

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

October 31st, 2022 6:00 p.m.

Baisley Powell Elebash Recital Hall



James Archie Worley, tenor
with James Bassi, piano

<i>Dichterliebe</i> , op. 48, no. 15, <i>Aus alten Märcchen</i>	Robert Schumann (1810–56)
<i>Loreley</i> , WoO 19	Clara Wieck Schumann (1819–96)
<i>Loreley</i> , op. 53, no. 2	Robert Schumann
<i>Der Fischer</i> , op. 5, no. 3	Franz Schubert (1797–1828)
<i>Hexenlied (And'res Maienlied)</i> , op. 8, no. 8	Felix Mendelssohn (1809–1847)
<i>Elfenliedchen</i> , op. 6, no. 3	Nikolai Medtner (1880–1951)
<i>Thomas der Reimer</i> , op. 135a	Carl Loewe (1796–1869)
<i>Die Heintzelmännchen</i> , op. 83	Carl Loewe

INTERMISSION

Passacaglia (1992)	John Musto (b.1954)
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This recital is given in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the D.M.A. degree.
Please switch off your cell phones and refrain from taking flash pictures.

Ghosts	Margaret Ruthven Lang (1867–1972)
Phantoms, 7 Songs, no. 5	Charles Tomlinson Griffes (1884–1920)
The Song of Wandering Aengus	Richard Faith (1926–2021)
Jabberwocky	Lee Hoiby (1926–2011)
The Grunchin' Witch	John Duke (1899–1984)
Horror Movie	William Flanagan (1923–1969)
Mirror	Eric Schorr (living)
The Dolls	James Bassi (b.1961)
I, Ichabod: or <i>Crane 'splains</i>	Richard Pearson Thomas (still living)
The Irish Ballad	Tom Lehrer (b.1928)

Notes on the Program

On this Halloween evening, we will explore German *Lieder* and American Art Song in settings that follow a supernatural theme, including three songs commissioned for this recital.

Robert Schumann (1810–1856) composed “**Aus alten Märchen,**” (From Fairy Tales of Old) in 1840—his *Liederjahr* (song year). This is the fifteenth *Lied* in Schumann’s *Dichterliebe* (Poet’s Love), op. 48, set to the poetry of Heinrich Heine (1797–1856). Galloping hunting horn figures in the piano transport us to that misty land where green trees sing old melodies, birds warble, and blue sparks are ablaze on every leaf and twig. Typical in Schumann’s *Lieder*, the pianist and singer play equal roles. He leads us forward through a series of chromatically ascending major seventh chords at “und laute Quellen brechen” (and loud springs break) to a reflective, rhythmically augmented A’ section. A series

of descending diminished chords underscores the vanishing of the dream of the magical land like “vain foam” (zerfließt’s wie eitel Schaum).

After being introduced to the land of fairy tales, we turn to **Clara Wieck Schumann** (1819–1896), Robert Schumann’s wife and celebrated concert pianist. Clara composed “**Loreley**” (also spelled “Lorelei”) in June 1843 to Heine’s famous “Lorelei” poem and gifted it to Robert on his birthday that same month. From the opening of this through-composed song, a sense of urgency and anxiety are evident in the virtuosic piano part through repeated eighth-note patterns and building chromatic intensity. The protagonist laments the unknown sadness felt in the recollection of an old fairy tale. The subject of this legendary tale, the Lorelei, is a siren who lures Rhine travelers to their doom at the base of the so-called “Lorelei Spitz.” Arpeggiated chords in disjunct rhythm with the vocal line lend an unsettled feeling to this *Lied* as a boatman is tossed by the waves. The climax occurs as we realize the Lorelei’s song has caused the boatman to be lost beneath the waves—“und das hat mit ihrem Singen die Lorelei getan” (and the Lorelei has done that with her singing.) This *Lied* was first published in 1992 by Breitkopf and Härtel.

Robert Schumann’s modified strophic setting (1840) of “**Loreley**” (op. 53, no. 2), more calmly depicted underneath the waves of the Rhine in poetry by Auguste Wilhelmine Lorenz (1784–1861), opens with augmented arpeggiated chords in wave-like motion, lending an ethereal atmosphere as the waves toil above the Loreley’s home. As the key is settled, she calls out from beneath the waves: “remember me” (gedenke mein).

Franz Schubert (1797–1828) set more than 80 *Lieder* to texts by Johann Wolfgang von Goethe (1749–1832), including the 1815 strophic setting of “**Der Fischer**,” op. 5, no. 3. Schubert creates the feeling of perpetual motion in the accompaniment with flowing sixteenth-note patterns and mordents painting the water’s ebb and flow as a fisherman encounters a water sprite, who ultimately entices him to dwell with her brood beneath the waves.

We are now transported to that storied realm atop the Brocken, the highest peak of the Harz mountains in Germany, which, according to legend, hosts witches and other nefarious creatures who fly there to take part in various celebrations. The Brocken is featured in **Felix Mendelssohn**’s 1827 “**Hexenlied**” (Witch’s Song), op. 8, no. 8, subtitled, “And’res Maienlied” (Another Kind of May Song), as it follows “Maienlied,” op. 8, no. 7. Mendelssohn (1809–1847) wrote that he was against composing non-serious music, and he criticizes ballad composers (unnamed), so it has been suggested that his modified strophic “Hexenlied,” set to a poem by Ludwig Hölty (1748–1776), was meant as a humorous, “tongue-in-cheek” offering.¹ Nevertheless, he masterfully uses painterly effects (sweeping arpeggios, chromaticism, and hunting figures) to depict dragon- and witch-flight, along with a calmer, tremolo-padded section featuring swallows and triumphant spring.

Russian composer **Nikolai Medtner** (1880–1951) introduces us to the land of elves in his 1904–06 “**Elfenliedchen**” (Little Song of the Elves), op. 6, no. 3, set to the poetry of Goethe. The virtuosic piano part in this mixed meter, modified strophic piece splendidly paints the elves’ midnight romp with lilting dotted figures in the left hand as the right hand sweeps to and fro, countering the vocal line, at times in sync with the piano, at times not. He adds an eerie effect with two moaning vocal utterances in which the singer is instructed to sing with half closed lips.

The elfin theme continues in “**Thomas der Reimer**” (Thomas the Rhymer), op. 135a. **Carl Loewe** (1796–1869) sets this adaptation of a Scottish legend by Theodore Fontane (1819–1898). This through-composed (with some repetition) 1860 *Ballad* features a twinkling upper-range in the piano, mimicking the bells that adorn the mane of the Elf Queen’s white steed. Bird-song figures adorn a kiss between Thomas and the Queen—a kiss that seals his seven-year commitment to her. A triumphal

¹ Susan Youens, “Mendelssohn’s Songs.” Chapter 11 in *The Cambridge Companion to Mendelssohn*, ed. Peter Mercer-Taylor (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 189–205, doi:10.1017/CCOL9780521826037.013.

march-like dotted section accompanies the couple as they ride off through the green forest as the bell figures return in the accompaniment.

