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CLAUDE DEBUSSY
(1862–1918)

OLIVIER MESSIAEN
(1908–1992)

GABRIEL FAURÉ
(1845–1924)

SUSANNA PHILLIPS, SOPRANO | MYRA HUANG, PIANO

SONGS BY DEBUSSY, MESSIAEN AND FAURÉ

During the century stretching from the 1860s to the 1960s—from Fauré's first vocal attempts to the last of Poulenc, say—the art of voice-and-piano songs witnessed an extraordinary flowering at the hands of French composers. This was a tradition and culture that nurtured both major and minor talents, many of whom achieved some of their most personal expressions in the field of song: Chabrier, Chausson, Duparc, Reynaldo Hahn, Koechlin, Ravel and Satie for instance. And it the greatest composers of the period—Fauré, Debussy, Messiaen—also immeasurably enriched that vocal culture in their own distinctive ways.

The songs of **Claude Debussy** are among the most remarkable of the whole period, sometimes seeming to defy analysis. While his earliest works in the genre are still a little conventional, redolent perhaps of Gounod, and make use of text-repetition and a rather melismatic vocal style, in his mature songs Debussy's remarkable sensitivity to the musical qualities of words and to the natural rhythm of speech causes the vocal line to grow out of the lyrics themselves, generally with one note per syllable and sometimes with recitative-like vocal writing. His characteristic piano parts, refined in his solo piano pieces, are often much more complex and extremely evocative, conjuring up delicate imagery or providing a tremulous, poetic correlative to the singer's part.

The six songs that make up his collection *Ariettes oubliées*, composed between 1885 and 1887, first published in 1888, but revised in 1903 (when

Debussy dedicated them to the soprano Mary Garden) are really the first set of songs in which Debussy's pronounced individuality began to make itself felt. They are composed to poems by Paul Verlaine, to whose verse he frequently turned for song-texts (for instance in the two sets of *Fêtes galantes*) as he found their word-music highly congenial. Here, partly through his study of Richard Wagner—a composer he often affected to despise—Debussy found ways to make his songs much more chromatic and tonally ambiguous, suiting the elusive moods of Verlaine's poetry.

The very opening of the first song, 'C'est l'extase', is immediately striking with its chain of falling ninths in the piano part; the floating, apparently weightless melodic line perfectly evokes the mood of the text, with a wide vocal leap at the mention of a gentle cry, and a purling, stream-like figuration at the mention of whirling water. There are more watery musical images in 'Il pleure dans mon coeur' (where the sentiment is close to the late 20th-century pop-song 'It's raining, raining in my heart'), with the piano's pattering figuration emulating raindrops in a similar fashion to Debussy's well-known piano-piece *Jardins sous la pluie*. The melancholic mood persists and deepens in the shadow of the trees in the sad, solemn 'L'ombre des arbres'.

By contrast, the wooden horses of 'Chevaux de Bois' are depicted by the piano with the sounds of a merry-go-round in a bright, lively texture, though there is again a hint of sadness in the song's middle section where the poet laments that these are not, in fact, living creatures. The last two songs bear the English titles 'Green' and 'Spleen'—Verlaine, who spent part

of the 1870s in England as a teacher of French, Latin and Greek, simply liked the sound of the words. He also referred to these two poems as aquarelles, and again Debussy responds with water-imagery in his piano parts. 'Green' is a love-song, beginning in celebratory mood as the lover offers the bounty of nature to his beloved, but eventually becoming slumberous. 'Spleen' is rather a song of despair: the loved one has done something unforgivable (gone off with someone else, perhaps) and as a result the sky is too blue, the sea is too green. Debussy has the colour drain out of his setting as the vocal line becomes obsessive, monotonous; and the music eventually fades away in discontent.

Our programme includes a set of songs of a rather different kind, both mystical and religious in nature. Born in Avignon, of partly Flemish and partly Provençal descent, his mother a poet, his father a translator of Shakespeare, Olivier Messiaen had emerged by the 1940s as the most original personality in French music, a position he maintained until his death. The sources of his inspiration—Catholic mysticism, Hindu philosophy, plainchant and latterly and increasingly the whole vast research field of birdsong, on which he was an acknowledged authority—infused his music with an extraordinary spiritual ardour, and impelled him to develop unique harmonic, rhythmic and melodic idioms which reflect, among other things, his acute sense of colour in sound. The song-cycle *Poèmes pour Mi* uses patterns from Classical Greek metrics and the rhythmic structures of Hindu music, which at first caused difficulties in its reception in early performances, though nowadays they seem no impediment to the cycle's lucid

lyricism. Written for voice and piano in 1936 (Messiaen made an orchestral version the following year), this cycle is dedicated to the composer's first wife, Claire Delbos: 'Mi' was Messiaen's pet name for her. The poems are Messiaen's own, their phrasing and imagery influenced by the Gospels and Psalms as well as the Dauphinoise countryside in which he always preferred to compose. There are nine of them (Messiaen knew well that nine is the number symbolic of maternity), divided into two Books of four and five songs respectively, and they are at once love-poems and mystic religious texts, almost a kind of modern *Song of Songs*.

