



SERA D'INVERNO

Songs by Ildebrando Pizzetti

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Sera d'inverno

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Hanna Hipp *mezzo-soprano*

Emma Abbate *piano*

About Hanna Hipp & Emma Abbate:

*'Hanna Hipp [...] is excellent, with a knowing,
competent demeanour and a glowing mezzo timbre'*
The Guardian

'[...] sensitively accompanied by Emma Abbate'
International Record Review

1. Sera d'inverno	[3:42]
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Ildebrando Pizzetti

Sera d'inverno: The Songs of Ildebrando Pizzetti

Ildebrando Pizzetti (1880–1968) belonged to a group of Italian composers who were born around the year 1880, referred to as the *generazione dell'ottanta* ('generation of eighty'). Far from being unified by a singular style, this group included other important composers such as Franco Alfano (1876–1954), Ottorino Respighi (1879–1936), Gian Francesco Malipiero (1882–1973), and Alfredo Casella (1883–1947). They would, despite their very different aesthetic ideals, play important roles in preparing the way for the next generation of Italian composers, many of whom broke away from traditional Italian styles. One characteristic that set Pizzetti apart from his contemporaries was that he never studied outside Italy, unlike the other members of the *generazione dell'ottanta*. Therefore, he was perhaps the most intrinsically 'Italian' of all of these composers, since his education was steeped in the traditions and techniques of the old Italian school. His domestic education probably also explains his 'preoccupation with emerging from Italian musical provincialism', an objective that would remain a life-long concern for him.

An important question to consider regarding Pizzetti is whether to view him as a revolutionary or a conservative. His complicated history makes answering this question less straightforward than it might at first appear. Two manifestos, both signed by Pizzetti, reveal this dichotomy. The first – signed by such forward-thinking composers as Vincenzo Tommasini (1878–1950), Francesco Malipiero, and Alfredo Casella, in addition to Pizzetti and three others – was included as a kind of preface to a printed programme for a concert of compositions by these so-called 'young Italian school' composers in 1914. The signatories sought to revitalise the national music of Italy, 'in spite of the lethargy which has blighted the natural development of the seventeenth-century melodrama, smothered the germs of eighteenth-century chamber music and dried up (or almost) the sources of folk-song'. The authors continued by announcing that 'this concert [...] is being given in order to prove the birth of a new musicality in our country'. Pizzetti's association with this group of composers and his signing of this document would seem to place him at the forefront of the modern musical movement in Italy, a movement far removed from the stodgy conservatism of the *verismo* and old *bel canto* schools.

In 1932, Pizzetti aligned himself with Respighi, Riccardo Zandonai (1883–1944), and various other conservative musical figures to sign a notorious manifesto that essentially condemned experimental music and encouraged a return to the established musical tradition of Italy. This manifesto caused great upheaval in an already complicated and tense period for struggling Italian composers, creating a situation in which '[...] the Italian musical world was soon divided into pro and contra camps and sub-factions.' Ironically, this document was likely aimed at some of the signatories of the 1914 manifesto, specifically Casella and Malipiero. It is surprising that Mussolini, often the advocate for Italian tradition, actually sided with the modernists after this manifesto surfaced. Pizzetti later recanted his signing of this document, perhaps in response to confrontations by musicians such as Malipiero – who in 1934 wrote to Pizzetti condemning the manifesto and its ill effects on all modern composers, even those that signed it – but his signing does shed light on either the composer's change of position over the course of three decades or his proclivity for rejecting alternate musical ideologies that did not correspond to his own artistic values.

The songs of Ildebrando Pizzetti, of which there are thirty-three for voice and piano,

are unique in the long history of song composition. Never has an Italian composer expressed such a strong emphasis on the texts of his songs. Pizzetti's varied methods of responding to text make for highly individual works in this genre. He was not a composer who was content to compose music that was guaranteed to be a success with his audiences. Instead, he challenged himself to compose thoughtful settings that arose from the elevated poetry that he consistently chose to use. If some of his greatest songs are also his most rhythmically and musically challenging, one need look no further than Pizzetti's efforts towards realising an authentic, idiomatic rendering of his texts to discover the reason for their complexity. The resulting songs are so characteristically 'Pizzettian' that virtually none of them could be mistaken for having been written by any other composer. In the best of them, he essentially created an entirely new kind of Italian song (which he called *liriche*), one in which word and music were perfectly wedded to form something greater than its parts.

