

Text and Translations

George Frideric Händel

“Furibondo spira il vento” from *Partenope*

Partenope is an opera seria by Handel, premiered in the King’s Theater in London in 1730. Themes of romance, deception, and gender reversals are dominant in this opera. This aria caps Act 2, in which Arsace is torn: should he continue pursuing Queen Partenope of Naples, or should he try to mend the old love between him and Rosmira? The confusion and trouble is perfectly set to music by Handel, with numerous phrases of coloratura that suddenly takes a sharp turn, and with lines stretching and moving across the whole vocal range.

Furibondo spira il vento

Furibondo spira il vento
E sconvolge il cielo e il suol.

Tal adesso l’alma io sento
Agitata dal mio duol.

Furiously blows the wind

Furiously blows the wind
and upsets sky and the earth.

Likewise now I feel my soul
troubled by my sorrow.

Translation from Italian to English © Bard Suverkrop, from ipasource.com

George Frideric Händel

“O sacred oracles of Truth” from *Belshazzar*

Belshazzar is an oratorio based on the Biblical account of Babylon’s downfall, followed by the freeing of the Jews according to the prophet Daniel. This piece is from Act 1 of the oratorio. In this scene, the prophet Daniel reads the sacred Jewish texts to guide him. He looks into these texts as he believes that the Jews will soon be freed.

O sacred oracles of Truth

O sacred oracles of Truth,
O living spring of purest joy
By day be ever in my mouth
And all my nightly thoughts employ.

Whoever withhold attention due
Neglect themselves despising you.

Franz Schubert

Der Tod und das Mädchen, D. 531, No. 3

With text by Matthias Claudius, this setting of Der Tod und das Mädchen is a haunting and terrifying one. Schubert starts on a D minor chord, marking Death's walk towards his call of duty. A sudden change in tempo, and the maiden is heard in between gasps: "Go away, Death!" Suddenly, Death sings in an unrelenting D note, reassuring the maiden that Death is all but a horrific experience. That idea is even more cemented as the music ends in a hopeful D major chord, bringing quiet piece.

Der Tod und das Mädchen

DAS MÄDCHEN

Vorüber, ach, vorüber!
geh, wilder Knochenmann!
Ich bin noch jung, geh, Lieber!
Und rühre mich nicht an.

DER TOD

Gib deine Hand, du schön und zart Gebilde!
Bin Freund und komme nicht zu strafen.
Sei gutes Muts! Ich bin nicht wild,
Sollst sanft in meinen Armen schlafen!

Death and the Maiden

THE MAIDEN

Go away,
you wild man of bones!
I'm still young, so go away
and don't touch me.

DEATH

Give me your hand, you beautiful, tender creature!
I'm a friend, and I'm not coming to punish you.
Don't worry, I'm not wild;
you shall sleep gently in my arms!

Translation from German to English © Marcie Stapp

Franz Schubert

Der Doppelgänger, D. 957, No. 13

Der Doppelgänger is the thirteenth song in Schubert's *Schwanengesang* (*Swan Song*), a cycle that he wrote near his death. Heinrich Heine talked about the doppelgänger as a poem in his collection *Die Heimkehr*. A doppelgänger is described as a living person's double, often a ghost, and is known to be a bearer of bad news, or a bad omen of the living person's impending death. Schubert's musical setting is simple yet hauntingly effective: with the least amount of movement in the accompaniment, the vocal line takes on phrases that start on unmoving notes, then suddenly bursts into cries of fear, terror, and desperation. This is most apparent when the poet realizes he has seen his doppelgänger: "meine eigne Gestalt (my own form)."

Der Doppelgänger

Still ist die Nacht, es ruhen die Gassen,
In diesem Hause wohnte mein Schatz;
Sie hat schon längst die Stadt verlassen,
Doch steht noch das Haus auf demselben Platz.

Da steht auch ein Mensch und starrt in die Höhe,
Und ringt die Hände, vor Schmerzensgewalt;
Mir graust es, wenn ich sein Antlitz sehe –
Der Mond zeigt mir meine eigne Gestalt.

Du Doppelgänger, du bleicher Geselle!
Was äffst du nach mein Liebesleid,
Das mich gequält auf dieser Stelle,
So manche Nacht, in alter Zeit?

The Wraith

The night is still, the streets are at rest;
in this house lived my sweetheart.
She has long since left the town,
but the house still stands on the selfsame spot.

A man stands there too, staring up,
and wringing his hands in anguish;
I shudder when I see his face –
the moon shows me my own form!

You wraith, pallid companion!
why do you ape the pain of my love
which tormented me on this very spot,
so many a night, in days long past?