An initial love-song, thanking God who has made the Beloved ('Action de grâces', is followed by an (implied) meditation on suffering in a beautiful landscape ('Paysage'), on leaving the earthly house of life ('La maison'), and a terrifying vision of the gates of Hell ('Épouvante'). The fifth and sixth poems are theological advice to the Beloved, the wife, to help her join the choir of angels ('L'épouse' and 'Ta voix'); the seventh, a kind of war-song, views husband and wife as comrades in the battle between good and evil ('Les deux guerriers'). An ecstatic vision of fulfilment in earthly love, in the eighth song ('Le collier'), gives way to the joyous bell-sounds of the final one, 'Prière exaucée', where the poet finally leaves the human plane for the glory of resurrection in Christ. Messiaen once commented that the first and last songs reflected his preoccupation with Plainchant, with a rapid delivery of the text like an intoned psalm, the most significant words decorated by long melismas, while the most important element in the work was its harmonic colour, secured by combining streams of chords in the vari-

ous 'modes of limited transposition' he had established in developing his musical language. Certainly this is a remarkable cycle that combines the sensuousness of harmony of Messiaen's first mature works with the kind of sense of human and other-worldly ecstasy towards which his music strove at all stages of his career.

Gabriel Fauré composed around 100 songs in all. Though some of his early efforts have something of the odour of the salon, his response to his chosen poets rapidly deepened and he produced many of the defining masterpieces of French song. From the first he emulated the example of Schumann—whose music he loved—by putting the pianist on an equal footing with the singer; indeed in his later songs the piano sometimes has the more important role.

Adieu, op. 21 no. 3 is the last of a triptych of songs published in 1881 collectively entitled *Poème d'un jour* and setting three poems by Charles Grandmougin that trace the beginning, apparent permanence and ending of a love-affair, all in a single day. The verses speak in *Adieu* of the fickleness and changeability of every aspect of human life, so that almost at the moment of first meeting he is preparing to say 'farewell'. Fauré's setting is almost a recapitulation of the emotional journey already traversed in the other two poems, but in a more dispassionate, even careless mood, mirrored in the wide-stepping intervals in voice and piano, the touches of syncopation and careless modulations, and the piano's arpeggio that seems like a puff of cigarette smoke, or the evanescent scent of a rose.

Nell, op. 18 no. 1 appeared in 1880 and is dedicated to the wife of Fauré's

close friend Camille Saint-Saëns, who had also been one of his teachers at the École Niedermeyer in Paris. It was first performed on 28 January 1881 (the day before *Poème d'un Jour*) at a Société Nationale concert, sung by soprano Henriette Fuchs, a gifted amateur and one of the earliest advocates of Fauré's songs. Setting a poem by Leconte de Lisle, the entire song gets its impetus from the rippling semiquavers which are never absent from the accompaniment, whether in the pianist's right hand or the left or both. Over this figuration Fauré fashions a mainly quiet, smoothly legato, almost prayerful vocal line which seems to embody a sense of delicacy and restraint on the part of the poet. Only in the third stanza is the treatment more effusive, the melody sent into new harmonic territory by Fauré's cunning and piquant modulations.

Les Roses d'Ispahan, op. 39 no. 4, is another setting of Leconte de Lisle, which appeared in 1884, being heard in public for the first time on 27 December that year at a Société Nationale concert, sung by Thérèse Guyon.

Fauré in fact omitted two of the stanzas of this 'orientalizing' poem, finding the remaining four adequate for his expressive purposes. In setting such 'exotic' material Fauré sometimes made use of pseudo-oriental effects, and these are evident in the piano's prelude and interludes between the voices and in occasional touches to the vocal line—though it is all highly refined: he refrains from any direct word-painting, but the gently rocking phrases and quiet guitar-like arpeggios of the accompaniment, the singer's caressing phrases and the repeated dolce markings in her seductive vocal line help to produce the tenderly sensual atmosphere that the poem seeks to evoke.

Fauré's *Après un rêve*, op. 7 no. 2, written about 1865 but not published until 1877, is one of the composer's early songs, but has become one of the best-loved. It sets an anonymous poem translated by Romain Bussine, describing a dream in which the narrator and her beloved are reunited in an almost otherworldly meeting, followed by a longing to return to this dream state. The light-textured piano accompaniment creates the sense of an underlying pulse, while the vocal line is appropriately languorous and dreamy, creating a sense of intense expressiveness and emotional fulfillment that seems to transcend the mere notes out of which the song is constructed.