The most universal and important characteristic of Pizzetti's style is his focus on the text. Early in his career, he began to direct his attention toward achieving an authentic musical setting for Italian texts. This came as a reaction to composers of

Italy's past and present, as perceived by Pizzetti, who obscured the texts they were setting for various musical reasons, but especially for the sake of melody. He also felt that composers of the recent past had chosen to set inferior poetry, largely due to the ease with which it was possible to set such simplistic, metrically regular verse. In identifying these problems, Pizzetti set for himself the objective of writing songs that were absolutely faithful to the words in every conceivable way, a goal that influenced nearly every aspect of his songs.

This ideal also led Pizzetti to seek out modern and traditional poetry of high quality for his songs. His texts come from three basic sources: modern Italian poetry; ancient and historical sources, including biblical texts and poetry, and texts by Petrarch (1304–1374), Michelangelo (1475–1564) and Sappho (born c. 650 B.C.); and folksong texts. By far the largest source of poetry for his songs comes from modern Italian poets. Some were famous, such as Gabriele D'Annunzio (1863–1938) and Giuseppe Ungaretti (1888–1970), who were two poets that inspired some of the greatest Pizzetti songs (**I pastori** by D'Annunzio and the later work, *Due poesie di Giuseppe Ungaretti*), while others were lesser known, such as Mario Silvani (1884–1913), who authored **Sera d'inverno** and who happened

to be from Pizzetti's hometown of Parma.

Pizzetti's careful attention to text setting had many results. The first was that his songs eschewed traditional melodies in favour of vocal lines that followed the natural spoken inflection of the Italian language. Thus, longer, higher notes, especially those that fall on the strong beats of the measure, tend to be found on the stressed syllables of important words; unstressed syllables of less important words in the sentence fall on lower notes and are shorter in duration. In fact, in certain songs one can almost imagine Pizzetti creating a hierarchy of words in each sentence in order to establish his vocal 'melody'. Emotional outbursts in the text are consistently set as high notes, usually preceded by an unprepared disjunct leap. Generally speaking, though, his vocal lines are stepwise in nature, making these excursions distinctive because they leap out of an otherwise speech-like texture that falls within a limited vocal range. As one might expect, the texts themselves are usually set syllabically, with only a handful, such as the late song *Surge, propera, amica mea* serving as aberrations from the norm.

Another characteristic driven by Pizzetti's desire for accurate text-setting is his varied use of mixed meter, which manifests itself either as a consistent fluctuation in meter as

a basic characteristic of the piece (*I pastori*), or as a polymeter between the voice and piano (*Vorrei voler, Signor, quel ch'io non voglio*), or both (**La madre al figlio lontano**). In his most famous song *I pastori*, the voice and the piano are written in polymeter and both parts frequently change meter throughout the piece. The meter of the vocal line is not indicated but alternates between 2/4 and 6/8, while the piano part alternates between 9/8 and 3/4.

A second important characteristic of Pizzetti's songs is the incorporation of Medieval and Renaissance elements into the overall musical conception. Many authors, when discussing Pizzetti, have pointed to his use of modes in his music, though there are, in actuality, relatively few instances of Pizzetti using any historical mode in his songs. Instead, Pizzetti often adapts characteristics from the music of these time periods to suit his specific needs, imitating without replicating exactly any specific modality or other defining qualities. Generally, when it seems that Pizzetti is relying on some mode that is ancient sounding or, at least, not familiar to modern ears, it is likely that Pizzetti has actually composed the 'mode' himself. In this way, Pizzetti adopts a method of suggesting historical modes in his songs without making use of any particular one.

One fine example is a later song, **Scuote amore il mio cuore**, in which Pizzetti has created a scale from which much of the piece is derived. The poetry is by Sappho (born c. 650 B.C.), and it is likely that Pizzetti composed this 'mode' in response to the ancient and exotic elements of this text.