Carl Loewe recounts the adventures of house gnomes in his 1841 “**Die Heinzelmännchen**” (The Little House Gnomes), op. 83, a setting of the popular poem by August Kopisch (1799–1853). The many toils of the little house gnomes are evoked in this through-composed, quasi theme and variation *Ballad*. As various Cologne tradesfolk doze, the *Heinzelmännchen* come out of hiding to complete the work of these lazy folk. The carpenters’ work on a house is finished in one night; the master baker’s bread is baked and presented for sale; the butcher’s sausage making (to frenetic piano accompaniment) is done and hung; the bar keeper’s wine is finely bottled; the mayor’s official coat is finished (accompanied by charming grace-note figures), but his nosy wife sets out to catch the gnomes by strewing peas on the floor. After flailing about, depicted with descending chromatic coloratura, they rush off, never to return to Cologne again, leaving the townsfolk to lament that they must now do all the work themselves. The several interludes, which all use the same thematic material (save the last), largely follow progressions of thirds.

American Art Song

Award-winning composer and pianist, **John Musto**, is also a professor and Coördinator of the D.M.A. Program here at the Graduate Center.² His “**Passacaglia**” (1992), originally from the song cycle *Encounters* for tenor and orchestra, is set to a poem by E. E. Cummings (1894–1962). The voice and piano intertwine in painterly effects as stone children sing with stone flowers in which they are wound. The piano and the voice participate in the passacaglia variations, coming together in parallel thirds at “singing forever,” to end *a capella* on the word, “song.” Musto writes that “the image of stone children singing reminded me of statuary my wife and I came across in Père Lachaise cemetery in Paris. The poet’s incantational repetition of the alliterative stone, singing, silence, struck me as eerie and unsettling. (Generally, children are anything but silent.) The song is set as a passacaglia, a set of variations over a cyclical pattern, because of its sense of motion-in-stasis, like the frozen song of the children.”³

The first American woman to have a work premiered by an American Symphony orchestra, **Margaret Ruthven Lang** (1867–1972) set “**Ghosts**” (1889) to poetry by Richard Kendall Munkittrick (1853–1911). This elegantly simple modified strophic song is introduced by falling figures solely in the treble clef. Along with a descending vocal line, Lang is perhaps evoking the falling snow and the fallen “flowers that died in the early spring.” The sparse postlude ends in two sets of thirds in an imperfect authentic cadence.

In keeping with the ghosts of nature, **Charles Tomlinson Griffes’s “Phantoms”** (c1912), with text by John Banister Tabb (1845–1909), displays a more ethereal quality than Lang’s similarly texted “Ghosts.” Griffes (1884–1920) places “Phantoms” as the fifth in a collection of seven songs. A series of multi-tupletted figures in the accompaniment, intertwined with the vocal line, suggests the ghosts of fallen leaves masquerading as snowflakes in this through-composed song. After a short homophonic interlude, the tuplet figures return in the piano as we ponder whether the snowflakes, instead of being “the ghosts of fallen leaves,” are “angels bearing home the host unseen of truant spirits to be clad again in green.”

In 1982, **Richard Faith** (1926–2021) composed “**The Song of Wandering Aengus**” to poetry by William Butler Yeats (1865–1939). In this modal, mixed-meter, modified strophic song, Aengus catches a trout who magically becomes an enchanting, yet allusive girl. The vocal line in the

² For more information, see <http://www.johnmusto.com>.

³ John Musto wrote this program note for NYFOS (New York Festival of Song) Next: An Evening with John Musto and Friends at OPERA America’s National Opera Center, <http://www.johnmusto.com/texts-and-notes-on-the-program.html>.

second strophe is accompanied by a winding countermelody leading to a reflective recitative-like section. Aengus, who by now has been wandering for years in search of the trout-maiden pledges that, when she is found, they will “walk among long dappled grass, and pluck till time and times are done, the silver apples of the moon, the golden apples of the sun.”

First published in 1871, *Through the Looking-Glass and What Alice Found There* by Lewis Carroll (Charles Lutwidge Dodgson, 1832–1898) features a scene in which Alice finds a poem in a book that can only be read in a mirror (everything is mirrored in Looking-Glass land). Widely considered to be the finest example of nonsense poetry in the English language, “**Jabberwocky**” includes Carroll’s portmanteau words now in mainstream English—chortle (chuckle and snort) and galumph (gallop and triumphant).⁴ **Lee Hoiby** (1926–2011) sets *Jabberwocky* (1986) as a through-composed fantastical piece in mixed meter with extensive motivic devices, word painting, and dazzling accompaniment. A young lad sets out to slay the Jabberwock, a fierce creature with “jaws that bite” and “claws that catch,” accompanied by staccato triplet figures in the piano. Hoiby does not rely solely on the singer to convey the story—the piano continues the depiction of the lad’s journey even as there are extended periods of rest in the vocal line

Not much is known about the poet Jessica Jackson. She and **John Duke** (1899–1984) were acquainted, and her 1924 “**The Grunchin’ Witch**” was one of two Jackson poems Duke set in 1924. He makes extensive use of clustered harmonies and virtuosic piano writing with abundant text painting clarified by written instructions in the score. As we begin the journey of the Grunchin’ Witch and her compatriots, Duke asks the pianist to play the sweeping prelude “with a great rush.” Of the fourteen further written instructions in this short, through-composed song, Duke asks the pianist, as the witch is introduced, to play “with strongly marked rhythm (like drum-beats),” foreshadowing the line, “and gerrumping on her drums.” Other instructions direct the pianist to play “grotesquely,” “with sinister emphasis,” and “precipitately.” Duke asks the singer to imitate a “drum-roll” in the word “gerrumping”; to sing “with repressed excitement” as “the horny witchies come”; and to sing “fantastically” as “down the screaming wind they scut.” He also asks the singer to sing “madly,” “sternly,” and finally, “sleepily,” as the witchies end their journey in the final line: “and snore in a furry fum.”