Notes by Malcolm MacDonald

DEBUSSY | ARIETTES OUBLIÉES

C'EST L'EXTASE LANGOUREUSE

C'est l'extase langoureuse,
C'est la fatigue amoureuse,
C'est tous les frissons des bois
Parmi l'étreinte des brises,
C'est vers les ramures grises
Le chœur des petites voix.

O le frêle et frais murmure!
Cela gazouille et susurre,
Cela ressemble au cri doux
Que l'herbe agitée expire...
Tu dirais, sous l'eau qui vire,
Le roulis sourd des cailloux.

Cette âme qui se lamente
En cette plainte dormante
C'est la nôtre, n'est-ce pas ?
La mienne, dis, et la tienne,
Dont s'exhale l'humble antienne
Par ce tiède soir, tout bas ?

—*Paul Verlaine (1844–1896)*

IT IS THE LANGOROUS ECSTASY

It is the langorous ecstasy,
It is the lover's exhaustion,
It is all the shivering of the branches,
the grasp of gentle winds;
It is near the grey twigs:
The chorus of tiny voices.

Oh, the frail and fresh whisper!
It babbles and murmurs,
It resembles the soft cry
That winded grass exudes.
You could say it was, under the curving
stream,
The muffled sound of rolling pebbles.

This spirit, which mourns
And this plaintive cry,
It is ours, no?
Mine, you say, and yours,
Whose humble anthem we breathe
On this mild night, in silence?

IL PLEURE DANS MON CŒUR

Il pleure dans mon cœur
Comme il pleut sur la ville;
Quelle est cette langueur
Qui pénètre mon cœur?

Ô bruit doux de la pluie,
Par terre et sur les toits!
Pour un cœur qui s'ennuie,
Ô le chant de la pluie!

Il pleure sans raison
Dans ce cœur qui s'écœure.
Quoi! nulle trahison?...
Ce deuil est sans raison.

C'est bien la pire peine,
De ne savoir pourquoi
Sans amour et sans haine
Mon cœur a tant de peine!

—*Paul Verlaine (1844–1896)*

IT WEEPS IN MY HEART

It weeps in my heart
like the rain over the village.
What is this exhaustion
that penetrates my heart?

Oh the soft fall of the rain,
on the earth and the roofs!
For a heart which despairs
oh the song of the rain!

There is mad weeping
in this heartless heart.
What! No betrayal?
There's no sanity for this grief.

Truly the harshest pain
is not knowing why,
without love or hatred,
my heart feels so much pain.

L'OMBRE DES ARBRES

L'ombre des arbres dans la rivière embrumée
Meurt comme de la fumée,
Tandis qu'en l'air, parmi les ramures réelles,
Se plaignent les tourterelles.

Combien, ô voyageur, ce paysage blême
Te mira blême toi-même,
Et que tristes pleuraient dans les hautes
feuillées,—
Tes espérances noyées.

—*Paul Verlaine (1844–1896)*

CHEVAUX DE BOIS

Tournez, tournez, bon chevaux de bois,
Tournez cent tours, tounez mille tours.
Tournez souvent et tournez toujours,
Tournez, tournez au son des hautbois.

L'enfant tout rouge et la mère blanche,
Le gars en noir et la fille en rose.
L'une à la chose et l'autre à la pose,
Chacun se paie un sou de dimanche.

Tournez, tournez, chevaux de leur coeur,
Tandis qu'autour de tous vos tournois
Clignote l'oeil du filou sournois.
Tournez au son du piston vainqueur!

THE SHADOW OF THE TREES IN THE MIST-CLOAKED RIVER

The shadow of the trees in the mist-cloaked
river dies like the smoke;
while above, among the true trees,
the doves are mourning.

How well, Oh traveler, does this pale passage
mirror your own pallor,
And how mournfully, in the high leaves,
they wept, your hopes drowning.

TURN, TURN, GOOD WOODEN HORSES

Turn, turn, good wooden horses,
turn a hundred times, turn a thousand times,
turn often and turn always,
turn, turn to the tune of the oboes.

The all-red child and pale mother,
the boy in black and the girl in pink,
the one pursuing and the other posing,
each getting a coin's worth of Sunday fun.

Turn, turn, heart-horses,
while all around your turning
squints the sly rogue's eye—
turn to the sound of the vanquishing cornet.

C'est étonnant comme ça vous soule,
D'aller ainsi dans ce cirque bête,
Rien dans le ventre et mal dans la tête,
Du mal en masse et du bien en foule;

Tournez dadas, sans qu'il soit besoin
D'user jamais de nuls éperons
Pour commander à vos galops ronds.
Tournez, tournez, sans espoir de foin,

Et dépêchez, chevaux de leur âme,
Déjà voici que sonne à la soupe
La nuit qui tombe et chasse la troupe
De gais buveurs, que leur soif affame.