Pizzetti's fascination with early music also contributed to the most characteristic aspect of his songs—the 'flexible arioso' style that pervades much of his song output. The melodic flexibility of Pizzetti's style was influenced in part by his knowledge of Gregorian chant, a feature often mentioned in contemporary accounts of his music. There are times when the music strays from an overwhelmingly syllabic style; generally when this is the case, it is to introduce a melismatic element that recalls characteristics from Medieval chant. A particularly moving use of this feature can be found in the opening section of **Adjuro vos, filiae Jerusalem**, in response to the ancient biblical text from Song of Solomon. **Antifona Amatoria di Basilola** is an example of this compositional technique put to particularly dramatic effect.

Another important characteristic of Pizzetti's songs is his reliance upon one or two themes (or motives) on which to base a song. This is true of almost every one of the songs written

in his maturity (after, say, 1908, the year in which **L'annuncio** and *I pastori* were composed, both of which make use of this compositional device). These themes are very often presented in the piano in octaves or in multiple octaves in an introduction to the song, and they may continue only in the piano part as the song progresses or they may be sung, as a whole or in part. They do not normally undergo development, per se, except to be truncated at times and to be presented in different keys. Since Pizzetti's themes remain largely intact, they are almost always recognizable when they reappear. Often, these recurring themes or motives are the unifying element in Pizzetti's songs, since his songs are, for the most part, through composed otherwise. A striking example of Pizzetti's use of this technique can be found in the heart-breaking **Mirologio per un bambino**.

Though Pizzetti supported his fellow composers at various points in his career and also served as a teacher to so many of the younger generation of Italian composers, his strong belief in his own musical aesthetic caused him to distance himself from other musicians on numerous occasions. He did this in his critical writings for the journals and magazines for which he worked during his lifetime and by signing the infamous manifesto of 1932, mentioned above, among

other ways. He admired certain composers for their operas, such as Bellini and Gluck, but felt that their compositions fell short of his high standards, usually due to the predominance of the music over the words in their operas. Other composers earned his esteem for their attempts at a marriage between words and music, such as Wolf and Debussy, but he felt that they hadn't gone far enough in their experiments in this regard. One wonders, from the modern and admittedly easy vantage point, if Pizzetti didn't perhaps go too far with his. He apparently admired Monteverdi greatly, indicating that he had found 'a few pages' of music written by this composer that displayed a perfect marriage between words and music. This kind of arrogance was unlikely to garner many friends among his contemporaries. Perhaps Pizzetti's opinion of other composers, contemporary and historical alike, can best be summarised by quoting his final words, shouted from his death bed: 'They are all dilettantes!'

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Adapted from A Singer's Guide to the Songs of Ildebrando Pizzetti by Mark Whatley, D.M.A.



Texts and translations

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1. Sera d'inverno

Muore il giorno invernale
tra un pio lamentar di campane.
Muore... e un bagliore sanguigno
sui monti lontani s'indugia.

S'alza la nova luna su'l puro velario del cielo
e la gran coltre nivea scintilla di vivido argento.
Nel piano senza fine

il popol de li alberi assorto nel suo dolore muto
tende le braccia a l'alto;
e un gregge intorpidito sotto la lana grigia
sognando i verdi paschi
pel bianco silenzio lontana.
Ancora le campane ripetono il vano lamento:
quel anima si lagna nel gelo vespertino?
È questa l'ora triste pei cuori
che celano un sogno
per quelli che sanno le lotte
per quelli che sanno le gioie.
Naufraga in questo mar senza rive ogni voce di vita
ogni cosa mortale nel bianco silenzio s'addorme.

