song, and is a frequent guest artist with orchestras, performing a wide range of oratorio and concert repertoire. In an alternate career, Pat has enjoyed a long term collaboration as librettist for the graphic artist P. Craig Russell. Together they have produced graphic versions of famous operas, including *The Magic Flute*, *Parsifal*, and *Pelléas et Mélisande*. Mr. Mason's most recent recordings include *Winterreise* (Bridge BCD 9053) and a disc with guitarist David Starobin for the Belgian label, GHA. Patrick Mason is currently a member of the voice faculty at the University of Colorado at Boulder.

Pianist **Robert Spillman** has performed extensively in the United States and Europe, where he resided for ten years. Since his return to the US in 1973, he has been on the faculty of the Eastman School, the Aspen Music Festival and the University of Colorado at Boulder, where he has been Chair of the Piano faculty since 1987. Mr. Spillman is also the author of *The Art of Accompanying* and *Sight Reading at the Keyboard*. He has recorded for Arabesque, Mercury, Music Heritage Society, Pro Arte and Vox.

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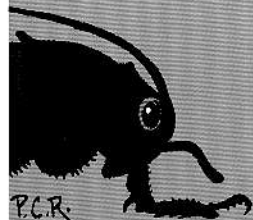
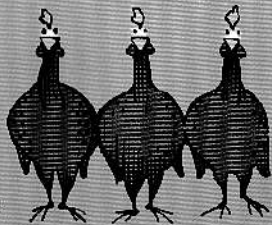
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