Tournez, tournez! Le ciel en velours
D'astres en or se vêt lentement,
L'Eglise tinte un glas tristement.
Tournez au son joyeux des tambours, tournez.
—*Paul Verlaine (1844–1896)*

It is astonishing how it enchants you
to spin around in a silly circle,
empty stomach and a headache,
sick and having lots of fun.

Turn, wooden horses, with no need
ever to dig in spurs
to order you to gallop around,
turn, turn, with no chance for hay.

And hurry, horses of their souls—
hear the supper bell already,
the night that is falling and chasing the troop
of happy drinkers, hungered by their thirst.

Turn, turn! The velvet sky
is slowly clothed with stars of gold.
The church bell tolls mournfully.
Turn, to the joyous sound of drums.

GREEN

Voici des fruits, des fleurs, des feuilles et des branches
Et puis voici mon coeur qui ne bat que pour vous.
Ne le déchirez pas avec vos deux mains blanches
Et qu'à vos yeux si beaux l'humble présent soit doux.

J'arrive tout couvert encore de rosée
Que le vent du matin vient glacer à mon front.
Souffrez que ma fatigue à vos pieds reposée
Rêve des chers instants qui la délasseront.

Sur votre jeune sein laissez rouler ma tête
Toute sonore encor de vos derniers baisers;
Laissez-la s'apaiser de la bonne tempête,
Et que je dorme un peu puisque vous reposez.

—*Paul Verlaine (1844–1896)*

GREEN

Here are the fruit, the flowers, the leaves
and the branches,
And then here is my heart, which solely
beats for you.
Do not rip it up with your two hands of
white,
And in your pretty eyes, may the humble
present be sweet.

I show up covered entirely dew,
Which the wind of morning comes to
freeze on my forehead.
Suffer my fatigue as I rest at your feet,
Dreaming of precious instants that will
restore me.

On your young chest allow my head to rest,
Still sonorous with your last kisses;
Let it relax after the good storm,
And let me sleep a little, while you are
resting.

SPLEEN

Les roses étaient toutes rouges,
Et les lierres étaient tout noirs.
Chère, pour peu que tu te bouges,
Renaissent tous mes désespoirs.

Le ciel était trop bleu, trop tendre,
La mer trop verte et l'air trop doux;
Je crains toujours, ce qu'est d'attendre,
Quelque fuite atroce de vous!

Du houx à la feuille vernie,
Et du luisant buis je suis las,
Et de la campagne infinie,
Et de tout, fors de vous. Hélas!

—*Paul Verlaine (1844–1896)*

OLIVIER MESSIAEN | POÈMES POUR MI, BOOK ONE

ACTION DE GRÂCES

Le ciel,
Et l'eau qui suit les variations des nuages,
Et la terre, et les montagnes qui attendent
toujours,
Et la lumière qui transforme.

SPLEEN

The roses were all red
And the ivy was all black.
Dear, it only needs one little move from you
For all my despairs to be reborn.

The sky was too blue, too tender,
The sea too green and the air too soft.
I dread all the time, ever attending,
Some atrocious flight from you.

The holly with its varnished leaf
and the shining boxwood bore me,
And of the infinite countryside,
And of everything, except you. Alas!

THANKSGIVING

The sky,
And the water which follows the variations
of the clouds,
And the earth, and the mountains which
wait always,
And the light which transforms.

Et un œil près de mon œil, une pensée près
de ma pensée,
Et un visage qui sourit et pleure avec le
mien,
Et deux pieds derrière mes pieds
Comme la vague à la vague est unie.

Et une âme,
Invisible,
pleine d'amour et d'immortalité,
Et un vêtement de chair et d'os qui germera
pour la résurrection,
Et la Vérité, et l'Esprit, et la grâce avec son
héritage de lumière.

Tout cela, vous me l'avez donné.
Et vous vous êtes encore donné vous-même,
Dans l'obéissance et dans le sang de votre
Croix,
Et dans un Pain plus doux que la fraîcheur
des étoiles, Mon Dieu.

Alleluia.

—Olivier Messiaen (1908–1992)

And an eye close to my eye, a thought close
to my thought,
And a face that smiles and weeps with mine,
And two feet behind my feet
Like the wave to the wave is united.

And a soul,
Invisible,
full of love and of immortality,
And a clothing of flesh and bone that will
germinate for the resurrection,
And Truth, and the Spirit, and the grace
with its heritage of light.

All of that, you have given me.
And you still gave yourself,
In the obedience and in the blood of your
cross,
And in a bread softer than the freshness of
the stars, My God.

Alleluia

Translation: Susanna Phillips

PAYSAGE

Le lac comme un gros bijou bleu.
La route pleine de chagrins et de fondrières,
Mes pieds qui hésitent dans la poussière,
Le lac comme un gros bijou bleu.

Et là voilà, verte et bleue comme le paysage!
Entre le blé et le soleil je vois son visage:
Elle sourit, la main sur les yeux.
Le lac comme un gros bijou bleu.