Composer and critic, **William Flanagan** (1923–1969), who was mentored by Aaron Copland, wrote music in several genres, but was best known for his songs. He set “**Horror Movie**,” a 1940 poem by former poetry editor of *The New Yorker*, Howard Moss (1922–1987). Flanagan supplies virtuosic piano accompaniment, featuring vivid chromaticism with imaginative metrical and rhythmical changes. The prelude, with disjunct triplet figures rising to the upper range of the piano, along with clanging, bell-like hammered chords, are reminiscent of horror movie soundtracks from the early twentieth century up to 1962. Flanagan deftly takes us through various horror movie scenes in this through-composed, madcap tour-de-force. The vocal line is at times declamatory, at times demandingly difficult, yet delightfully humorous and campy in its approach. A Twilight Zone-esque figure even makes an appearance before the story of Doctor X., “who kills by moonlight.” A truncated version of the prelude closes the piece with banging left hand in the piano, perhaps suggesting the pounding of coffin nails and ominous tolling of bells.

Albany Records has recently released *New York Pretending to Be Paris*, an album of **Eric Schorr**’s art songs on contemporary poems. Eric composes for theater, film, and television, but reports that he has a special fondness for the art of the art song. Written for this recital, Eric’s song “**Mirror**” (2022) features the poetry of Richie Hofmann. “Mirror,” from Hofmann’s poetry collection, *Second Empire*, was written in 2010, after Hofmann spent time at The James Merrill House in Stonington, Connecticut, where a gold-framed mirror is a focal point of the residence. The mirror features

⁴ Carroll was also the first to use the preexisting word, *portmanteau*, to refer to blended words—*portmanteau words*. A more complete list of Carroll’s nonce words is found at <https://www.dictionary.com/e/words-invented-by-lewis-carroll/>.

prominently in Merrill's poetry and serves as a portal, in a sense, to the spirit world of *The Changing Light at Sandover*.⁵ In Eric Schorr's A-B-A' setting, the F-major prelude (with added decorating tones) leads to a waltz-like foreshadowing of the reflections of a "supernatural corps-de-ballet." After a recitative-like section, a return to the A section, now A', leads to the observer expecting to see "the faces of the dead" in the mirror, but instead is seen by "the faces of the ghosted silver sea." Special thanks go to Richie Hofmann for permission to use his poetry.

Also written for this recital, "**The Dolls**" is set to a poem by William Butler Yeats (1865–1939) of the same title. In this charming A-B-A' setting, **James Bassi**, also the pianist for this evening's recital, presents a music box opening which, as the poem progresses, becomes more and more distorted as the "oldest of all the dolls" rails about the man and woman of the house bringing a child into their domain. Ironically, the dolls scream and fuss because they do not want to deal with a noisy child. A marching B section, with tritone utterances, leads to a boisterous cadenza at "a noisy, noisy filthy thing." The A section returns, now distorted as the woman realizes her husband has heard the wretched, oldest doll on the shelf screaming and raving about the forthcoming child. We get the effect of the music box winding down in the postlude, enhanced by the eerie sonority provided by the use of the sostenuto pedal. The song closes with a final cluster chord stinger. Bassi says that this song "may be described as a miniature musical episode of *The Twilight Zone*."⁶

Richard Pearson Thomas, prolific composer and pianist, is currently on the faculty at Columbia University Teachers College.⁷ Mr. Thomas has cleverly adapted *The Legend of Sleepy Hollow* by Washington Irving (1783–1859) into a rousing scena. In 2020, Thomas composed "**I, Ichabod: or Crane 'splains**" for this recital. He has conjured Ichabod Crane, who tells us exactly what he thinks about his situation in Sleepy Hollow, "that swamp upstate." Painterly effects in the piano include rhapsodic arpeggiated figures as Ichabod explains his liking of all sorts of cake, including the Dutch *olykoek* (Thomas writes that this is pronounced "o-LICK-o-eck"). Crane croons about his singing ability, and his love of dancing. He expounds upon his desire for "the girl" (Katrina Van Tassel). Alas, she rejects Crane, later chased by her oaf of a boyfriend (Van Brunt, AKA Brom Bones) on his big black horse. Crane's imagination runs wild, as does the fleet accompaniment, as he races from the now-suspected specter—the headless horseman. As he shrieks through the night, something whistles by his head. In the story by Irving, Crane is missing the next day, but a pumpkin is found by the roadside—Mr. Thomas has Crane explain that he knew it wasn't HIS head (the horseman), but a pumpkin—he's an Ichabod after all, "not an idiot." Richard Pearson Thomas has supplied the inventive rhyme—ninny/ignominy; and playful alliteration—"feckless phony." Crane swears on his mother's pumpkin pie that "the name Ichabod Crane will never die" as the song gallops to a close.

Tom Lehrer (b. 1928) retired in 2001, having taught mathematics at MIT, Harvard, and the University of California, Santa Cruz, where he offered an introductory mathematics course he referred to as "Math for Tenors." He produced his own recordings in 1953, including *The Irish Ballad*. Since October 2020, all of Lehrer's song lyrics and much of the music are freely available on his website. He encourages "anyone to set any of these lyrics to their own music and publish or perform their versions or parodies or distortions of these lyrics without fear of legal action."⁸ With this in mind, James Bassi will be creative in his piano accompaniment for this song. Lehrer's "**The Irish Ballad**" is a gruesome and wickedly funny strophic song that relates the various "little pranks" that a young maiden nefariously inflicts upon her family—drowning, poisoning, immolation, more drowning, and intersectional mutilation—a fine ending for Halloween.

⁵ Eric Schorr supplied the background to Hofmann's poetry in an email correspondence, August 17, 2022. For more on Eric Schorr, see <https://www.ericshorr.com>; for Richie Hofmann, see <https://www.richiehofmann.com>.

⁶ This is from a conversation with the composer on September 20, 2022.

⁷ For more on Richard Pearson Thomas, see <https://www.richardpearsonthomas.com>.

⁸ See <https://tomlehrersongs.com>.

About the Artists

Tenor **James Archie Worley** has appeared as soloist with the New York Philharmonic, the American Symphony Orchestra, the American Composers Orchestra, the Orchestra of St. Luke's in the Fields, Orpheus Chamber Orchestra, the Little Orchestra Society, the Santa Fe Symphony, the Chattanooga Symphony, the Midland Symphony Orchestra, the Brooklyn Philharmonic, and the Chinese National Opera Orchestra in Beijing, China.

He has also appeared as soloist with the Berkshire Bach Society, Berkshire Choral Festival, Collegiate Chorale, Dessoff Choirs, Grace Choral Society, Handel Choir of Baltimore, I Cantori di New York, Masterwork Chorus and Orchestra, Melodious Accord, Monmouth Civic Chorale, Musica Sacra, New Amsterdam Singers, New York Concert Singers, New York Oratorio Society, Sacred Music in a Great Space, Sacred Music in a Sacred Space, Voices of Ascension, Waldorf Choral Society, Westchester Choral Society, and the Westchester Oratorio Society. Archie premiered P. D. Q. Bach's Four Next-to-Last Songs with Peter Schickele at the piano at Carnegie Hall and has toured with the Mark Morris Dance company and the New York Vocal Arts Ensemble.

