

The Ph.D./D.M.A. Programs in Music

May 4th, 2022 1:00 p.m.

Baisley Powell Elebash Recital Hall



Jennifer Roderer, Mezzo-Soprano Albin E. Konopka, piano

An die ferne Geliebte, Op. 98 (1816)

Ludwig van Beethoven
(1770–1827)

Stornello (1869)

Giuseppe Verdi
(1813–1901)

La seduzione (1839)

Il poveretto (1847)

La zingara (from *Album di Sei romanze*) (1845)

Three Moods of the Sea (1913)

Requies
Before The Squall
After Sunset

Ethel Smyth
(1858–1944)

INTERMISSION

Le travail du peintre, FP 161 (1956)

Pablo Picasso
Marc Chagall
Georges Braque
Juan Gris
Paul Klee
Joan Miró
Jacques Villon

Francis Poulenc
(1899–1963)

This recital is given in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the D.M.A. degree.

“At That Hour When All Things Have Repose”
from *Of That So Sweet Imprisonment* (2017)

Juliana Hall
(b. 1958)

“To Mother” from *Letters from Edna* (1993)

“I wished to post a letter” from *Dreams in War Time* (2003)

“The Women’s Litany” from *Through the Guarded Gate* (2018)

“Some Things Are Dark” from *Night Dances* (1987)

Notes on the Program

An die ferne Geliebte (To the Distant Beloved) Op. 98, composed by **Ludwig van Beethoven** is considered the first *Liederkreis* or song cycle. Alois Jeitteles, a doctor, poet, writer and translator, composed the six poems in 1815 at the age of twenty-one. Beethoven set them in 1816, but we do not know if the poems were written specifically for Beethoven, although the composer the Jeitteles family were acquainted, and the poems were never independently published. The six songs, each with its own rhythmic pattern, are continuous and create a tonal wreath (Eflat/G/Aflat/Aflat/C/Eflat) and a melodic wreath as the first song’s theme returns in the final song. The poems describe a fervent longing for a distant beloved and it has been surmised that Beethoven’s mysterious “Immortal Beloved” and this cycle’s “distant beloved” are one and the same. Whether or not the object of desire is real, imagined or metaphorical, I am struck by the hope in the words that recur in the first song and in the cycle’s coda: *und ein liebend Herz erreicht, was ein liebend Herz geweiht* or “and a loving heart achieves what a loving heart consecrated” Whether or not *An die ferne Geliebte* represents Beethoven’s unmet desires, this cycle captures the longing, frustration, spiritual connection to Nature and belief in a dedicated heart that Beethoven brought to his music and which helped usher in the Romantic period of music and its treasured song repertoire.

Throughout his life, but particularly early in his career, **Giuseppe Verdi** composed *liriche da camera*, chamber songs written for voice and piano. I am drawn to his songs that create simple but powerful moments of drama and that reflect the *ottocento* trend of finding poems from the countryside or mimicking that authentic style. “**Stornello**” (1869) is a later song of Verdi’s by an anonymous poet (perhaps one of these gathered rustic poems) that was part of a song collection published by the Ricordi publishing company to raise money for the family of the opera librettist Francesco Maria Piave. Its text is a surprisingly natural and free statement of sexual liberation. “**La seduzione**” (1839) is a poem by Luigi Balestra and tells the story of an innocent girl’s ill-fated seduction. “**Il poveretto**” (1847) with another unattributed text, is told from the point of view of a beggar with heartbreaking words similar to what we hear on the streets of New York City every day. “**La zingara**” from Verdi’s *Sei Romanze* (1845) uses a flamboyant vocal line and exotic rhythms for S.M. Maggioni’s portrayal of a free-spirited Romani.

Composer, author, and suffragist **Dame Ethel Smyth** is a personal hero and inspiration. Her opera *Der Wald* (1902) was the only work by a female composer to be heard at the Metropolitan Opera until Saariaho's *L'amour de loin* in 2016. Smyth composed *Moods of the Sea* in 1913, originally setting the poems by Arthur Symons for mezzo-soprano or baritone and orchestra, but her piano version is available and most often performed, although new versions for orchestra and chamber orchestra have been created. Smyth enhances the sensual aspects of Symons's poems with an impressionistic style characterized by whole-tone scales. "Requies" uses a steady but powerfully swelling triple meter to form the rocking waves. The tempestuous and exciting "Before the Squall" contains tremolos and rapid triplets in the piano and ascending lines in the voice to portray an approaching storm. "After Sunset" is in the same rhythmic meter as "Before the Squall" yet provides a sharp contrast and exquisitely gentle conclusion to the trio of songs.