1. Winter Evening

*The winter day dies
amid a pious lament of bells.
It dies... and a sanguine glow
on the distant mountains lingers.
The new moon rises on the pure curtain of the sky
and the great white snow blanket sparkles of
silver bright.
In the endless plain the population of trees,
absorbed in their sorrow,
silently stretches their arms to heaven;
and a numbed flock underneath the grey wool
dreaming of the green pastures
through the white silence far away.*

*Again the bells repeat the vain lament:
what spirit moans in the cold evening?
This is the sad hour for hearts that conceal a dream
for those who know struggles
for those who know joys.
Every living voice is shipwrecked
in this sea without shores
everything mortal goes to sleep in the white silence.*

Mario Silvani (1884–1913)

2. L'annuncio

Italian text by Teresa Corinna Ubertis Gray (1877–1964)

2. The Announcement

*It came with the wind;
it landed, the first,
on the old chimney top and greeted.
It was already the shadow of the evening:
on the top of the hay racks the bonfires were lit.
In the mountains they celebrated the good saint
who has a name of lovely weather and of fortune
and the bell with its sound poured out to him
three rosaries of praise, to the plain.
No one knew what sweetness he was collecting
on the house that evening,
on the little peaceful house of the grandmother
where the first swallow settled.*

Cinque Liriche

3. I pastori

Settembre, andiamo. È tempo di migrare.
Ora in terra d'Abruzzi i miei pastori
lascian gli stazzi e vanno verso il mare:
scendono all'Adriatico selvaggio
che verde è come i pascoli dei monti.
Han bevuto profondamente ai fonti alpestri,
che sapor d'acqua natia

rimanga nei cuori esuli a conforto,
che lungo illuda la lor sete in via.
Rinnovato hanno verga d'avellano.
E vanno pel tratturo antico al piano
quasi per un erbal fiume silente,
su le vestigia degli antichi padri.
O voce di colui che primamente
conosce il tremolar della marina!
Ora lung'hesso il litoral cammina la greggia.
Senza mutamento è l'aria.
Il sole imbionda sì la viva lana
che quasi dalla sabbia non divaria.
Lsciacquo, calpestio, dolci romori.
Ah perchè non son io co' miei pastori?

3. The Shepherds

*September, let's go. It is time to migrate.
Now in the land of Abruzzi
my shepherds leave their folds and go towards the sea:
they descend to the wild Adriatic
that is as green as the mountain meadows.
They have drunk deeply at the alpine springs,
so that the taste of native water
may remain in their exiled hearts as comfort,
that it may long elude their thirst on their way.
They have renewed the staff of hazelwood.
And they go along the ancient sheep path to the plain
as if through a grassy silent river,
on the footprints of the ancient fathers.
Oh voice of the one who first
knows the trembling of the sea!
Now the flock walks along the coastline.
The air is without change.
The sun makes the living wool so golden
that it is nearly indistinguishable from the sand.
Swishing waters, trampling hoof steps, sweet sounds.
Ah, why am I not with my shepherds?*

Gabriele d'Annunzio (1863–1938)

4. La madre al figlio lontano
O figlio, figlio, in che mondo ti trovi?
Da quanti mesi qua sola t'aspetto!
Ogni mattina riguardo il tuo letto:
è sempre intatto coi lenzoli novi
ed ogni sera mi rimetto a farlo
e lungamente ti sorrido e parlo.
E come spiego i candidi lenzoli,
dico che tanta pace ti consoli.
Scuoto i cuscini, li dispongo e dico:
l'amor più bello e il più fedele amico!
E poi rincalzo sotto le coperte:
così d'argento sette sacchi e sette!
O figlio, figlio, nel tuo letto bianco
torna una notte sola a riposare:
forse dormi sui monti o lungo il mare,
ti manca un letto quando sei più stanco.
E il tuo bel letto lo ritrovo intatto,
e dentro il petto mi ribevo il pianto.
Ma questa sera son tranquilla,
sento che torni a casa
e dormi nel tuo letto.
Accendi il lume, fermati un momento,
guarda il cuscino bello di merletto.
L'ho rinnovato quando mi sei nato:
pel tuo ritorno, figlio, l'ho serbato.