Translation from German to English © Richard Wigmore, from oxfordlieder.co.uk

Franz Schubert

An die Musik, D. 547, No. 4

With text by Franz Schober, Schubert set this two-stanza text into strophic form, exalting music as a noble art. The poet gives thanks to Music, for bringing him out of sadness and revealing a better world. A bass line melody is heard within two bars of introduction, then the vocal line takes over in an extended, more expressive melody. The lines are accompanied by steady yet reassuring eighth notes from the accompaniment throughout the piece, providing a sense of comfort and bliss that only Music can bring.

An die Musik

Du holde Kunst, in wie viel grauen Stunden,
Wo mich des Lebens wilder Kreis umstrickt,
Hast du mein Herz zu warmer Lieb entzunden,
Hast mich in eine bessere Welt entrückt!

Oft hat ein Seufzer, deiner Harf entfloßen,
Ein süßer, heiliger Akkord von dir
Den Himmel besser Zeiten mir erschlossen,
Du holde Kunst, ich danke dir dafür!

To Music

Beloved art, in how many a bleak hour,
when I am enmeshed in life's tumultuous round,
have you kindled my heart to the warmth of love,
and borne me away to a better world!

Often a sigh, escaping from your harp,
a sweet, celestial chord
has revealed to me a heaven of happier times.
Beloved art, for this I thank you!

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Ludwig van Beethoven

Adelaide, Op. 46

Beethoven is most popular for his symphonic works; yet he is also a transitional figure in the art of the German Lied. He composed about 66 songs, which were mostly set to German text, and some to Italian. The musical themes and gestures used have influenced the next Lied composers who followed, like Schubert and Schumann.

Adelaide's text is by Friedrich von Matthisson. The architecture of this work resembles that of a solo cantata or a concert aria, divided into three sections. It starts with a very lyrical first section, a dramatic development section, which then transitions to a final allegro section. The piece compares the beauty of nature to the maiden Adelaide. Beethoven adjusts Matthisson's poetry to match the music; the name "Adelaide" is repeated fourteen times throughout the piece, as opposed to the original four in Matthisson's.

Adelaide

Einsam wandelt dein Freund im Frühlingsgarten,
Mild vom lieblichen Zauberlicht umflossen,
Das durch wankende Blütenzweige zittert,
Adelaide!

In der spiegelnden Flut, im Schnee der Alpen,
In des sinkenden Tages Goldgewölken,
Im Gefilde der Sterne strahlt dein Bildnis,
Adelaide!

Abendlüftchen im zarten Laube flüstern,
Silberglöckchen des Mais im Grase säuseln,
Wellen rauschen und Nachtigallen flöten:
Adelaide!

Einst, o Wunder! entblüht auf meinem Grabe
Eine Blume der Asche meines Herzens;
Deutlich schimmert auf jedem Purpurblättchen:
Adelaide!

Adelaide

Your friend wanders lonely in the spring garden,
Gently bathed in the magical sweet light
That shimmers through swaying boughs in bloom,
Adelaide!

In the mirroring waves, in the Alpine snows,
In the golden clouds of the dying day,
In the fields of stars your image shines,
Adelaide!

Evening breezes whisper in the tender leaves,
The silvery bells of May rustle in the grass,
Waves murmur and nightingales sing:
Adelaide!

One day, O miracle! there shall bloom on my grave
A flower from the ashes of my heart;
On every purple leaf shall clearly shimmer:
Adelaide!

Translation from German to English © Richard Stokes, from oxfordlieder.co.uk

Henri Duparc

Chanson triste

Chanson triste is the first of just sixteen mélodies that Duparc composed, but they made a mark on the French art song literature. With text by Jean Lahor, this piece has an overall mood of hope and longing. A spacious vocal line is accompanied by floaty piano arpeggios that expand in sonorities during more intense moments. The piece closes in a more nostalgic manner.

Chanson triste

Dans ton cœur dort un clair de lune,
Un doux clair de lune d'été,
Et pour fuir la vie importune,
Je me noierai dans ta clarté.

J'oublierai les douleurs passées,
Mon amour, quand tu berceras
Mon triste cœur et mes pensées
Dans le calme aimant de tes bras.

Tu prendras ma tête malade,
Oh! quelquefois sur tes genoux,
Et lui diras une ballade
Qui semblera parler de nous;

Et dans tes yeux pleins de tristesses,
Dans tes yeux alors je boirai
Tant de baisers et de tendresses
Que peut-être je guérirai.