Archie has been engaged as a cover artist by the Metropolitan Opera, and has sung roles at the Portland Opera Repertory Theatre, the Bard Music Festival, Mississippi Opera, the Pocket Opera Players, the New York City Opera VOX Festival, and with the Opera Orchestra of New York.

He can be heard on Amazon Music, Apple Music, Spotify, Naxos Online, and on recordings released by Albany Records, Arabesque, Mandacy, Menuetto Classics, Musical Concepts, New World, North/South, Orange Mountain Music, Sforzando Classics, and Telarc.

Archie holds a Bachelor of Music Degree from the University of Georgia, a Master of Arts Degree from Hunter College of the City University of New York, and is an alumnus of the Manhattan School of Music. He is a DMA candidate in vocal performance with Susan Gonzalez here at the Graduate Center.

James Bassi is a pianist, composer and music director. He has played concerts with a diverse array of artists including Deborah Voigt, Jessye Norman, Ute Lemper, Judy Kaye, and Tovah Feldshuh. On the PBS documentary "Baroque Duet," he accompanies Kathleen Battle and Wynton Marsalis. He is frequently engaged as rehearsal pianist for the New York Philharmonic, working with maestri Riccardo Muti, Gustavo Dudamel, and Alan Gilbert among many others. As a composer, he has written works commissioned and premiered by Orchestra of St. Luke's and Voices of Ascension. His choral composition "Quem Pastores Laudavere" was sung at Midnight Mass at the Vatican. He is currently writing a musical theatre work with playwright Jared Eberlein. Mr. Bassi has received composition grants from NEA, Meet the Composer, and New York Foundation for the Arts. His music publisher is Oxford University Press. He has music directed productions at Lincoln Center Theater and at numerous Off-Broadway and regional venues: most recently a critically-acclaimed revival of "Ragtime" at Bay Street Theater. For more information, visit www.jamesbassi.com.

Texts and Translations

Dichterliebe, op. 48, no. 15
Heinrich Heine (1797–1856)

Aus alten Märcen winkt es
Hervor mit weißer Hand,
Da singt es und da klingt es
Von einem Zauberland;

Wo bunte Blumen blühen
Im gold'nen Abendlicht,
Und lieblich duftend glühen,
Mit bräutlichem Gesicht;

Und grüne Bäume singen
Uralte Melodei'n,
Die Lüfte heimlich klingen,
Und Vögel schmetter'n drein;

Und Nebelbilder steigen
Wohl aus der Erd' hervor,
Und tanzen luft'gen Reigen
Im wunderlichen Chor;

Und blaue Funken brennen
An jedem Blatt und Reis,
Und rote Lichter rennen
Im irren, wirren Kreis;

Und laute Quellen brechen
Aus wildem Marmorstein.
Und seltsam in den Bächen
Strahlt fort der Widerschein.

Ach, könnt' ich dorthin kommen,
Und dort mein Herz erfreu'n,
Und aller Qual entnommen,
Und frei und selig sein!

Ach! jenes Land der Wonne,
Das seh' ich oft im Traum,
Doch kommt die Morgensonne,
Zerfließt's wie eitel Schaum.

Poet's Love, op. 48, no. 15
Trans. James Archie Worley and Thomas Tradler

From old fairy tales beckons
Forth, with white hand;
There it sings and there it sounds
Of a magical land

Where colorful flowers bloom
In golden twilight,
And glow lovely and fragrant
With bridal countenance;

And green trees sing
Ancient melodies;
The breezes furtively sound
And birds warble,

And misty figures climb
Well from the earth forth,
And dance airy round dances
In a whimsical chorus,

And blue sparks burn
On every leaf and twig,
And red lights run
In an insane, confused circle,

And loud springs break
Out of wild marble.
And strangely in the brooks
Streams forth the reverberation.

Ah, could I get there,
And there delight my heart,
And all torment remove,
And free and overjoyed be!

Ah, that land of bliss
That I see often in a dream,
Yet comes the morning sun;
It dissolves as vain foam.

Loreley, WoO 19, Clara Schumann

Heinrich Heine

Ich weiß nicht, was soll es bedeuten,
Dass ich so traurig bin;
Ein Märchen aus alten Zeiten,
Das kommt mir nicht aus dem Sinn.

Die Luft ist kühl und es dunkelt,
Und ruhig fließt der Rhein;
Der Gipfel des Berges funkelt
Im Abendsonnenschein.

Die schönste Jungfrau sitzet
Dort oben wunderbar,
Ihr gold'nes Geschmeide blitzet
Sie kämmt ihr gold'nes Haar.

Sie kämmt es mit gold'nem Kamme
Und singt ein Lied dabei;
Das hat eine wundersame,
Gewaltige Melodei.

Den Schiffer im kleinen Schiffe
Ergreift es mit wildem Weh;
Er schaut nicht die Felsenriffe,
Er schaut nur hinauf in die Höh'.

Ich glaube, die Wellen verschlingen
Am Ende Schiffer und Kahn;
Und das hat mit ihrem Singen
Die Loreley getan.

Loreley, op. 53, no. 2, Robert Schumann

Auguste Wilhelmine Lorenz (1784–1861)

Es flüstern und rauschen die Wogen
Wohl über ihr stilles Haus.
Es ruft eine Stimme: "Gedenke mein!
Bei stiller Nacht im Vollmondschein!
Gedenke mein!"
Und flüsternd ziehen die Wogen
Wohl über ihr stilles Haus.
"Gedenke mein!"

Lorelei, WoO 19

Trans. James Archie Worley and Thomas Tradler

I do not know what it shall mean,
That I am so sad;
A fairy tale from olden times
That I cannot get out of my mind.

The air is cool and it is getting dark,
And quietly flows the Rhine;
The mountain top twinkles
In the evening sunshine.

The lovely maiden sits
Up there wonderfully,
Her golden jewelry sparkles,
She combs her golden hair.

She combs it with a golden comb
And sings a song (while combing)
That has a wondrous,
Powerful melody.

The boatman in a small boat
Is seized with wild woe;
He looks not at the rocky reefs,
He looks only up toward the heights.

I believe the waves engulf,
In the end, boatman and boat;
And that has, with her singing,
The Lorelei done.

Lorelei, op. 53, no. 2

Trans. James Archie Worley and Thomas Tradler

The waves whisper and rush
Well over her quiet house.
A voice calls: "Remember me!
In still night in the full moonshine!
Remember me!"
And whispering, the waves move
Well over her quiet house.
"Remember me!"

Der Fischer, op. 5, no. 3

Johann Wolfgang von Goethe (1749–1832)

Das Wasser rauscht', das Wasser schwoll,
Ein Fischer saß daran,
Sah nach dem Angel ruhevoll,
Kühl bis ans Herz hinan.