4. The Mother to the Son Faraway

*Oh son, son, in what world do you find yourself?
For how many months here alone I have been waiting
for you!
Every morning I check your bed:
it is always untouched with fresh sheets
and every evening I go back to make it
and for a long time I smile at you and speak to you.
And as I spread out the spotless, white sheets,
I say that such peace may console you.
I shake the pillows, I arrange them and say:
the most beautiful love and the most faithful friend!*

*And then I tuck the covers under:
thus seven sacks of silver and seven!
Oh son, son, in your white bed
return just one night to rest:
perhaps you sleep in the mountains or beside the sea,
you lack a bed when you are most tired.
And I find untouched your beautiful bed,
and inside my breast I drink again the tears.
But this evening I am peaceful,
I feel that you are returning home
and are sleeping in your bed.
Light the lamp, stop a moment,
look at the beautiful pillow of lace.
I have renewed it when you were born:
I have saved it, son, for your return.*

Romualdo Pantini (1877–1945)

5. San Basilio
San Basilio viene di Cesarea:
porta scarpe di bronzo e ferree vesti.
"Basilio mio, donde vieni, e ove scendi?"
"Dal maestro vengo, e a mia madre vo,"
"Se vieni dal maestro, dicci l'abbicci."
Sul pastorale s'appoggiò per dire l'abbicci.
E il pastorale era verde, e gettò un ramo,
un ramo con fronde d'oro, trapunto in argento.

5. Saint Basil

*Saint Basil comes from Cesarea:
he wears bronze shoes and iron garments.
"My Basil, where do you come from,
and where do you go?"
"I come from the master, and I go to my mother",
"If you are coming from the master,
tell us the alphabet."
He leaned on the shepherding staff
to say the alphabet.
And the staff became green, and sprang a branch,*

a branch with golden leaves, embroidered in silver.

Greek folk text, trans. Niccolò Tommaseo (1802-1874)

6. Il clefta prigionero
Oggi, Demo, gli è pasqua, oggi fiera:
i prodi fan festa, e tirano al bersaglio;
e tu, Demo mio, a Giannina, alla porta del visire,
in catene, in ceppi, in trista carcere.
E tutto il mondo tel dicevano,
e Turchi e Romei:
Demo caro, sta savio, se ti tocchi l'armatolato.
"E che mal vi fec'io, che piangete su me?"
Faccia Iddio e la Vergine e sire san Giorgio,
che guarisca la mia mano, ch'io cinga la spada,
e alfin venga la primavera, venga la state,
che s'infrondino i rami e chiudano le viottole,
ch'io prenda il mio fucile, ch'io cinga la mia spada,
ch'io pigli l'opposto lato dei monti,
dell'alte cime,
ch'io faccia arrostire pecore pingui e grossi montoni,
ch'io lasci madri senza figliuoli, spose senza mariti."

6. The Imprisoned Thief

*Today, Demo, is Easter for them, today a fair:
the brave celebrate, and go target shooting;
and you, my Demo, are in Giannina, at the door of the vizier,
in chains, in shackles, in a dreary prison.
And all the world said it to you,
and Turkey and Rome:
dear Demo, remain wise, if you meet the armed man.
"And what harm did I do to you that you weep over me?
May God and the Virgin and Lord Saint George,
heal my hand so that I may wield a sword,
and at last may come the spring,
may come the summer,
the branches may become leafy
and the paths may block,
that I might take my gun, that I might wield my sword,*

that I might take the opposite side of the mountains,
of the high peaks,
that I might roast fat sheep and large rams,
that I might leave mothers without sons,
wives without husbands.”

Greek folk text, translated by Niccolò Tommaseo

7. Passeggiata

Italian text by Giovanni Papini (1881-1956)

7. Stroll

Two in confidence, upright as kings,
were going through the streets, beyond poetry,
a flower for you and a leaf for me
and we unbind the fantasies!

It was the two of us, alone between walls
without noticing who was passing, who was looking,
empty eye but secure steps emperors in good faith.
They encountered the mountains one by one,
the shoots saluted in yellow swaying
but we did not speak to anyone:
each one was their god to the other.

As far as the world around was wide
a scent of love was breathing through the air.
We, almost lovers of the first day,
would feel a burning on the cheeks.

But we were so happy, perspiring, breathless,
tipsy with perfect egoism,
by that time it seemed to us that we were soldiers
with ten medals on our chest.

Finally, at the end of the ascent,
in the final bay of the horizon,
a veiled moon without life
easily detaches itself from a mountain.

All is equal and companion to the infinite,
the heart is overflowing: it tolls for nothing;
and yet, one moment, I felt
the moist kiss of your mouth.