Song of Sadness

Moonlight slumbers in your heart,
A gentle summer moonlight,
And to escape the cares of life
I shall drown myself in your light.

I shall forget past sorrows,
My sweet, when you cradle
My sad heart and my thoughts
In the loving calm of your arms.

You will rest my poor head,
Ah! sometimes on your lap,
And recite to it a ballad
That will seem to speak of us;

And from your eyes full of sorrow,
From your eyes I shall then drink
So many kisses and so much love
That perhaps I shall be healed.

Translation from French to English © Richard Stokes, from oxfordlieder.co.uk

Henri Duparc

Phidylé

Phidylé is one of Duparc's longest mélodies, with text by Leconte de Lisle. The piece is opened with a beautiful countryside setting: blades of grass under the sun, perfumed by herbs and flowers. Phidylé is seen there, asleep in this spot, as the poet tells her to rest; for when she wakes up, the poet will be rewarded by her image.

Phidylé

L'herbe est molle au sommeil sous les frais peupliers,
Aux pentes des sources moussues,
Qui, dans les prés en fleur germant par mille issues,
Se perdent sous les noirs halliers.

Repose, ô Phidylé! Midi sur les feuillages
Rayonne, et t'invite au sommeil.
Par le trèfle et le thym, seules,
en plein soleil, chantent les abeilles volages.
Un chaud parfum circule au détour des sentiers,
La rouge fleur des blés s'incline,
Et les oiseaux, rasant de l'aile la colline,
Cherchent l'ombre des églantiers.

Mais, quand l'Astre,
incliné sur sa courbe éclatante,
Verra ses ardeurs s'apaiser,
Que ton plus beau sourire et ton meilleur baiser
Me récompensent de l'attente!

Phidylé

The grass is soft for sleep beneath the cool poplars
On the banks of the mossy springs
That flow in flowering meadows from a thousand
sources,
And vanish beneath dark thickets.

Rest, O Phidylé! Noon on the leaves
Is gleaming, inviting you to sleep.
By the clover and thyme, alone, in the bright sunlight,
the fickle bees are humming.
A warm fragrance floats about the winding paths,
The red flowers of the cornfield droop;
And the birds, skimming the hillside with their wings,
seek the shade of the eglantine.

But when the sun,
low on its dazzling curve,
Sees its brilliance wane,
Let your loveliest smile and finest kiss
Reward me to for my waiting!

Translation from French to English © Richard Stokes, from oxfordlieder.co.uk

Richard Strauss

Zueignung, Op. 10, No. 1

Zueignung is the first song in Strauss' Opus 10, which is his first collection of songs, composed when he was only eighteen years old. With text by Hermann von Gilm, this piece is one of Strauss' famous songs. Each of the three stanzas end with the text, "Habe Dank", which was the original title of Gilm's poem.

The text contains three stanzas, which speak of solemn and almost spiritual dedication to a loved one. At the very last stanza, Strauss puts at a high tessitura the word "Heilig" – holy, accompanied with thick, extended chords in the piano. Strauss ends this piece with a big chordal finish.

Zueignung

Ja, du weißt es, teure Seele,
Daß ich fern von dir mich quäle,
Liebe macht die Herzen krank,
Habe Dank.

Einst hielt ich, der Freiheit Zecher,
Hoch den Amethysten-Becher,
Und du segnetest den Trank,
Habe Dank.

Und beschworst darin die Bösen,
Bis ich, was ich nie gewesen,
Heilig, heilig an's Herz dir sank,
Habe Dank!

Dedication

Yes, dear soul, you know
That I'm in torment far from you,
Love makes hearts sick –
Be thanked.

Once, reveling in freedom,
I held the amethyst cup aloft
And you blessed that draught –
Be thanked.

And you banished the evil spirits,
Till I, as never before,
Holy, sank holy upon your heart –
Be thanked.

Translation from German to English © Richard Stokes, from oxfordlieder.co.uk

Richard Strauss

Morgen!, Op. 27, No. 4

Morgen! is the last piece in Strauss' Opus 27, composed when he was twenty-eight years old. With text by John Henry Mackay, the piece talks about a hope that tomorrow, as the sun shines, that they will be reunited; and at that moment, in deep silence, they will be lost in each other's worlds. This setting is underscored by a very exquisite piano accompaniment. For this recital, a viola will play the solo violin part in Strauss' original orchestral score. The two lovers prepare to meet, and in "speechless silence", closes the song in an inverted chord that feels unresolved.

Morgen!

Und morgen wird die Sonne wieder scheinen
Und auf dem Wege, den ich gehen werde,
Wird uns, die Glücklichen, sie wieder einen
Inmitten dieser sonnenatmenden Erde ...