Und wie er sitzt und wie er lauscht,
Teilt sich die Flut empor;
Aus dem bewegten Wasser rauscht
Ein feuchtes Weib hervor.

Sie sang zu ihm, sie sprach zu ihm:
"Was lockst du meine Brut
Mit Menschenwitz und Menschenlist
Hinauf in Todesglut?"

Ach wüsstest du, wie's Fischlein ist
So wohlig auf dem Grund,
Du stiegst herunter wie du bist
Und würdest erst gesund.

Labt sich die liebe Sonne nicht,
Der Mond sich nicht im Meer?
Kehrt wellenatmend ihr Gesicht
Nicht doppelt schöner her?

Lockt dich der tiefe Himmel nicht,
Das feuchtverklärte Blau?
Lockt dich dein eigen Angesicht
Nicht her in ew'gen Tau?"

Das Wasser rauscht', das Wasser schwoll,
Netz' ihm den nackten Fuß;
Sein Herz wuchs ihm so sehnsuchtsvoll
Wie bei der Liebsten Gruß.

Sie sprach zu ihm, sie sang zu ihm;
Da war's um ihn geschehn:
Halb zog sie ihn, halb sank er hin,
Und ward nicht mehr gesehn.

The Fisherman, op. 5, no. 3

Trans. James Archie Worley and Thomas Tradler

The water rushed, the water swelled;
A fisherman sat next to it,
Calmly looked at the fishing pole,
Cool to the heart.

And as he sits and as he listens,
The flood splits aloft;
From the moving water rushes
A soaked maiden forth.

She sang to him, she spoke to him:
"Why do you lure my brood
With human wit and human guile
Up into death-glow?"

Ah, if you knew how the little fish is
So cozy in the depths,
You would descend as you are
And would then become whole (healthy).

Does the lovely sun not nourish itself,
And the moon itself, in the sea?
While breathing waves, turning their faces,
Do they not emerge twice as beautiful?

Does the deep sky not lure you,
The damp-transfigured blue?
Does your own countenance not lure you
Toward eternal dew?"

The water rushed, the water swelled;
Wets his naked foot;
His heart grows within him so longingly,
As with the lover's greeting.

She spoke to him, she sang to him;
Then was it done for him (he was done in);
Half she pulled him, half he sank down,
And was never seen again.

**Hexenlied (And'res Maienlied),
op. 8, no. 8**

Ludwig Hölty (1748–1776)

Die Schwalbe fliegt,
Der Frühling siegt,
Und spendet uns Blumen zum Kranze!
Bald huschen wir
Leis' aus der Tür,
Und fliegen zum prächtigen Tanze!

Ein schwarzer Bock,
Ein Besenstock,
Die Ofengabel, der Wocken,
Reißt uns geschwind,
Wie Blitz und Wind,
Durch sausende Lüfte zum Brocken!

Um Beelzebub
Tanzt unser Trupp
Und küsst ihm die kralligen Hände!
Ein Geisterschwarm
Fasst uns beim Arm,
Und schwinget im Tanzen die Brände!

Und Beelzebub
Verheißt dem Trupp
Der Tanzenden Gaben auf Gaben:
Sie sollen schön
In Seide gehn
Und Töpfe voll Goldes sich graben!

Ein Feuerdrach'
Umflieget das Dach,
Und bringet uns Butter und Eier!
Die Nachbarn dann seh'n
Die Funken wehn,
Und schlagen ein Kreuz vor dem Feuer!

Die Schwalbe fliegt,
Der Frühling siegt,
Die Blumen erblühen zum Kranze!
Bald huschen wir
Leis' aus der Tür,
Juchheissa zum prächtigen Tanze!

**Witches' Song (Another Kind of May Song),
op. 8, no. 8**

Trans. James Archie Worley and Thomas Tradler

The swallow flies,
The spring triumphs,
And offers us flowers for the wreath!
Soon we scurry
Silently out of the door
And fly to the splendid dance!

A black goat,
A broomstick,
The oven fork, the distaff,
Tears us swiftly,
As lightning and wind,
Through whizzing winds to the Brocken!

Around Beelzebub
Dances our troupe
And kisses his claw-like hands.
A swarm of ghosts
Grabs us by the arm
And swings in the dance the firebrands!

And Beelzebub
Promises the troupe
Of dancers gifts upon gifts:
They shall beautifully
Go in silk,
And dig themselves pots full of gold!

A fire dragon
Flies around the roof
And brings us butter and eggs!
The neighbors then see
The sparks fly,
And make the sign of the cross against the fire!

The swallow flies
The spring triumphs,
The flowers bloom for the wreath!
Soon we scurry
Silently out of the door
Hurrah to the splendid dance!

Elfenliedchen, op. 6, no. 3

Johann Wolfgang von Goethe

Um Mitternacht, wenn die Menschen erst schlafen,
Dann scheint uns der Mond,
Dann leuchtet uns der Stern,
Wir wandeln und singen,
Und tanzen erst gern.

Um Mitternacht, wenn die Menschen erst schlafen,
Auf Wiesen an den Erlen
Wir suchen unsern Raum,
Und wandeln und singen
Und tanzen einen Traum.

Little Song of the Elves, op. 6, no. 3

Trans. James Archie Worley and Thomas Tradler

At midnight, when the people finally sleep,
Then the moon shines for us,
Then the star glows for us,
We stroll and sing
And dance particularly gladly.

At midnight, when the people finally sleep,
On meadows near the alders
We seek our space,
And stroll and sing
And dance a dream.

Thomas der Reimer, op. 135a

Theodore Fontane (1819–1898)

Der Reimer Thomas lag am Bach,
Am Kieselbach bei Huntly Schloss.
Da sah er eine blonde Frau,
Die saß auf einem weißen Ross.

Sie saß auf einem weißen Ross,
Die Mähne war geflochten fein,
Und hell an jeder Flechte hing
Ein silberblankes Glöcklein.

Und Tom der Reimer zog den Hut
Und fiel auf's Knie, er grüßt und spricht:
"Du bist die Himmelskönigin!
Du bist von dieser Erde nicht!"

Die blonde Frau hält an ihr Ross:
"Ich will dir sagen, wer ich bin;
Ich bin die Himmelsjungfrau nicht,
Ich bin die Elfenkönigin!

Nimm deine Harf und spiel und sing
Und lass dein bestes Lied erschall'n!
Doch wenn du meine Lippe küsst,
Bist du mir sieben Jahr verfall'n!"

"Wohl! sieben Jahr, o Königin,
Zu dienen dir, es schreckt mich kaum!"
Er küsste sie, sie küsste ihn,
Ein Vogel sang im Eschenbaum.