8. Épitaphe

Il dort.

Quoi-que le sort fût pour lui bien étrange,
il vivait.

Il mourut quand il n'eut plus son ange.

La chose simplement d'elle-même arriva,
comme la nuit se fait lorsque le jour s'en va.

8. Epitaph

He sleeps.

Although the fate was very strange for him,
he lived.

He died when he no longer had his angel.

The thing simply happened of itself,
like the night happens when the day goes.

Victor Hugo (1802-1885)

9. Antifona amatoria di Basiliola

Fulcite me floribus,
stipate me malis.
Quia amore langueo.

9. Amatory Antiphon of Basiliola

Support me with flowers,
attend me with apples.
Because I am faint with love.

Gabriele d'Annunzio

10. E il mio dolore io canto

Italian text by Jacopo Bocchialini (1878-1965)

10. And I Sing my Sorrow

I am a dry fountain.

Summer wounded my spring
that once flowed calm and full.

Now no more.

A falling of leaves down here at the bottom.

A useless flight of little wings around.

Parched mouth, do not come near.

I am a sorrowful spring that languishes,
every drop is a drop of blood,
every drop is a drop of tears.

And I sing my sorrow.

Parched mouth,
my spring of weeping does not satisfy.

11. Incontro di Marzo

(from *Tre Liriche*)

Guardami dunque! Io sono sempre quella
come t'apparvi nei sogni d'allora
così fiera e soave e così bella.

Se tu mi guardi
non rivivi ancora nelle morte giornate.
Non respiri fragranze abbandonate?
Getta il rimpianto e la paura amare
e saluta la vecchia fantasia.

Anche l'alta bontà di perdonare
vuol questa bruna reduce folliata.
Dammi le nuove rose
e tremino le mie labbra sdegnose.
Per la mia strana iride profonda
per queste braccia dal segreto incanto
per la chioma che il collo agil m'innonda
non ti scordare che una volta hai piantato
per la dolcezza amara
di questa bocca sovra tutte cara.

Se dalla tomba stanca impallidita
a te venissi per magia risorta
come vorresti le mie ceree dita
lagrimando baciar.

Baciar la morta tua buona fata antica.
Oltre il rogo non vive ira nemica.

E col sorriso d'altre primavere
da remote campagne io son venuta;
lasciando per vederti!

Oggi le schiere dei sogni de l'addio.

Sono una muta dolce donna che fù!

Donna di cieli che non s'apron più.

Pur se di Marzo a la mia chioma folta
doni in memorie le novelle rose
tremeranno le mie labbra sdegnose.
Ma ti bacia sul cuore anche una volta
questa mia bocca antica.

Oltre l'addio non ferve ira nemica.

11. March Encounter

Look at me then! I am forever that one
as I appeared to you in dreams of that time
so proud and gentle and so beautiful. If you look at me
you will not revive again in days gone by.
Do you not breathe fragrances abandoned?
Cast away the bitter regret and fear
and greet the old fantasy.

Even the kindness of pardoning
wants this dark madness to be returned.
Give me the new roses
and may my contemptuous lips tremble.

For my strange deep iris
for these arms from the secret enchantment
for the hair which floods my agile neck
do not forget that once you wept
for the bitter sweetness
of this mouth, dear above all others.

If from the weary faded tomb
I came resurrected to you by magic,
how you would want to kiss my waxen fingers
while weeping.

Kissing your good, ancient, dead fairy.
Beyond the funeral pyre
harmful wrath does not live.

And with the smile of other springtimes
I have come from distant lands; leaving to see you!
Today the hosts of dreams of farewell.
I am a silent sweet woman who has been!
A woman of the heavens that open no more.

*Even if in March you give new roses
in memory of my thick hair
my contemptuous lips will tremble.
But in your heart you kiss this,
my ancient mouth, once again.
Beyond the farewell harmful wrath does not burn.*

Ildebrando Cocconi (1877-1943)

Due Canti d'amore

12. Adjuro vos, filiae Jerusalem
In lectulo meo, in noctes,
quaesivi quem diligit anima mea;
quaesivi illum, et non inveni.
Adjuro vos, filiae Jerusalem,
si inveneritis dilectum meum,
ut nunciatis ei quia amore langueo.