To say **Francis Poulenc** was a lover of visual art would be an understatement. His appreciation for, knowledge of, and opinions about art figure significantly in his life, work and reminiscences. *Le travail du peinture* (1956) consists of seven songs based on poems by Paul Eluard, whose work was frequently set by Poulenc. The works of Pablo Picasso, Marc Chagall, George Braque, Juan Gris, Paul Klee, Joan Miró and Jacques Villon are described in the poems, although specific paintings are not named. Poulenc's music seems to describe the persona of the artist even more than the artwork itself, but this is open to interpretation. The songs are dedicated to Alice Esty, an American operatic soprano and patroness of the arts, who commissioned the work and sang its first performance. The simple vocal line of these songs serves the poetry while the difficult piano part is vivid and descriptive. Although tonal, Poulenc uses accidentals instead of key signatures to denote tonality and the extended harmonic, jazz-like chords that end each song create a feeling of observation and rumination about these artists.

American composer **Juliana Hall** began her musical studies as a pianist but switched to composition studies in graduate school. A lover of storytelling and poetry, Hall was drawn to art song and studied with Dominic Argento. I have chosen selections from different song cycles, with the composer's blessing, because of the expanse of style and mood that she captures, as well as the variety of vocal colors that she showcases. "**At That Hour When All Things Have Repose**" is relaxed yet moody setting for contralto based on James Joyce. "**To Mother**" is from Hall's setting of various letters by Edna St. Vincent Millay. The sweet and conversational portrait of a mother that works as either nostalgia or pure fantasy. "**I wished to post a letter**" is part of *Dreams in War Time*, poems that use simple stories as metaphors for the indelible trauma of war, and the song's avant garde expression portrays the drying up of artistic expression after such trauma. Hall's setting of Margaret Widdemer's "**Woman's Litany,**" makes it easy to imagine countless generations of enraged and disenfranchised women clamoring against the heavily guarded gate of power. Hall's *Night Dances* (1987) is a song cycle based on texts by several poets that focus on all aspects of darkness, and "**Some Things Are Dark,**" is a short, high-flying and flamboyant song based on Edna St. Vincent Millay's description of the nightmares that plagued her in her painful last years.

About the Artists

DMA candidate **Jennifer Roderer** has most recently performed with the Metropolitan Opera as Giovanna in *Rigoletto* and La duègne in Alfano's *Cyrano de Bergerac*. Other recent performances include Marfa in Rothschild's *Violin* with American Symphony Orchestra, Shifrah Puah in *Enemies, A Love Story* for Palm Beach Opera, *Kabanicha* in *Kat'a Kabanova* for Spoleto USA, *Quickly in Falstaff* at Chautauqua Opera, and *Mrs. Lovett in Sweeney Todd* for Syracuse Opera.

Jennifer performed a diverse array of roles during her years at New York City Opera, such as Lady Angela in *Patience*, Junon in Mark Morris' production of *Plateé*, Jade Boucher in *Dead Man Walking*, as well as Cecilia March in *Little Women* on NYCO's tour of Japan. Favorite roles include the Witch in *Hansel and Gretel* (NYCO, Opera Company of Philadelphia, Utah Opera, Tulsa Opera, Phoenix Symphony and Opera Roanoke) Mrs. Grose in *Turn of the Screw* (Lyric Opera of Kansas City, Toledo Opera and Lorin Maazel's Chateauville Foundation) and Amneris in *Aida* (Opern Air Gars in Austria, New Jersey Festival Orchestra, Opera Illinois and Berkeley Opera).

Other opera performances include Jennifer's critically acclaimed debut at the Teatro Colón in Buenos Aires as Fricka in *Die Walküre*, conducted by Charles Dutoit. Other credits in the German repertoire include Waltraute in *Die Walküre* for Lyric Opera of Chicago and Seattle Opera, *Rosswaise* in *Die Walküre* at Opera Pacific, *Flowermaiden* in *Parsifal* with the Los Angeles Philharmonic, conducted by Pierre Boulez, *Klementia* in *Sancta Susanna* with the American Symphony Orchestra, *Gertrude* in *Hänsel und Gretel* with New Jersey Symphony and several orchestral concerts with the Wagner Society of Washington D.C.