"Nun bist du mein, nun zieh mit mir,
Nun bist du mein auf sieben Jahr."
Sie ritten durch den grünen Wald,
Wie glücklich da der Reimer war!
Sie ritten durch den grünen Wald
Bei Vogelsang und Sonnenschein,
Und wenn sie leis' am Zügel zog,
So klangen hell die Glöcklein.

Thomas the Rhymer, op. 135a

Trans. James Archie Worley and Thomas Tradler

The Rhymer Thomas lay by the stream,
By the pebbled stream at Huntly Castle.
There he saw a blond woman;
She sat upon a white steed.

She sat upon a white steed,
The mane was braided finely,
And brightly on every braid hung
A shiny silver little bell.

And Tom the Rhymer pulled off his hat
And fell to the knee, he greets and says:
"You are the Queen of Heaven!
You are not from this world!"

The blonde woman held her steed:
"I will tell you who I am;
I am not the maiden of heaven,
I am the queen of the elves!

Take your harp and play and sing,
And let your best song ring out!
But if you kiss my lips,
You will be mine for seven years!"

"Well! seven years, oh queen,
to serve you—it scares me little!"
He kissed her, she kissed him,
A bird sang in the ash tree.

"Now are you mine, now travel with me,
Now are you mine for seven years."
They rode through the green forest,
How happy there the Rhymer was!
They rode through the green forest
By birdsong and sunshine;
And when she lightly pulled on the reins,
Then sounded brightly the little bells.

Die Heinzelmännchen, op. 83

August Kopisch (1799–1853)

Wie war zu Cölln es doch vordem
mit Heinzelmännchen so bequem!
Denn, war man faul, man legte sich
hin auf die Bank und pflegte sich:
Da kamen bei Nacht,
eh' man es gedacht,
die Männlein und schwärmten
und klappten und lärmten
und rupften und zupften.
Die Männlein, sie lärmten
und klappten und schwärmten
und hüpfen und trabten
und putzten und schabten,
und eh ein Faulpelz noch erwacht,
war all' sein Tagewerk bereits gemacht!

Die Zimmerleute streckten sich
hin auf die Bank und reckten sich.
Indessen kam die Geisterschar
und sah, was da zu zimmern war.
Nahm Meissel und Beil
und Säge in Eil.
Sie sägten und stachen
und hieben und brachen,
berappten und kappten,
visirten wie Falken
und setzten die Balken,
eh sich's der Zimmermann versah,
klapp! stand das ganze Haus
schon fertig da!

Beim Bäckermeister war nicht Not,
die Heinzelmännchen backten Brot.
Die faulen Bursche legten sich,
die Heinzelmännchen regten sich
und ächzten daher
mit den Säcken so schwer!
und kneteten tüchtig
und wogen es richtig
und hoben und schoben
und fegten und backten
und klopfen und hackten;
die Bursche schnarchten noch im Chor,
da rückte schon das Brot, das neue, vor!

Beim Fleischer ging es just so zu:
Gesell und Bursche lag in Ruh.
Indessen kamen die Männlein her
und hackten das Schwein die Kreuz und Quer.
Das ging so geschwind,

The Little House Gnomes, op. 83

Trans. James Archie Worley and Thomas Tradler

How it once was in Cologne
with little house gnomes so comfortable!
Because, when one was lazy, one laid oneself
down on a bench and looked only after oneself:
Then came by night,
before one expected it,
the little men, and (they) swarmed
and flipped and buzzed
and plucked and pulled.
The little men, they buzzed
and flipped and swarmed
and hopped and trotted
and cleaned and scraped,
and before a lazybones yet awoke,
was all his day's work already done!

The carpenters sprawled themselves
down on the bench and stretched themselves.
Meanwhile, came the ghostly crowd,
and saw what there was to be carpentered.
Took chisel and axe
and a saw in haste.
They sawed and stuck
and chopped and broke,
laid out and cut,
took aim like hawks
and set the beams,
and before the carpenter realized,
snap! stood the whole house
already finished there!

At the head baker's there was no trouble,
the little house gnomes baked bread.
The lazy lads lay themselves down,
the little house gnomes stirred themselves
and groaned (throughout)
with the sacks so heavy!
and kneaded heartily
and weighed it correctly
and hoisted and shoved
and swept and baked
and pounded and chopped;
the lads still snored in chorus,
there already the bread, the new, came out!

At the butcher's it went just the same:
apprentice and lad lay in peace.
Meanwhile, came the little men
and butchered the pig every which way.
It all went so fast

wie die Mühl' im Wind:
die klappten mit Beilen,
die schnitzten an Speilen,
die spülten, die wühlten
und mengten und mischten
und stopften und wischten,
und tat der Gesell die Augen auf:
Wapp! hing die Wurst da schon im Ausverkauf!

Beim Schenken war es so: es trank
der Küfer, bis er niedersank,
am hohlen Fasse schlief er ein.
Die Männlein sorgten um den Wein,
und schwefelten fein alle Fässer ein.
Und rollten und hoben
mit Winden und Kloben,
und schwenkten und senkten
und gossen und panschten,
und mengten und manschten;
und eh der Küfer noch erwacht:
war schon der Wein geschönt
und fein gemacht.

Ein Schneider hatte große Pein,
der Staatsrock sollte fertig sein;
warf hin das Zeug und legte sich
hin auf das Ohr und pflegte sich.
Da schlüpfen sie frisch
in den Schneidertisch
und schnitten und rückten
und nähten und stickten
und fassten und passten
und strichen und kuckten
und zupften und ruckten,
und eh mein Schneiderlein erwacht,
war Bürgermeister's Rock bereits gemacht.

Neugierig war des Schneiders Weib,
und macht sich diesen Zeitvertreib:
streut Erbsen hin die andre Nacht,
die Heinzelmännchen kommen sacht.
Eins fährt nun aus,
schlägt hin im Haus,
die gleiten von Stufen,
die plumpen in Kufen,
die fallen mit Schallen,
die lärmen und schreien,
vermaledeien.
Sie springt hinunter auf den Schall
mit Licht: husch, husch, husch,
husch, husch, husch, husch, husch!
Verschwinden all.

like the mill in the wind:
they banged with cleavers,
they sliced on the butcher's block,
they rinsed, they rummaged
and mingled and mixed
and stuffed and wiped,
and when the apprentice opened his eyes:
Bang! the sausage was already hung for sale!

At the tavern it was so: drank
the Cooper until he sank down,
by the hollow keg he fell asleep.
The little men looked after the wine,
and finely fumigated all the kegs.
And rolled and lifted
with winches and pulleys,
and swung around and lowered
and poured and splashed about,
and mixed and mashed;
and before the Cooper yet awoke:
the wine was already purified
and finely made.