12. *I Beseech You, Daughters of Jerusalem
In my bed at night
searching for the one my soul loves;
searching for that one and not finding him.
I beseech you, daughters of Jerusalem,
if you find my beloved,
tell him that I am faint with love.*

From the Song of Songs

13. Oscuro è il ciel
Oscuro è il ciel;
nell'onde la luna già s'asconde
e in seno al mar le Plejadi
già discendendo van.
È mezzanotte,
e l'ora passa frattanto,
e sola qui sulle piume
ancora veglio ed attendo in van.

13. *The sky is dark
The sky is dark;
the moon already conceals itself in the waves
and the Pleiades are already descending
into the breast of the sea.
It is midnight,
and the time is passing by,
and alone here on the feather pillows
I still stay awake and wait in vain.*

Giacomo Leopardi (1798-1837)

14. Scuote amore il mio cuore

*(from Tre Canti d'amore)
Poem by Sappho (c. 650 B.C. – 580 B.C.)
Italian translation by Manara Valgimigli (1876-1965)*

14. *Love shakes my heart
Love shakes my heart
like the wind on the mountains crashes
down on oak trees.
Sweet mother, I can no longer weave the cloth,
the desire for a boy has conquered me,
and the tender Aphrodite.
Stop, dear one, stay before me.
Discover the grace that is within your gaze.*

Tre Canti Greci

15. Augurio
Greek folk text, trans. Pio Bondioli (1890–1958)

15. *Wish
There is a tree in Rumelia,
full of leaves and of great shade;
it has a fresh spring at the roots
and a cross on the trunk.
The sailors go there for the water
and make a wish on the cross:
“May he who is loved and rejects love*

*bleed to death
and may he who has two lovers
have forty knife wounds;
and may he who has three or four lovers
have forty-four knife wounds;
and may he who has one lover,
unique in the world, rejoice;
and who has not even one lover,
may a bullet strike him in the heart.”*

16. *Mirológio per un bambino
Greek folk text, trans. Pio Bondioli*

16. *Calendar For a Child
Not in the beautiful summertime,
but in the heart of winter,
just now you wanted to go away!
My baby, you did not want to wait
until the hills would be little by little full of flowers,
the meadows would become green again,
the carnations would blossom,
and the flowers would grow.
You could have picked them by the handfolds
and carried them into the underworld,
and the boys could have put them on their caps,
the little girls on the front of their blouses,
and the little ones could have held them in their hands,
forgetting their mother.*

17. *Canzone per ballo
Greek folk text, trans. Pio Bondioli*

17. *Song for Dancing
Enjoy, youths; enjoy pretty ones:
the days wane
and Charon counts them one by one.
Begin the dance, go!
Afterwards the black earth will swallow us.
Charon has neither judgement nor respect;*

*he tears the babies away from their mothers' breasts
and leave the elderly.
Ah! Let's dance then,
because the dance is good for us!
Beneath this earth that we trample on,
we will all go one day.
This verdant earth
devours little boys and brave young men;
this flowering earth
devours little girls, devours maidens.
This earth, who is also mother to us,
will devour us too.
This earth that will devour us,
beat on her with your feet!*

All English translations by Dr Mark Whatley

*Heartfelt thanks to Dr Mark Whatley – author of
A Singer's Guide to the Songs of Ildebrando Pizzetti –
for his invaluable support in preparing for this project.*



Hanna Hipp (mezzo-soprano)

Increasingly in demand, as of 2018, Hanna Hipp's most recent operatic debuts were Isabella (*L'italiana in Algeri*) for Opéra Orchestre National Montpellier, Beatrice (*Beatrice and Benedict*) for Seattle Opera, where she also sang Dorabella (*Così fan tutte*); Frances, Countess of Essex in *Gloriana* for Teatro Real in Madrid, directed by Sir David McVicar and as Clairon in *Capriccio* for Garsington Opera.