—Olivier Messiaen (1908–1992)

LA MAISON

Cette maison nous allons la quitter:
Je la vois dans ton œil.
Nous quitterons nos corps aussi:
Je les vois dans ton œil.
Toutes ces images de douleur
qui s'impriment dans ton œil,
Ton œil ne les retrouveras plus:
Quand nous contemplerons la Vérité,
Dans des corps purs, jeunes,
éternellement lumineux.

—Olivier Messiaen (1908–1992)

LANDSCAPE

The lake like a large blue jewel.
The road full of sorrows and quagmires,
My feet which hesitate in the dust,
The lake like a large blue jewel.

And there she is, green and blue like the
landscape! Between the corn and the sun
I see her face: She smiles, her hand on her
eyes. The lake like a large blue jewel.

Translation: Susanna Phillips

THE HOUSE

We are going to leave this house:
I see it in your eye.
We will leave our bodies as well:
I see them in your eye.
All these images of pain
imprinted on your eye,
Your eye will not find them anymore:
When we contemplate the Truth,
In pure bodies, young,
eternally luminous.

Translation: Susanna Phillips

ÉPOUVANTE

Ha!
N'enfouis pas tes souvenirs dans la terre, tu
ne les retrouverais plus.
Ne tire pas, ne froisse pas, ne déchire pas.
Des lambeaux sanglants te suivraient dans
les ténèbres
Comme une vomissure triangulaire,
Et le choc buyant des anneaux sur la porte
irréparable
Rythmerait ton désespoir
Pour rassasier les puissances du feu.
Ha!

—*Olivier Messiaen (1908–1992)*

L'ÉPOUSE

Va où l'Esprit te mène,
Nul ne peut séparer ce que Dieu a uni,
Va où l'Esprit te mène,
L'épouse est le prolongement de l'époux,
Va où l'Esprit te mène,
Comme l'Église est le prolongement du
Christ.

—*Olivier Messiaen (1908–1992)*

TERROR

Ha!
Don't hide your memories in the ground,
you will not find them again.
Do not take, do not crush, do not tear.
Bloody scraps would follow you in darkness

Like a triangular vomit,
And the noisy shock of the rings on the
irreparable gate
Beat your despair
To satisfy the power of fire.
Ha!

Translation: Susanna Phillips

THE WIFE

Go where the Spirit leads you,
Nothing can separate what God has united,
Go where the Spirit leads you,
The wife is the extension of the husband,
Go where the Spirit leads you,
Just as the Church is the extension of Christ

Translation: Susanna Phillips

TA VOIX

fenêtre pleine d'après-midi,
Qui s'ouvre sur l'après-midi,
Et sur ta voix fraîche
(Oiseau de printemps qui s'éveille).
Si elle s'ouvrait sur l'éternité
Je te verrais plus belle encore.
Tu es la servante du Fils,
Et le Père t'aimerait pour cela.
Sa lumière sans fin tomberait sur tes épaules,
Sa marque sur ton front.
Tu complèterais le nombre des anges
incorporels.
A la gloire de la Trinité sainte
Un toujours de bonheur élèverait ta voix
fraîche
(Oiseau de printemps qui s'éveille):
Tu chanterais.

—*Olivier Messiaen (1908–1992)*

YOUR VOICE

Window filled with afternoon,
That opens on the afternoon,
And on your clear voice
(Bird of Spring Awakening).
If it opened on eternity
I would see you as still more beautiful.
You are the servant of the Son.
And the Father would love you for that.
His light without-end would fall on your
shoulders.
His mark on your forehead.
You would complete the number of intan-
gible angels.
To the glory of the Holy Trinity
An Eternity of happiness would raise your
clear voice
(Bird of Spring Awakening):
You would sing.

Translation: Susanna Phillips

LES DEUX GUERRIERS

De deux nous voici un. En avant!
Comme des guerriers bardés de fer!
Ton oeil et mon oeil
parmi les statues qui marchent,
Parmi les hurlements noirs,
les écroulements de sulfureuses géométries.
Nous gémissons: ah! écoute-moi,
je suis tes deux enfants, mon Dieu!
En avant, guerriers sacramentels!
Tendez joyeusement vos boucliers.
Lancez vers le ciel les flèches du dévouement d'aurore:
Vous parviendrez aux portes de la Ville.

—Olivier Messiaen (1908–1992)

LE COLLIER

Printemps enchaîné,
arc-en-ciel léger du matin,
Ah! mon collier! Ah! mon collier!
Petit soutien vivant de mes oreilles lasses,
Collier de renouveau,
de sourire et de grâce,
Collier d'Orient,
collier choisi multicolore
aux perles dures et cocasses!
Paysage courbe, épousant l'air frais du matin,
Ah! mon collier! Ah! mon collier!
Tes deux bras autour de mon cou, ce matin.