On the concert stage, Jennifer performed solos in Verdi's *Requiem* with the Berkshire Choral Festival at Terezín, Handel's *Messiah* with the Jacksonville Symphony, Bach's B minor Mass and Dvorák's *Requiem* with the Berkshire Choral Festival, *Les noces* with the Los Angeles Master Chorale, Horatio Parker's *Hora Novissima* with the Pacific Chorale and Symphony, Mozart's *Requiem* with the New Jersey Symphony, and Beethoven's *Symphony No. 9* with the Los Angeles Philharmonic at the Hollywood Bowl.

Jennifer has given recitals for the Wagner Society of New York, the Austrian Cultural Forum and the Saratoga Arts Festival and received grants from the William Matheus Sullivan Musical Foundation, Opera Buffs of Southern California, and the Wagner Societies of New York, Washington D.C. and Los Angeles. She won the Arthur E. Walters Memorial Award from Opera Index and First Place in the Opera Guild of Southern California Competition. Born in Illinois and raised in Los Angeles, she holds a Bachelor of Music degree from the University of Southern California and a Master of Arts in Vocal Performance from Hunter College. At Hunter and here at the Graduate Center, Jennifer has studied voice with Professor Susan Gonzalez.

Pianist **Albin E. Konopka** has enjoyed an international career, spanning 40 years, as a pianist, producer, composer, musical director, vocal and dance arranger, and orchestrator. Albin is currently the music supervisor and arranger for the new musical *Come Get Maggie*. His most recent credits include pianist for *King Lear* (with Glenda Jackson), *Wicked*, *Amazing Grace* and *Billy Elliot* on Broadway, and associate musical director on the National Tours of *A Gentleman's Guide to Love and Murder* and *Anything Goes* Albin speaks 5 languages and has performed in 26 countries. He music directed *Suites by Sondheim* in Bucharest, *Lies My Father Told Me* in Montreal, Quebec, where he also orchestrated *The Jazz Singer*, and he has been music supervisor/director for numerous

productions of A Chorus Line in many countries and languages. He was the music director, arranger and orchestrator for a musical in Spanish No Volveré, La Cage Aux Folles in Italy and toured the globe with Liza Minelli. Producing credits include Magic in the Mirror in Korea, Smart Women, Foolish Choices in Tokyo, and two shows for the White House.

Albin's musical, *The "Gay No More" Telethon* was performed in the 2008 NYC Fringe Festival and he has written two other shows: *Ambra* (in Italian) and *She Shtups To Conquer!* Albin's classical New York engagements include music directing a condensed version of *Der Ring des Nibelungen* with New York Lyric Opera and recitals in New York, Los Angeles and Copenhagen with Metropolitan Opera mezzo-soprano Jennifer Roderer and international opera singers Elsebeth Dreisig and Ivan Dimitrov.

Albin was born in Los Angeles, where he received his Bachelor of Music in piano from Immaculate Heart College. He holds a Master of Music in Piano from The Juilliard School and won the Debussy Grant, enabling him to study with Nadia Boulanger in Paris. Albin has taught music theory and was a staff pianist at AMDA, coached opera and musical theater at Hunter College and is currently a collaborative pianist and coach at Barnard College.

Texts and Translations

An die ferne Geliebte

Alois Jeitteles

1. Auf dem Hügel sitz ich spähend
In das blaue Nebelland,
Nach den fernen Triften sehend,
Wo ich dich, Geliebte, fand.

Weit bin ich von dir geschieden,
Trennend liegen Berg und Tal
Zwischen uns und unserm Frieden,
Unserm Glück und unsrer Qual.

Ach, den Blick kannst du nicht sehen,
Der zu dir so glühend eilt,
Und die Seufzer, sie verwehen
In dem Raume, der uns teilt.

Will denn nichts mehr zu dir dringen,
Nichts der Liebe Bote sein?
Singen will ich, Lieder singen,
Die dir klagen meine Pein!

Denn vor Liebesklang entweicht
Jeder Raum und jede Zeit,
Und ein liebend Herz erreicht
Was ein liebend Herz geweiht

2. Wo die Berge so blau
Aus dem nebligen Grau
Schauen herein,
Wo die Sonne verglüht,
Wo die Wolke umzieht,
Möchte ich sein!

Dort im ruhigen Tal
Schweigen Schmerzen und Qual.
Wo im Gestein
Still die Primel dort sinnt,
Weht so leise der Wind,
Möchte ich sein!