A tailor had great pain;
the state coat had to be finished;
he threw down the tool and laid himself
down on his ear and tended to himself.
Then they freshly slipped
onto the tailor's table
and cut and adjusted
and sewed and embroidered
and grabbed and fitted
and stroked and looked
and pulled and jerked,
and before my little tailor awoke,
was the mayor's coat already made.

Curious was the tailor's wife,
and makes herself this pastime:
she strew peas the other night;
the little house gnomes come lightly.
One now ventures out,
falls down in the house,
they slide down the stairs,
they fall in the gaps (of the floor boards),
they fall with banging noises,
they buzz and shriek,
cursing.
She leaps down at the noise
with the light: whoosh, whoosh, whoosh,
whoosh, whoosh, whoosh, whoosh, whoosh!
They all disappear.

O weh! nun sind sie alle fort,
und keines ist mehr hier am Ort!
Man kann nicht mehr wie sonst ruh'n,
man muss nun alles selber tun.
Ein Jeder muss fein
selbst fleißig nun sein,
muss rennen und traben,
muss kratzen und schaben
und schneiteln und biegn
und klopfen und hacken
und kochen und backen.
Ach, dass es noch wie damals wär!
Doch kömmt die schöne Zeit nicht mehr.

Alas! now they are all gone,
and none is here any more!
One can no longer rest as previously,
one must now do everything himself/herself.
Each one must, keenly,
now himself/herself be hard-working,
must run and trot,
must scratch and scrape
and spruce things up, and iron
and pound and chop
and cook and bake.
Alas, were it still as it was then!
But that lovely time will not come again.

Passacaglia (1992)

E. E. Cummings (1894–1962)

these children singing in stone a
silence of stone these
little children wound with stone
flowers opening for

ever these silently lit
tle children are petals
their song is a flower of
always their flowers

of stone are
silently singing
a song more silent
than silence these always

children forever
singing wreathed with singing
blossoms children of
stone with blossoming

eyes
know if a
lit tle tree
listens

forever to always children singing forever
a song made
of silent as stone silence of
song

Ghosts

Richard Kendall Munkittrick (1853–1911)

Out in the misty moonlight
The first snowflakes I see
As they frolic among
The leafless boughs of the apple tree.

Faintly they seem to whisper
As round the boughs they wing;
“We are the ghosts of flowers
Who died in the early spring.”

Phantoms, from 7 Songs, no. 5

John Banister Tabb (1845–1909)

Are ye the ghosts of fallen leaves,
O flakes of snow,
For which, through naked trees, the winds
A-mourning go?

Or are ye angels, bearing home
The host unseen
Of truant spirits, to be clad
Again in green?

The Song of Wandering Aengus

William Butler Yeats (1865–1939)

I went out to the hazel wood,
Because a fire was in my head,
And cut and peeled a hazel wand,
And hooked a berry to a thread;
And when the white moths were on the wing,
And moth-like stars were flickering out,
I dropped the berry in a stream
And caught a little silver trout.

When I had laid it on the floor
I went to blow the fire a-flame,
But something rustled on the floor,
And someone called me by my name:
It had become a glimmering girl
With apple blossom in her hair
Who called me by my name and ran
And faded through the brightening air.

Though I am old with wandering
Through hollow lands and hilly lands,
I will find out where she has gone,
And kiss her lips and take her hands;
And walk among long dappled grass,
And pluck till time and times are done,
The silver apples of the moon,
The golden apples of the sun.

Jabberwocky

Lewis Carroll (1832–1898)

'Twas brillig, and the slithy toves
Did gyre and gimble in the wabe;
All mimsy were the borogoves,
And the mome raths outgrabe.

“Beware the Jabberwock, my son!
The jaws that bite, the claws that catch!
Beware the Jubjub bird, and shun
The frumious Bandersnatch!”

He took his vorpal sword in hand:
Long time the manxome foe he sought—
So rested he by the Tumtum tree,
And stood awhile in thought.

And as in uffish thought he stood,
The Jabberwock, with eyes of flame,
Came whiffing through the tulgey wood,
And burbled as it came!

One, two! One, two! And through and through
The vorpal blade went snicker-snack!
He left it dead, and with its head
He went galumphing back.

“And, hast thou slain the Jabberwock?
Come to my arms, my beamish boy!
O frabjous day! Callooh! Callay!”
He chortled in his joy.

'Twas brillig, and the slithy toves
Did gyre and gimble in the wabe;
All mimsy were the borogoves,
And the mome raths outgrabe.

The Grunchin' Witch

Jessica Jackson (dates unknown)

A down the wind she comes,
The grunchin' witch, the devil witch,
Riding out of a foul moor ditch,
Joggling along on a limping pig
And gerrumping on her drums.

The horny witchies come,
Down the screaming wind they scut,
Witching it in a boggy rut;

And gerrumping on her drums.
The crooked witch, the roosting witch,
Lurks her bleak and haggish eye
Till the yelping witchies come.

Slinking into their dirty lair,
They sleep in the witch's spriggly hair,
Or snore in a furry fum.

Horror Movie

Howard Moss (1922–1987)

Doctor Unlikely, we love you so,
You who made the double-headed rabbits grow
From a single hare. Mutation's friend,
Who could have prophesied the end
When the Spider Woman deftly snared the fly
And the monsters strangled in a monstrous kiss
And someone hissed, "You'll hang for this!"?

Dear Dracula, sleeping on your native soil,
(Any other kind makes you spoil),
How we clapped when you broke the French door down
And surprised the bride in the over-wrought bed.
Perfectly dressed for lunar research,
Your evening cape added much
Though the bride, inexplicably dressed in furs,
Was a study in jaded jugulars.

The Wolf Man knew when he prowled at dawn
Beginnings spin a web where endings spawn.
The bat who lived on shaving cream,
A household pet of Dr. Dream,
Unfortunately maddened by the bedlam,
Turned on the Doc, bit the had that fed him.

And you, Dr. X., who killed by moonlight,
We loved your scream in the laboratory
When the panel slid and the night was starry
And you threw the inventor in the crocodile pit
(An obscure point: Did he deserve it?)
And you took the gold to Transylvania
Where no one guessed how insane you were.

We thank you for the moral and the mood,
Dear Dr. Cliché, Nurse Platitude.
When we meet again by the Overturned Grave,
Near the Sunken City of the Twisted Mind,
(In *The Son of the Son of Frankenstein*),
Make the blood flow, make the motive muddy:
There's a little death in every body.