—Olivier Messiaen (1908–1992)

THE TWO WARRIORS

From two, we are one. Forward March!
Like armor-clad warriors!
Your eye and my eye
Among the statues that march,
Among the black shrieks,
The collapse of sulfurous geometric structures. We groan: Ah! Listen to me,
I am your two children, my God!
Forward March, sacramental warriors!
Joyfully thrust out your shields,
Launch arrows into the sky
to the dedication of the dawn:
You will reach the gates of the city.

Translation: Susanna Phillips

THE NECKLACE

Springtime enchained,
light-hued rainbow of morning,
Ah! My necklace! Ah! My necklace!
Little support living beneath my weary ears,
Necklace of renewal,
of smiles and of grace,
Necklace of the East,
Necklace chosen from many colors,
from pearls hard and lighthearted!
Curving landscape, wedded to the cool
morning air, Ah! my necklace! Ah! my
necklace! Your two arms around my neck,
this morning.

Translation: Susanna Phillips

PRIÈRE EXAUCÉE

Ébranlez la solitaire,
la vieille montagne de douleur,
Que le soleil travaille
les eaux amères de mon coeur!
O Jésus,
Pain vivant et qui donnez la vie,
Ne dites qu'une seule parole
et mon âme sera guérie.
Ébranlez la solitaire,
la vieille montagne de douleur,
Que le soleil travaille
les eaux amères de mon coeur!
Donnez-moi votre grâce,
donnez-moi votre grâce!
Carillonne, mon coeur!
Que ta résonance soit dure, et longue, et
profonde!
Frappe, tape, choque pour ton roi! Frappe,
tape, choque pour ton Dieu! Voici ton jour
de gloire
et de résurrection!
La joie est revenue.

—Olivier Messiaen (1908–1992)

ANSWERED PRAYER

Shake the lonely,
The old mountain of pain,
As the sun pounds
The bitter waters of my heart!
O Jesus,
Living bread which gives life,
Do not say but one single word
And my soul will be healed.
Shake the solitary
The old mountain of pain,
As the sun works
The bitter waters of my heart!
Give me your grace,
Give me your grace!
Ring out as chimes, my heart!
May your resonance be hard, and long, and
deep!
Strike, clap, clink for your King!
Strike, clap, clink for your God!
Here is your day of glory
And resurrection!
Joy has returned.

Translation: Susanna Phillips

LES ROSES D'ISPAHAN

Les roses d'Ispahan dans leur gaine de mousse, Les jasmins de Mossoul, les fleurs de l'oranger, Ont un parfum moins frais, ont une odeur moins douce, Ô blanche Leïlah! que ton souffle léger.

Ta lèvre est de corail et ton rire léger
Sonne mieux que l'eau vive et d'une voix plus douce.
Mieux que le vent joyeux qui berce l'oranger,
Mieux que l'oiseau qui chante au bord d'un nid de mousse.

Mais le subtile odeur des roses dans leur mousse, La brise qui se joue autour de l'oranger Et l'eau vive qui flue avec sa plainte douce Ont un charme plus sûr que ton amour léger!

Ô Leïlah! depuis que de leur vol léger
Tous les baisers ont fui de ta lèvre si douce
Il n'est plus de parfum dans le pâle oranger,
Ni de céleste arôme aux roses dans leur mousse.

THE ROSES OF ISPAHAN

The roses of Ispahan in their sheath of moss, the jasmines of Mosul, the orange flowers, have a scent less crisp, an aroma less sweet, O pale Leilah, than your airy breath!

Your lips are of coral and your gentle laughter has a softer and lovelier sound than rippling water.
Lovelier than the joyous wind that rocks the orange tree, lovelier than the bird that chirps near its nest of moss.

But the subtle odor of the roses in their moss, the breeze which plays about the orange-tree and the living water flowing with its plaintive whisper have a more definite charm than your risky love!

O Leilah, since in their airy flight all the kisses have fled from your lips so soft there is no longer any perfume from the pale orange tree, no divine scent from the roses in the moss.

L'oiseau, sur le duvet humide et sur la mousse, Ne chante plus parmi la rose et l'oranger; L'eau vive des jardins n'a plus de chanson douce, L'aube ne dore plus le ciel pur et léger.

Oh! que ton jeune amour, ce papillon léger, Revienne vers mon coeur d'une aile prompte et douce. Et qu'il parfume encor [les fleurs]1 de l'oranger, Les roses d'Ispahan dans leur gaine de mousse.

Charles-Marie-René Leconte de Lisle (1818-1894)

NELL

Ta rose de pourpre à ton clair soleil,
Ô Juin, étincelle enivrée,
Penche aussi vers moi ta coupe dorée:
Mon coeur à ta rose est pareil.

Sous le mol abri de la feuille ombreuse
Monte un soupir de volupté:
Plus d'un ramier chante au bois écarté.
O mon coeur, sa plainte amoureuse.