Und zu dem Strand, dem weiten, wogenblauen,
Werden wir still und langsam niedersteigen,
Stumm werden wir uns in die Augen schauen,
Und auf uns sinkt des Glückes stummes Schweigen ...

Tomorrow!

And tomorrow the sun will shine again
And on the path that I shall take,
It will unite us, happy ones, again,
Amid this same sun-breathing earth ...

And to the shore, broad, blue-waved,
We shall quietly and slowly descend,
Speechless we shall gaze into each other's eyes,
And the speechless silence of bliss shall fall on us ...

Translation from German to English © Richard Stokes, from oxfordlieder.co.uk

Jake Heggie

Encountertenor

Encountertenor is a song cycle written for countertenor and piano. The cycle was commissioned by the late Brian Asawa, countertenor, with text by John Hall. The three songs in the cycle all talk about the countertenor voice. In Countertenor's Conundrum, the history of countertenors is laid out. The interesting life and the peculiarities of the countertenor voice is further explored comically (and with a little bit of crass language) in The Trouble with Trebles in Trousers. Finally, the cycle is closed with a very hopeful tune – that countertenors are normal singers too! – in A Gift to Share.

1. Countertenor's Conundrum

This note from my throat,
Ah! conjures imagined memories of altered males who stood upon a stage,
And with their scales and trills sang stories of heroic deeds,
Which seemed to satisfy the needs of list'ners long dead and gone.
Now we are here to carry on.

This note from my throat,
Ah! causes creative fantasies of times gone by when pampered neuters sang,
And they would try to move their audience with grace and art,
Still mindful of that missing part that changed their lives and made their song.
So precious rare and yet so wrong!

The songs they sang I'll sing again,
A modern echo of those men,
I'll train my voice stylistic'ly correct,
And hope these threads of tissue in my throat connect,
With something of those spirit voices trilling soft and sweet

Now here am I tensed present and complete.

This note, Ah! from my throat,
You understand the history that sets my voice apart.
Now let me share the mystery.

This note comes from my heart.

2. The Trouble with Trebles in Trousers

It wasn't long ago that people laughed when I would sing
They weren't uncomfortable with what I had to say
But when I tried it to a tune, they all would look away
The smirk upon their faces taught me this small thing
Pitch can be a bitch!

My post pubescent peer group in a touring schoolboy choir
Would never mention it but I could clearly see
Their smug and spotty faces singing parts marked "T" or "B"
But when I tried to baritone, I was a liar
Pitch can be a bitch!

Even teachers who specialize in voices believed I had some choices
When they heard me, they'd shake their heads and wonder:
How did it get so much like a mezzo?

I have to smile when I think back to those days in the past
For now these very notes are what I'm paid to sing
We men who sing these higher notes are few and far between
You've heard it said that laughter's best when it is last
Pitch can be a bitch!
But so can I.

3. A Gift to Share

Are my songs numbered by some accountant Norn
Who keeps a score of ev'ry note I utter
My every vocal flutter,
'till I can sing no more?

Should I be stingy and number every note that you will hear?
A vocal inventory becomes an allegory for what I really fear

Silence.

It is the silence that in some future time will come to me
Now makes my song ring clearer and your attention dearer.

Let's make a memory.
So look around you.
Remember who you're with and if you dare recall just how you're feeling.
For music can be healing and songs are meant to share.

Restituto Umali

Ang pag-ibig mo

Ang pag-ibig mo is an example of a Filipino art song known as kundiman. The Kundiman started out in the nineteenth century as a folk song. Due to the three hundred years of Spanish oppression, the Kundiman eventually developed into patriotic songs disguised as love songs. The musical structure of the Kundiman is a mix of native folk song and European musical traditions, with long legato vocal phrases and fully textured accompaniment.

This piece, with text by Philippine National Artist Levi Celerio, talks about humble dedication and service to a beloved. Notice how the song text can be romantic and nationalistic at the same time.

Ang pag-ibig mo

Ang pag-ibig mo ay tunay kong aliw,
Sa puso ko'y ikaw na lang ang ap ag mamahalin
Sa dusa mo ngayong taglay sa buhay
Ang nais ko'y ako na lamang sana ang s'yang mahirapan

Kung nababatid pag-asa ko'y ikaw
Liwanag kang sa buhay kong ito ay tumatanglaw
Kung ang tunay na ag-ibig mo ay aking makamtan,
Ligaya ko'y wala nang pagmamaliw kalian man
Magpahanggang kamatayan.