Hin zum sinnigen Wald
Drängt mich Liebesgewalt,
Innere Pein.
Ach, mich zög's nicht von hier,
könn't ich, Traute, bei dir ewiglich sein!

To the distant Beloved

Alois Jeitteles

1. Upon the hill I sit gazing
At the blue foggy land,
Towards the far meadows I look
Where I, my love, found you.

Far am I from you,
Separated by mountain and valley
Between us and our peace
Our happiness and our pain.

Ah, you cannot see the gaze
That so fiery rushes to you,
And the sighs that are lost
In the space that separates us.

Will nothing more reach you then,
Nothing act as love's messenger?
I will sing, sing songs,
That tell of my pain!

Then at the sound of love,
Flee every space and every time,
And a loving heart achieves,
What a loving heart has consecrated!

2. Where the mountains so blue
Come from the misty grayness
gazing there,
Where the sun burns
Where the clouds move
I want to be there.

There in the peaceful valley
Sorrows and pain ease.
Where among rocks
The silent primrose contemplates,
The wind blows so softly
I want to be there. I want to be there.

Towards the musing forest,
Drawn by love's force,
Inner pain, inner pain.
Ah nothing could take me from here,
If I, beloved, could be with you forever! Forever!

3. Leichte Segler in den Höhen,
Und du, Bächlein klein und schmal,
Könnt mein Liebchen ihr erspähen,
Grüßt sie mir viel tausendmal.

Seht ihr, Wolken, sie dann gehen
Sinnend in dem stillen Tal,
Laßt mein Bild vor ihr entstehen
In dem luft'gen Himmelssaal.

Wird sie an den Büschen stehen,
Die nun herbstlich falb und kahl.
Klagt ihr, wie mir ist geschehen,
Klagt ihr, Vöglein, meine Qual.

Stille Weste, bringt im Wehen
Hin zu meiner Herzenswahl
Meine Seufzer, die vergehen
Wie der Sonne letzter Strahl.

Flüstr' ihr zu mein Liebesflehen,
Laß sie, Bächlein klein und schmal,
Treu in deinen Wogen sehen
Meine Tränen ohne Zahl!

4. Diese Wolken in den Höhen,
Dieser Vöglein muntren Zug,
Werden dich, o Huldin, sehen.
Nehmt mich mit im leichten Flug!

Diese Weste werden spielen
Scherzend dir um Wang' und Brust,
In den seidnen Locken wühlen. –
Teilt ich mit euch diese Lust!

Hin zu dir von jenen Hügeln
Emsig dieses Bächlein eilt.
Wird ihr Bild sich in dir spiegeln,
Fließ zurück dann unverweilt!

5. Es kehret der Maien,
Es blühet die Au,
Die Lüfte, sie wehen
So milde, so lau,
Geschwätzig die Bäche nun rinnen.
Die Schwalbe, die kehret
Zum wirtlichen Dach,
Sie baut sich so emsig
Ihr bräutlich Gemach,
Die Liebe soll wohnen da drinnen.

Sie bringt sich geschäftig
Von kreuz und von Quer

3. Wispy sailors on high,
And brooklet narrow and small,
If you can see my love,
Greet her for me a thousand times.

Clouds, if you see her wandering
Thoughtfully in the still valley
Let my portrait appear before her
In the airy hall of Heaven.

If she is standing in the greenery
That autumn has made fallow and bald
Tell her what is happening to me
Tell her, little bird, about my torment!

Silent westwinds bring my complaints
There to my chosen one
My sighs pass away
Like the sun's last rays.

Whisper to her my love's supplication
Let her, brooklet, narrow and small,
Clearly in your waves see
My tears that are without number, without number!

4. These clouds on high,
This lively flock of birds
You will see, oh graceful one.
Take me with you in gentle flight!

These westwinds will play
Jokingly upon your cheek and breast,
Burrow in your silken locks
I want to share such pure joy!

To you from these hills
Busily this brooklet rushes.
If your picture is reflected in it
May it flow back straightaway, flow back
straightaway, yes straightaway!

5. May returns, it makes the meadows bloom,
The breezes blow so mild and gentle
The brooks now run murmuring.
The swallow returns to his true home,
She busily builds her bridal chamber,
Love shall live within.

She sleepily carries from here and there
Some soft bits

Manch weicherer Stück
Zu dem Brautbett hieher,
Manch wärmendes Stück für die Kleinen.
Nun wohnen die Gatten
Beisammen so treu,
Was Winter geschieden,
Verband nun der Mai,
Was liebet, das weiß er zu einen.