The bird, in its nest of moist feathers or moss, sings no more among the roses and orange-trees; the springs in the gardens have lost their soft song; and dawn no longer gilds the pure and weightless sky.

Oh, if only your young love, that airy butterfly, would return to my breast on swift and gentle wings, and perfume again the orange blossom and the roses of Ispahan in their sheath of moss.

NELL

Under your clear sun, oh June,
your red rose sparkles enlivened.
Lean over me too with your cup of gold-
my heart is equal to your rose.

Under the darkened, covering leaves
a sigh of lust rises.
In the forest there are pigeons cooing,
singing their love-songs (oh my heart!).

Que ta perle est douce au ciel parfumé.
Étoile de la nuit pensive! Mais combien plus
douce est la clarté vive Qui rayonne en mon
coeur, en mon coeur charmé!

La chantante mer. Le long du rivage,
Taira son murmure éternel,
Avant qu'en mon coeur, chère amour.
Ô Nell, ne fleurisse plus ton image!

APRÈS UN RÊVE

Dans un sommeil que charmaient ton image
Je rêvais le bonheur, ardent mirage,
Tes yeux étaient plus doux, ta voix pure et
sonore, Tu rayonnais comme un ciel éclairé
par l'aurore;

Tu m'appelais et je quittais la terre
Pour m'enfuir avec toi vers la lumière,
Les cieus pour nous entr'ouvraient leurs
nues, Splendeurs inconnues, lueurs divines
entrevues,

Hélas! Hélas! triste réveil des songes
Je t'appelle, ô nuit, rends moi tes
mensonges, Reviens, reviens radieuse,
Reviens ô nuit mystérieuse!

—*Romain Bussine (1830–1899)*

How sweet is the pearl in the sky,
the star of thoughtful night!
But how much sweeter is the bright shining
that glows in my charmed heart!

The singing sea. Across its banks
will end its eternal murmur
before your image, my love.
O Nell, cease not to bloom in my heart.

AFTER A DREAM

In a slumber charmed with your image
I dreamed joyously, soaring heart, ardent
mirage
Your eyes more soft, your voice pure and
sonorous—You radiated like an aurora in
the clear sky.

You called me, and I quit the earth
With you to the sky—together towards
the light. Heaven its clouded shroud for us
unwrapped, Unknown splendors and divine
glow revealed.

Alas, alas, to wake alone in grief
I call you, O Night, return your lying images
—Return, return, hallucination!
Return, O mysterious night!

ADIEU

Comme tout meurt vite, la rose
Décloze,
Et les frais manteaux diaprés
Des prés;
Les longs soupirs, les bienaimées,
Fumées!

On voit dans ce monde léger
C'hanger,
Plus vite que les flots des grèves,
Nos rêves,
Plus vite que le givre en fleurs,
Nos coeurs!

À vous l'on se croyait fidèle,
Cruelle,
Mais hélas! les plus longs amours
Sont courts!
Et je dis en quittant vos charmes,
Sans larmes,
Presqu'au moment de mon aveu,
Adieu!

—*Charles Jean Grandmougin (1850–1930)*

FAREWELL

Like everything that dies young,
the unfolded rose,
and the fresh multicolored mantles
of the fields;
The long sighs, the good friends,
blown like smoke.

One sees in this fickle world,
Change,
More quickly than the waves on the beach,
Our dreams,
Quicker than frost on the flowers,
Our hearts.

To you, I believe myself faithful,
Cruel,
But alas! the longest of loves
are cut short!
And I say on quitting your charms,
Without tears,
Close to the time of my engagement,
Adieu!



SUSANNA PHILLIPS • SOPRANO

This French song recital marks the solo debut recording of the young American soprano, Susanna Phillips. Ms. Phillips was the winner of the Metropolitan Opera's 2010 Beverly Sills Artist Award, the most recent of a long list of honors

bestowed upon the Alabama native. Susanna Phillips first garnered international prominence in 2005, winning four of the world's leading vocal competitions: Operalia (both First Place and the Audience Prize), the Metropolitan Opera National Council Auditions, the MacAllister Awards, and the George London Foundation. She was also a winner of the Marilyn Horne Foundation Competition, and has been awarded grants from the Santa Fe Opera and the Sullivan Foundation. She holds first prizes from the American Opera Society Competition and the Musicians Club of Women in Chicago, and, as a Juilliard School alumna, won the Alice Tully Vocal Arts Debut Recital Award.