Mirror

Richie Hofmann (living)

You'd expect a certain view from such a mirror—
clearer
than one which hangs in the entry and decays.
I gaze
past my reflection toward other things:
bat wings,
burnt-gold upon blue, which decorate the wall
and all
those objects collected from travels, now seen
between
its great gold frame, diminished with age:
a stage
where, still, the supernatural corps-de-ballet
displays
its masquerade in the reflected light.
At night,
I thought I'd see the faces of the dead.
Instead,
the faces of the ghosted silver sea
saw me.

(Poem © 2015, Richie Hofmann, with permission)

The Dolls

William Butler Yeats (1865–1939)

A doll in the doll-maker's house
Looks at the cradle and bawls:
“That is an insult to us.”
But the oldest of all the dolls,
Who had seen, being kept for show,
Generations of his sort,
Out-screams the whole shelf: “Although
There's not a man can report
Evil of this place,
The man and the woman bring
Hither, to our disgrace,
A noisy and filthy thing.”
Hearing him groan and stretch
The doll-maker's wife is aware
Her husband has heard the wretch,
And crouched by the arm of his chair,
She murmurs into his ear,
Head upon shoulder leant:
“My dear, my dear, O dear.
It was an accident.”

I, Ichabod: or *Crane 'splains*

Richard Pearson Thomas (still living)

The Legend of Sleepy Hollow is just that. A legend.
I, Ichabod Crane have come to set the record straight!

If you read the story again—and I do not suggest you do—
you'll see the author thinks that he alone can speak for me.
The only words I'm allowed to utter aloud are "Who are you?"
with dreadful fright in the dead of night, to a facial amputee.
But before we get to that, allow me please to paint a picture
of my life at Sleepy Hollow, that swamp upstate,
where dull Dutch farmers and their superstitious wives
offered up their children for me to educate.
Oh, the abuse I endured from their sons—
half-eaten apples and toy popguns!
No, I did not spoil the child.
Those boys were wild.
If I had spared the rod, they would have eaten me alive!
Then there is the matter of my physical description:
exceedingly lank, long snipe nose,
feet like shovels, ill-fitting clothes.
I don't want to gripe, but as scarecrows go
I don't really fit the type ... I like cake!!
Sweet cake and short cake and cruller and such,
ginger cake and honey cake and olykoek (that's Dutch!),
doughty doughnuts and blondie with walnuts and cocoa, oh my!
Which brings us to pie!
Apple! Peach! Pumpkin!
(sourly) Pumpkin ...

But back to the story.
Oh my, I loved to sing!
Sundays, especially, I'd go out on a limb,
letting my voice soar. My sound had ping.
Jesus Christ, I did right by a hymn!
My quavers never wavered, nor did my trills
when they echoed (echoed) off of the hills.
Elocution with devotion was my optimum feature.
I was often praised by my peers and the preacher,
such that I became a voice teacher!!

Oh, and I could dance. I had a marvelous way
with an arabesque, a pirouette or jeté.
When I heard a minuet start to unfurl,
I couldn't help it. I just had to twirl!
Which brings us to the girl ...
Relentlessly described as "blooming."
Blooming, blooming, blooming.
Plump as a partridge, just out of reach.
Ripe and melting, a rosy-cheeked peach,
Blooming, blooming, blooming with an inheritance
looming, looming, looming.

I loved her!
She was bloomin', bloomin', bloomin', bloomin', bloomin', bloomin' rich.
I was gonna marry her!
It's true the girl had a party where I danced. Noticeably.
It's true that we spoke. She told me to go, oh so disagreeably.
She had chosen my rival and his big black horse.
Fine, I'd go home.
I had to ride that old nag, of course, named Gunpowder.
Oh, the irony.

I knew all the stories about the guy who galloped without his head,
but I hopped on my nag without trepidation. I sang instead.
La la la la
Gunpowder had a mind of his own, went every direction, except for home.
Did I hear something behind a tree? Was there someone watching me?
That's when I cried aloud: "Who are you?"
No reply.
Then we really started to fly.
Faster and faster we raced, pursued by a figure in black.
I could see we were being outpaced whenever I turned to look back.
I lost the saddle, but what the heck, I clung like a sponge to the horse's neck
when I heard a whistle.
I tried to dodge the missile, but it knocked me to the ground.

I could have been killed!

Nothing was wounded but my pride
and a BIG red bruise on my buttock, yeah, my buttock on the sinister side!
And for cake's sake! I knew it wasn't his head!
It was a pumpkin. I knew it was a pumpkin!
I am an Ichabod, not an idiot!

I recognized her suitor, the brute her cold heart was set on.
I was a threat so he chased me on his big pony.
I was not humiliated!
In fact, I'm celebrated!
Who remembers his name? No one!
But Ichabod? Ichabod?
I'll tell you what is not true about that ridiculous story:
the author says I was a craven and feckless phony.
I am not a ninny!
Rather than ignominy,
I was bound for greater fame and glory!
The name Ichabod Crane will never die!
I swear on my mother's
pumpkin pie!

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The Irish Ballad

Tom Lehrer (b. 1928)

About a maid I'll sing a song,
Sing rickety-tickety-tin.
About a maid I'll sing a song
Who didn't have her fam'ly long,
Not only did she do them wrong,
She did ev'ryone of them in, them in,
She did ev'ryone of them in.

One morning in a fit of pique,
Sing rickety-tickety-tin.
One morning in a fit of pique,
She drowned her father in the creek,
The water tasted bad for a week,
And we had to make do with gin, with gin,
We had to make do with gin.

Her mother she could never stand,
Sing rickety-tickety-tin.
Her mother she could never stand,
And so a cyanide soup she planned.
The mother died with the spoon in her hand,
And her face in a hideous grin, a grin,
Her face in a hideous grin.

She set her sister's hair on fire,
Sing rickety-tickety-tin.
She set her sister's hair on fire,
And as the smoke and flame rose high'r,
Danced around the funeral pyre,
Playing a violin, -olin,
Playing a violin.

She weighted her brother down with stones,
Sing rickety-tickety-tin.
She weighted her brother down with stones,
And sent him off to Davy Jones.
All they ever found were some bones,
And occasional pieces of skin, of skin,
Occasional pieces of skin.

One day when she had nothing to do,
Sing rickety-tickety-tin.
One day when she had nothing to do,
She cut her baby brother in two,
And served him up as an Irish stew,
And invited the neighbors in, -bors in,
Invited the neighbors in.

And when at last the police came by,
Sing rickety-tickety-tin.
And when at last the police came by,
Her little pranks she did not deny,
To do so, she would have had to lie,
And lying, she knew was a sin, a sin,
Lying, she knew, was a sin.

My tragic tale I won't prolong,
Sing rickety-tickety-tin.
My tragic tale I won't prolong,
And if you do not enjoy my song,
You've yourselves to blame if it's too long,
You should never have let me begin, begin,
You should never have let me begin.