Es kehret der Maien,
Es blühet die Au.
Die Lüfte, sie wehen
So milde, so lau;
Nur ich kann nicht ziehen von hinnen.
Wenn alles, was liebet,
Der Frühling vereint,
Nur unserer Liebe
Kein Frühling erscheint,
Und Tränen sind all ihr Gewinnen.

6. Nimm sie hin denn, diese Lieder,
Die ich dir, Geliebte, sang,
Singe sie dann abends wieder
Zu der Laute süßem Klang!

Wenn das Dämmerungsrot dann zieht
Nach dem stillen blauen See,
Und sein letzter Strahl verglüheth
Hinter jener Bergeshöh;

Und du singst, was ich gesungen,
Was mir aus der vollen Brust
Ohne Kunstgepräg erklingen,
Nur der Sehnsucht sich bewußt:

Dann vor diesen Liedern weichet
Was geschieden uns so weit,
Und ein liebend Herz erreicht
Was ein liebend Herz geweiht!

To her bridal bed
Some warming bits for her little ones.
Now the couple lives
Faithfully together,
What winter has separated
May has now joined.
May knows how to unite what loves.

May returns it makes the meadows bloom,
The breezes blow so mild and gentle
Only I am not able to move from here.
Although Spring unites all that loves,
No Spring shines upon our love,
And tears are our only prize, yes our only prize.

6. Take these songs then,
Beloved, that I have sung,
Sing in the evenings again and again
to the sweet sound of the lute.

When the red of twilight appears
In the quiet blue lake
And its last rays glow
Behind each mountaintop,

And you sing what I have sung
From my full heart
Played without the sound of artistic wiles,
Only with the feeling of longing, only, only of longing.

Then before these songs banish
What has so distantly separated us,
And a loving heart achieves
What a loving heart has consecrated!

Stornello

(Anonymous)

Tu dici che non m'ami... anch'io non t'amo...
Dici non vi vuoi ben, non te ne voglio.
Dici ch'a un altro pesce hai teso l'amo.
Anch'io in altro giardin la rosa coglio.

Anco di questo vo'che ci accordiamo:
Tu fai quel che ti pare, io quel che voglio.
Son libero di me, padrone è ognuno.
Serva di tutti e non servo a nessuno.

Costanza nell'amor è una follia;
Volubile io sono e me ne vanto.
Non tremo più scontrandoti per via,
Né, quando sei lontan mi struggo in pianto.
Come usignuol che uscì di prigionia
Tutta la notte e il dì folleggio e canto.

Son libero di me, padrone è ognuno.
Serva di tutti e non servo a nessuno.

La Seduzione

Luigi Balestra

Era bella com'angiol del cielo,
Innocente degl'anni sul fiore,
Ed il palpito primo d'amore
Un crudele nel cor le destò.

Inesperta, fidente ne' giuri,
Sè commise all'amante sleale;
Fu sedotta! e l'anello nuziale,
Poveretta, ma indarno invocò.

All'infamia dannata, allo scherno,
Nove lune gemé la tradita;
Poi, consunta dal duolo la vita,
Pregò venia al crudele e spirò.

Ed il frutto del vil tradimento
Nel sepolcro posogli d'appresso;
Là non sorse una croce, un cipresso,
Non un sasso il suo nome portò.

Stornello

(Anonymous)

You say that you don't love me...well I don't love...
You say you don't wish me well...same here.
You say you want to hook a different fish
Well I want to pick the roses from a different garden.

Let's agree on this:
You do what you want, I'll do what I want
Servant of all but I serve nobody.

Fidelity in love is a bad idea
I am fickle and proud of it.
I am not afraid of meeting you on the street,
And when you're long gone I won't shed any tears.

Like a bird let out of jail
All night and all day, I play and sing.
I am free and no one rules me;
Servant of all but I serve nobody.

The Seduction

Luigi Balestra

She was beautiful as an angel of heaven,
Innocent in her blooming years,
And the first heartbeats of love
A cruel one awakened in her.

Naïve, she believed the promises,
She trusted the affections of a user.
She was seduced! And she prayed in vain for a
wedding ring.

Shamed, damned and mocked, the abandoned girl
wept for nine months.
Then, consumed by enormous sorrow, she prayed
that the cruel one be forgiven and died.