After completing the Ryan Opera Center at the Lyric Opera of Chicago, Ms. Phillips made her Metropolitan Opera debut in 2008, singing

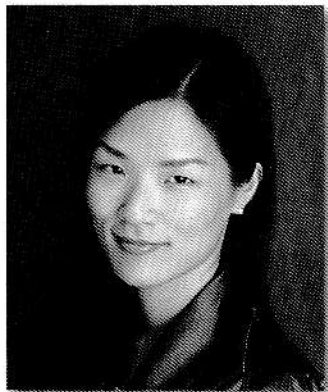
Musetta in *La bohème*, followed in the next season by Pamina, in Julie Taymor's celebrated *Zauberflöte* production. Susanna Phillips will return to the Met in the 2011–12 season to reprise Musetta in *La bohème*. Other 2011–12 highlights include the title role of *Lucia di Lammermoor* with Lyric Opera of Chicago and Minnesota Opera; Pamina in *Die Zauberflöte* at the Gran Teatro del Liceu Barcelona; and the Countess in *Le nozze di Figaro* with the Grand Théâtre de Bordeaux. She will also be performing in concert with the St. Louis Symphony Orchestra, the Orchestra of St. Luke's, and the Santa Fe Concert Association.

Susanna Phillips has performed in the Metropolitan Opera's Summer Recital Series, and was a resident artist at the Marlboro Music Festival in 2010 and 2011. In August 2011, Phillips was featured at the opening night

of the Mostly Mozart Festival, broadcast nationally on PBS' "Live From Lincoln Center". She starred in Minnesota Opera's *Orfeo ed Euridice* with David Daniels; gave her first staged *Lucia di Lammermoor* with Opera Birmingham; and played Helena in *A Midsummer Night's Dream* with Boston Lyric Opera. Major concert appearances included the Marilyn Horne Foundation gala at Carnegie Hall, and a solo recital in Chicago. In recital, Phillips has appeared at the Kennedy Center in Washington, DC and at New York's Carnegie Hall. Concert performances include Mozart's *Mass in C minor* with the Chicago Symphony; Beethoven's *Mass in C* and *Choral Fantasy* at Lincoln Center and Carnegie Hall; Dvorák's *Stabat Mater* with the Santa Fe Symphony; Brahms's *Deutsches Requiem* with the Santa Barbara Symphony; and Wolf's *Spanisches Liederbuch* at Carnegie's Weill Recital Hall. She

has also collaborated with the Royal Stockholm Philharmonic under Alan Gilbert. Susanna is the co-founder of Twickenham Fest chamber music festival in Huntsville, Alabama. Upcoming recording projects for Bridge include *The Offred Suite*, a monodrama drawn from Poul Ruders's opera, *The Handmaid's Tale*, and a recording of Mozart arias.

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MYRA HUANG • PIANO

Aclaimed by Opera News as being “among the top accompanists of her generation,” pianist Myra Huang appears this season in recital with soprano, Susanna Phillips, as part of the Weill Music Institute’s annual “The Song Continues...” Recital in Zankel Hall. She also appeared with tenor Nicholas Phan in US recital tour with tenor Nicholas

Phan, culminating in their Carnegie Hall recital debut as part of its “Great Singers III: Evenings of Song” series in Weill Hall.

Ms. Huang regularly performs in recitals and chamber music concerts around the world. She has participated in various music festivals such as the Cleveland Institute of Music Art Song Festival and the Music Academy of the West. In addition to many chamber music concerts and recitals at the Palau De Les Arts in Valencia, Spain, she performed recitals at the University of Chicago and the Metropolitan Museum of Art with tenor Nicholas Phan, and on the “On The Wings Of Song” series of the Marilyn Horne Foundation at Weill Hall with soprano Susanna Phillips in 2009.

Ms. Huang has served on the music staffs of the Washington National Opera, New York City Opera, and

Opera Pacific. Among the conductors she has worked with are James Conlon, Riccardo Frizza, Richard Hickox, Christopher Hogwood, Daniel Oren, Robert Spano, Patrick Summers, and Xian Zhang. From 2006 until 2008, she was a member of the music staff at the Palau De Les Arts in Valencia, Spain where she worked closely with the company’s artistic director, Lorin Maazel. One of the highlights of her time there was working on a complete cycle of Wagner’s *Der Ring des Nibelungen* with Zubin Mehta in 2007–08. In June 2006, she was personally invited by Plácido Domingo to be a pianist for the renowned vocal competition Operalia in Madrid, Spain held at the Teatro Real. She has continued as a pianist for Operalia every year thereafter, most recently performing at Teatro Alla Scala in Milan, Italy for Operalia 2010. In May 2010, Myra was invited to accompany the singers

for the Metropolitan Opera's National Council Auditions on the stage of the Metropolitan Opera. A member of the Houston Grand Opera Studio from 2001-2003, she worked with the company on mainstage productions involving singers such as Dmitri Hvorostovsky, Susan Graham, and Renee Fleming.

Ms. Huang received her bachelor's degree in piano performance from The Juilliard School under the tutelage of Martin Canin, and her Master of Music degree in collaborative piano from The Manhattan School under Warren Jones. Prizes from competitions include the Gina Bacchauer Piano Competition at The Juilliard School at age 14 and the Kosciuzsko Chopin Piano Competition at age 16 in New York.

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