A former member of the Jette Parker Young Artist Programme at the Royal Opera House (ROH), Covent Garden, Hanna has recently returned to the ROH for an 'enchanted' Magdalene (The Daily Telegraph) in Kasper Holten's new production of *Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg*, conducted by Sir Antonio Pappano. Previous roles there include Emilia (*Otello*), and Anna in Berlioz's *Les Troyens*, which was also presented at the BBC Proms and released on DVD by Opus Arte.

Following her debut at the Glyndebourne Festival as Flora (*La traviata*) under Sir Mark Elder, released on DVD by Opus Arte, Hanna has maintained a strong relationship with the company returning every season since: as Ramiro (*La finta giardiniera*) on tour under Christopher Moulds, La chatte and L'écureuil in Laurent Pelly's acclaimed production of

L'enfant et les sortilèges under Robin Ticciati, Magdalene (*Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg*) under Michael Güttler and, in 2017, as Der Komponist (*Ariadne auf Naxos*) under Cornelius Meister.

Further performances include a recent debut at Dutch National Opera as the Page in Strauss' *Salome* under Daniele Gatti in a new staging by Ivo van Hove, Mercédès (*Carmen*) at Teatro alla Scala under Massimo Zanetti, and Cherubino (*Le nozze di Figaro*) at both the Turku Music Festival and in a production by Sir Thomas Allen for Scottish Opera. A successful North American debut as Der Komponist for Minnesota Opera was followed by Isolier in Rossini's *Le comte Ory* under Giacomo Sagripanti for Seattle Opera. In concert, Hanna joined Orchestre de la Suisse Romande for *L'enfant et les sortilèges* under Charles Dutoit, and Orchestre Philharmonique de Strasbourg for *Les Troyens* under John Nelson, recorded for release on Warner Classics.

Hanna has built a strong relationship with Emma Abbate; they frequently collaborate as a duo performing a varied song repertoire.

Hanna is a graduate of the Stanisław Moniuszko Academy of Music in Gdańsk, the Guildhall School of Music & Drama and the National Opera Studio in London.

Emma Abbate (piano)

The Neapolitan pianist Emma Abbate enjoys a demanding career as a piano accompanist and chamber musician, working with some of the finest singers and instrumentalists of her generation. She has performed in duo recitals for international festivals and concert societies in Salzburg, Lisbon, Naples, Ischia, and Kosciierzyna, and at many prestigious UK venues such as the Wigmore Hall, Southbank Centre, Royal Opera House, St John's Smith Square, St George's, Bristol and at the Aldeburgh Festival, in addition to broadcasts on BBC Radio 3.

Emma is releasing a series of recordings devoted to twentieth-century Italian vocal chamber music, the latest of which was the world-première disc of Shakespeare Sonnets by Mario Castelnuovo-Tedesco with the BBC New Generation Artist Ashley Riches for Resonus Classics. Her previous disc was *L'Infinito*: a musical journey through twentieth-century Italian songs with the mezzo-soprano Kamelia Kader, including works by Respighi, Casella, Alfano and Malipiero. She has also released the first of two volumes of Mozart's complete piano duets on original fortepianos with Julian Perkins for Resonus Classics. This album, recorded on two original instruments from the Richard Burnett Heritage Collection of

Early Keyboard Instruments, was the final recording made at Finchcocks Musical Museum.

A keen advocate of contemporary music, Emma has recently released two discs devoted to works by Stephen Dodgson for Toccata Classics: world-première recordings of his cello and piano music with Evva Mizerska, and his piano quintets with the Tippett Quartet. Her discography also includes world-première recordings of works for cello and piano by the English composer Algernon Ashton, and the contemporary Polish composer Krzysztof Meyer, both with Evva Mizerska for Toccata Classics.

Based in London, Emma is a professor at the Guildhall School of Music & Drama and a staff coach at the Royal Opera House, Covent Garden. Following her graduation from the S. Pietro a Majella Conservatoire in Naples and an Advanced Diploma from the S. Cecilia Conservatoire in Rome, Emma studied in London with Yonty Solomon. She completed her studies with Geoffrey Pratley as a scholar at the Royal Academy of Music, from where she graduated with distinction. She was also awarded an Italian Literature and Culture degree *cum laude* from the Federico II University in Naples.

www.emmaabbate.com



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