And the fruit of the vile betrayal, was placed near her
in the grave.
There is no marking, no cross, no cypress
No stone carrying her name.

Il Poveretto

(Anonymous)

Passegger, che al dolce aspetto
Par che serbi un gentil cor,
Porgi un soldo al poveretto
Che da man digiuno è ancor.

Fin da quando era figliuolo
Sono stato militar
E pugnando pel mio suolo
Ho trascorso e terra e mar;

Ma or che il tempo su me pesa,
Or che forza più non ho,
Fin la terra che ho difesa,
La mia patria m'obliò.

Passeger, che al dolce aspetto . . .

La zingara

S.M. Maggioni

Chi padre mi fosse, qual patria mi sia,
Invano la gente chiamando mi va;
Del primo mai seppi ed è patria mia
La terra che un fiore, che un frutto mi dà.

Dovunque il destino m'addita un sentiero,
Io trovo un sorriso, io trovo un amor;
Perchè del passato darommi pensiero,
Se l'ora presente è lieta al mio cor?

Può, è vero, il domani un torbido velo
Dell'aure serene l'aspetto turbar;
Ma s'oggi risplende azzurro il mio cielo,
Perchè rattristarmi d'un dubbio avvenir?

Io sono una pianta che ghiaccio non spoglia,
Che tutto disfida del verno il rigor;
Se fronda qui cade, là un'altra germoglia,
In ogni stagione son carica di fior.

The Beggar

(Anonymous)

Passerby with the kindly face
That shows a gentle heart,
Give some change to a beggar
Who hasn't eaten all day.

Back when I was young
I was in the military
I fought for this land
And traveled the world;

But now that time has beaten me
Now that my strength is gone,
The country that I defended
Has forgotten me.

Passer-by...some change?

The Roma girl

S.M. Maggioni

Who was my father, what is my homeland,
People ask me in vain;
I never knew about the first and my country
Is the land that gives me flowers and fruit.

Wherever destiny leads me is my path.
Wherever I find a smile, find a love;
Why think about the past
When my heart is presently happy?

It is true that tomorrow a stormy veil
Will disturb my peaceful demeanor
But today my sky is a gorgeous blue
Why bother with doubts of what may happen?

I am a plant that the frost hasn't spoiled,
That defies the ravages of winter;
If a frond falls here another sprouts there,
In every season I am laden with flowers.

Moods of the Sea

Arthur Symons

Requies

O is it death or life that sounds
Like something strangely known
In this subsiding out of strife,
This low sea monotone?

A sound scarce heard through sleep
Murmurs as the August bees
That fill the forest hollows deep
About the roots of trees.

Before the Squall

O is it death or life, or is it
Hope or memory
That quiets all things with this breath
Of the eternal sea?

The wind is rising on the sea,
The windy white foam dancers leap;
And the sea moans uneasily,
And turns to sleep, and cannot sleep.

Ridge after rocky ridge uplifts wild hands,
And hammers at the land,
Scatters in liquid dust, and drifts
To death among the dusty sand.

On the horizon's nearing line,
Where the sky rests a visible wall,
Grey in the offing I divine
The sails that fly before a squall.

After Sunset

The sea lies quieted beneath
The after sunset flush
That leaves upon the heap'd grey clouds
The grapes faint purple blush.

Pale, from a little space in heaven
Of delicate ivory.
The sickle moon and one gold star
Look down upon the sea.

Le travail du peintre

Paul Eluard

Pablo Picasso

Entoure ce citron de blanc d'oeuf informe
Enrobe ce blanc d'oeuf d'un azur souple et fin
La ligne droite et noire a beau venir de toi
L'aube est derrière ton tableau

Et des murs innombrables croulent
Derrière ton tableau et toi l'oeil fixe
Comme un aveugle comme un fou
Tu dresses une haute épée dans le vide

Une main pourquoi pas une seconde main
Et pourquoi pas la bouche nue comme une plume
Pourquoi pas un sourire et pourquoi pas des larmes
Tout au bord de la toile où jouent les petits clous

Voici le jour d'autrui laisse aux ombres leur chance
Et d'un seul mouvement des paupières renonce

Marc Chagall

Âne ou vache coq ou cheval
Jusqu'à la peau d'un violon
Homme chanteur un seul oiseau
Danseur agile avec sa femme
Couple trempé dans son printemps

L'or de l'herbe le plomb du ciel
Séparés par les flammes bleues
De la santé de la rosée
Le sang s'irise le coeur tinte

Un couple le premier reflet
Et dans un souterrain de neige
La vigne opulente dessine
Un visage aux lèvres de lune
Qui n'a jamais dormi la nuit.