Giliw ko, tandan, hanggang magpakailanman.

Your love

Your love is my true joy
In my heart you will always be the one
How I wish that your current suffering
be made my own.

If you only knew, you are my hope,
You are the light that illuminates my life.
If the love you truly hold becomes mine,
my happiness will never fade
until death.

My love, remember, until forevermore.

Translation from Filipino to English © Kyle Tingzon

Jesús Guridi

¡Como quieres que Adivine!

The compositions of Jesús Guridi always reflect his Basque heritage. He made use of Basque folk music in his album of twenty-two Basque songs and zarzuelas. This piece is the fifth in his most popular cycle, the *Seis canciones castellanas* (Six Castilian Songs). This cycle uses popular Castilian melodies, but with a more modern take by Guridi.

The piece has a constant lilting pattern in triple meter. The vocal lines are also rhythmic, adorned with sudden accent and dynamic changes, as well as an embellished middle section. It ends in an unaccompanied little coda, repeating the very first phrase of the vocal line.

¡Como quieres que Adivine!

Cómo quieres que adivine
si estás despierta o dormida,
¡como no baje del cielo un ángel y me lo diga!
¿Cómo quieres que adivine?
Alegría y más alegría,
hermosa paloma cuando serás mía,
cuando serás mía, ¡cuando vas a ser,
hermosa paloma, remito laurel!

Cuando voy por leña al monte
olé ya mi niña y me meto en la espesura,
y veo la nieve blanca, ole ya mi niña,
me acuerdo de tu hermosura.
Quisiera ser por un rato anillo de tu pendiente,
para decirte al oído lo que mi corazón siente.

Las estrellas voy contando, ole ya mi niña,
por ver la que me persigue.
Ne persigue un lucerito,olé ya mi niña,
pequeñito pero firme,
Alegría y más alegría,
hermosa paloma cuando serás mía.
¡Cuando serás mía, cuando vas a ser,
hermosa paloma, ramito laurel!
¡Cómo quieres que adivine!

How can you expect me to guess?

How can you expect me to guess
if you're awake or asleep,
An angel isn't dropping down from heaven to tell me!
How can you expect me to guess?
Joy and more joy,
beautiful dove, when you're mine,
when you're mine, when you will,
beautiful dove, honor me!

When I go for firewood, up the mountain
oh yes, my girl, and I get tangled in the thicket,
and I see the white snow, oh yes, my girl,
I remember your beauty.
I'd like to be a ring (just for a while) in your earring,
to whisper in your ear what my heart feels.

The stars are counted by me, oh yes, my girl,
to see which one pursues me.
It's not Venus, oh yes, my girl,
but a tiny one, that shines steadily,
Joy and more joy,
beautiful dove, when you're mine,
when you're mine, when you will,
beautiful dove, honor me!
How can you expect me to guess?

Translation from Spanish to English © Laura Prichard, from lieder.net

Francisco Ernani Braga

Engenho novo!

For a long time, the songs of Braga have only been known in South America, despite writing numerous songs. It gained its well-deserved attention when Brazilian soprano Bidú Sayao and Spanish mezzo-soprano Teresa Berganza brought his songs into the world recital stage.

Engenho novo! is a part of a song cycle called *Cinco Cancões Nordestinas do Folclore Brasileiro* (*Five Songs of Northeastern Brazilian Folklore*). This piece talks about the excitement of farmers with the arrival of a new sugar mill that extracts juice from a sugar cane to make sugar. One of Braga's compositional methods is to integrate speech rhythms of the Afro-Brazilian dialect into his songs, which are usually used for a more onomatopoeic effect. That effect is explored in this piece, as a fast patter is found in the vocal line. Additionally, accent marks in the texts are integrated, to create the feeling of the Baião, a rhythmic pattern found in Brazilian regional music.

Engenho novo!

Engenho novo!
Bota a roda pra rodá!

Eu dei um pulo,
dei dois pulo,
dei tres pulo,
desta vés pulei o muro
quaji morro di pulá!

Engenho novo!
Bota a roda pra rodá!

Capim di pranta,
xique, xique, mela, mela,
Eu passei pela capela
Vi dois padri nu altá!

Engenho novo!
Bota a roda pra rodá!

New Sugar Mill!

New Sugar Mill!
Turn that wheel!

I jumped once,
I jumped twice,
I jumped three times,
And now I jumped over the wall
And I almost died because of it!

New Sugar Mill!
Turn that wheel!

Persistent weeds
(folk expressions)
I passed by the chapel
And saw two priests at the altar!

New Sugar Mill!
Turn that wheel!

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