George Braques

Un oiseau s'envole,
Il rejette les nues comme un voile inutile
il n'a jamais craint la lumière,
Enfermé dans son vol,
Il n'a jamais eu d'ombre.

Coquilles des moissons brisées par le soleil.
Toutes les feuilles dans les bois disent oui,
Elles ne savent dire que oui,
Toute question, toute réponse
Et la rosée coule au fond de ce oui.

The work of the artist

Paul Eluard

Pablo Picasso

Surround this lemon with unformed egg white
Enrobe this eggwhite with a supple and delicate blue
The line, straight and black comes strongly from you

The dawn is behind your scene
And the innumerable walls crumble behind your
scene and you,
Eyes fixed like a blind man or a fool,
Raise a tall sword in the void.

A hand, why not a second hand
And why not the mouth nude as a feather
Why not a smile and why not tears
At the very edge of your canvas where little nails play

Here is the day of others
Let the shadows have their chance
And with one motion of the eyelids renounce it.

Marc Chagall

Ass or cow rooster or horse,
Even the skin of a violin
A man singing, a single bird
An agile dancer with his wife
A couple soaked in their springtime

Golden grass the lead of sky
Separated by the blue flames
In the health of the dew
the blood becomes iridescent the heart rings.

A couple, the first reflection
And in a tunnel of snow the abundant vine draws
A face with lips of the moon
That has never slept at night.

George Braques

The bird takes wing
It rejects the clouds like a useless veil
It has never feared light,
Enclosed in its flight
It has never had a shadow.

Husks of the harvest broken by the sun
All the leaves in the forest say yes,
They only know to say that yes,
Every question, every response
And the dew flows deeply in that yes.

Un homme aux yeux légers décrit le ciel d'amour.
Il en rassemble les merveilles
Comme des feuilles dans un bois,
Comme des oiseaux dans leurs ailes
Et des hommes dans le sommeil.

Juan Gris

De jour merci de nuit prends garde
De douceur la moitié du monde
L'autre montrait rigueur aveugle

Aux veines se lisait un présent sans merci
Aux beautés des contours l'espace limité
Cimentait tous les joints des objets familiers

Table guitare et verre vide
Sur un arpent de terre pleine
De toile blanche d'air nocturne

Table devait se soutenir
Lampe rester pépin de l'ombre
Journal délaissait sa moitié

Deux fois le jour deux fois la nuit
De deux objets un double objet
Un seul ensemble à tout jamais

Paul Klee

Sur la pente fatale, le voyageur profite
De la faveur du jour, verglas et sans cailloux,
Et les yeux bleus d'amour, découvre sa saison
Qui porte à tous les doigts de grands astres en bague.

Sur la plage la mer a laissé ses oreilles
Et le sable creusé la place d'un beau crime.
Le supplice est plus dur aux bourreaux qu'aux
victimes
Les couteaux sont des signes et les balles des larmes.

Joan Mirò

Soleil de proie prisonnier de ma tête
Enlève la colline, enlève la forêt.
Le ciel est plus beau que jamais.

Les libellules des raisins
Lui donnent des formes précises
Que je dissipe d'un geste.

Nuages du premier jour,
Nuages insensibles et que rien n'autorise,
Leurs graines brûlent
Dans les feux de paille de mes regards.

An easy-eyed man describing the heaven of love.
He collects its wonder
Like the leaves in a forest,
Like birds in their wings
And people in their dreams.

Juan Gris

Gratitude in the day, caution in the night
Half of the world gentle, the other half thoughtless
rigidity,

In the veins could be read a merciless present.
In the beauty of the contours limited spaces
Cement all the joints of familiar objects

Table, guitar, and empty glass
On any parcel of earth
Of white canvas of night air

The table must support itself
The lamp remains a seed of shadow
The newspaper abandons its half.

Two times a day two times a night
From two objects a double object
Alone together forever.

Paul Klee

On the fatal slope, the traveler takes advantage
Of the favor of the day, smooth and without pebbles,
And eyes blue with love, discovers his season
That carries on all fingers rings of big stars.

On the beach the sea has left its ears
And the emptied sand the space of a beautiful
crime.
Torture is harder on the torturer than on the victims
Knives are signs and tears are bullets.

Joan Mirò

Sun of prey imprisoned in my head
Carry away the hill, carry off the forest.
The sky is more beautiful than ever.

The dragonflies of grapes
Give them precise forms
That I scatter with a gesture.

Clouds of the first day
Clouds unknowing and authorized by nothing
Burn their grains in the sudden fires of my gaze.

À la fin, pour se couvrir d'une aube
Il faudra que le ciel soit aussi pur que la nuit.

In the end, to cover itself with dawn
It also must be that the sky is as pure as the night.

Jacques Villon

Irrémédiable vie
Vie à toujours chérir

En dépit des fléaux
Et des morales basses
En dépit des étoiles fausses
Et des cendres envahissantes

En dépit des fièvres grinçantes
Des crimes à hauteur du ventre
Des seins taris des fronts idiots
En dépit des soleils mortels

En dépit des dieux morts
En dépit des mensonges
L'aube l'horizon l'eau
L'oiseau l'homme l'amour

L'homme léger et bon
Adoucissant la terre
Éclaircissant les bois
Illuminant la pierre

Et la rose nocturne
Et le sang de la foule.

Jacques Villon

Incurable life
Life always cherished

In spite of plagues
And base morals
In spite of false stars
And invading cinders

In spite of rasping fevers
Of crimes belly-high
Of dried-up breasts and idiotic brows
In spite of mortal suns

In spite of dead gods
In spite of lies
The dawn, the horizon, water
Birds, people, love

The man light and good
Sweetens the earth.
Clearing the wilderness
Illuminating the stones

And the nocturnal rose
And the blood of the crowd.

At that hour when all things have repose

James Joyce

At that hour when all things have repose,
O lonely watcher of the skies,
Do you hear the night wind and the sighs
Of harps playing unto Love to unclothe
The pale gates of sunrise?

When all things repose, do you alone
Awake to hear the sweet harps play
To Love before him on his way,
And the night wind answering in antiphon
Till night is overgone?

Play on, invisible harps, unto Love,
Whose way in heaven is aglow
At that hour when soft lights come and go,
Soft sweet music in the air above
And in the earth below.

To Mother

Edna St. Vincent Millay

Do you know, almost all people love their mothers, but I have never met anybody in my life, I think, who loved his mother as much as I love you. I don't believe there ever was anybody who did, quite so much, and quite in so many wonderful ways. I was telling somebody yesterday that the reason I am a poet is entirely because you wanted me to be and intended I should be, even from the very first. You brought me up in the tradition of poetry, and everything I did you encouraged. Some parents of children that are "different" have so much to reproach themselves with. But not you, Great Spirit. If I didn't keep calling you mother, anybody reading this would think I was writing to my sweetheart. And he would be quite right. Well, dear, this is enough for now. I will write again soon.

I wished to post a letter by Amy Lowell
I wished to post a letter,
But although I paid much,
Still the letter was overweight.
"What is in this package?" said the clerk,
"It is very heavy."
"Yes," I said,
"And yet it is only a dried fruit."

The Women's Litany

Margaret Widdemer

Let us in through the guarded gate,
Let us in for our pain's sake!
Lips set smiling and face made fair
Still for you through the pain we bare,
We have hid till our hearts were sore
Blacker things than you ever bore:
Let us in through the guarded gate,
Let us in for our pain's sake!

Let us in through the guarded gate,
Let us in for our strength's sake!
Light held high in a strife ne'er through
We have fought for our sons and you,
We have conquered a million years'
Pain and evil and doubt and tears—
Let us in through the guarded gate,
Let us in for our strength's sake!

Let us in through the guarded gate,
Let us in for your own sake!
We have held you within our hand,
Marred or made as we broke or planned,
We have given you life or killed
King or brute as we taught or willed—
Let us in through the guarded gate,
Let us in for your own sake!

Let us in through the guarded gate,
Let us in for the world's sake!
We are blind who must guide your eyes,
We are weak who must help you rise,
All untaught who must teach and mold
Souls of men till the world is old—
Let us in through the guarded gate,
Let us in for the world's sake!

Some things are dark

Edna St. Vincent Millay

Some things are dark — or think they are.
But, in comparison to me,
All things are light enough to see
In any place, at any hour.
For I am Nightmare: where I fly,
Terror and rain stand in the sky
So thick, you could not tell them from
That blackness out of which you come.

So much for "where I fly": but when
I strike, and clutch in claw the brain —
Erebus, to such brain, will seem
The thin blue dusk of pleasant dream.