The Metropolitan Opera presents

Sonya Yoncheva in Recital

Sonya Yoncheva, SOPRANO
Malcolm Martineau, PIANO

Metropolitan Opera House
Sunday, January 23, 2022, at 7:30PM

Recital a gift of Rolex
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Henri Duparc (1848–1933)
- L’invitation au voyage
- Au pays où se fait la guerre
- La vie antérieure
- Chanson triste

Pauline Viardot (1821–1910)
- Haï luli!

Ernest Chausson (1855–99)
- Le temps des lilas, from Poème de l’Amour et de la Mer, Op. 19, No. 3
- Le charme, Op. 2, No. 2
- Sérénade italienne, Op. 2, No. 5

Gaetano Donizetti (1797–1848)
- Depuis qu’une autre a su te plaire

Léo Delibes (1836–91)
- Les filles de Cadix

Intermission
Giacomo Puccini  
(1858–1924)  
Sole e amore  
Terra e mare  
Mentia l’avviso  
Canto d’anime

Giuseppe Martucci  
(1856–1909)  
Al folto bosco, placida ombria, Op. 68, No. 6

Paolo Tosti  
(1846–1916)  
L’ultimo bacio  
Ideale

Giuseppe Verdi  
(1813–1901)  
In solitaria stanza  
Ad una stella  
L’esule

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HENRI DUPARC (1848–1933)
“L’invitation au voyage”; “Au pays où se fait la guerre”;
“La vie antérieure”; “Chanson triste”

This evening’s program begins with four mélodies by the long-lived Henri Duparc, who composed just 17 songs before falling victim to a mysterious neurasthenic disease that prevented him from composing anything at all in his final 48 years of life. As if in compensation for such a hideous fate, his songs are among the greatest in the French language, their subtlety and gravitas a matter of marvel.

Duparc would have been immortalized even if he had composed nothing other than “L’invitation au voyage,” setting text from Charles Baudelaire’s masterpiece Les Fleurs du Mal (The Flowers of Evil). Here, the poet seduces the beloved with a vision of a realm of perfect beauty, steeped in calm and bathed in a Watteau-like amber glow of sensuality. The pair will journey to this exotic realm by boat; Duparc floats this exquisite song on a harmonic waterway infused with “luxe, calme, et volupté” (“luxury, calm, and delight”) from the start. Over a hollow, low bass—the song’s ocean bed—rich harmonies shift and change.

“Au pays où se fait la guerre” is a remnant from a projected opera entitled Roussalka, its libretto by Théophile Gautier after Alexander Pushkin. Minstrelsy, towers, and sad women parted from their warrior lovers: Gautier assembles many a medieval cliché, and Duparc in turn incorporates hints of antique modes into this beautiful lament. That it ends hanging in midair evokes waiting for the absent lover.

Baudelaire’s sonnet “La vie antérieure” is the poet’s attempt to escape from the horrors of modern life to an imaginary exotic island. But it ends with the darkness of unnamed grief; if this is the secret sorrow Romantics loved to cherish, it is also an admission of the inability to keep time and the world at bay by poetic means. In this, his last song, Duparc tracks every twist and turn of a profound poem—the musical columns to match the island’s colonnades, the quasi-Wagnerian surging sea, the harmonic shifts for exotic splendors and nude slaves, the somber chanting to evoke sorrowful languor, and the dying-away postlude.

Finally, the consummately beautiful “Chanson triste” might induce a lump in the throat when one thinks of Duparc’s fate while listening to this limpid hymn to love’s powers of healing … “peut-être” (“perhaps”). It is that last touch of doubt that puts the “tristesse” (“sadness”) in this song, whose harmonic shifts between light and dark, sharps and flats, seem to reflect all the nuances of the love expressed here.
PAULINE VIARDOT (1821–1910)
“Haï luli!”

One of the 19th century’s foremost women in music was Pauline Viardot, at once a pianist who studied with Liszt, an accomplished composer, and a mezzo-soprano diva from a singing dynasty (tenor Manuel García, Rossini’s original Count Almaviva in *Il Barbiere di Siviglia*, was her father, and legendary soprano Maria Malibran, Donizetti’s original Maria Stuarda, was her sister). Her circle of friends included the artistic elite of Europe, among them Chopin (whom she affectionately called “Chip Chip”), Berlioz, the Schumanns, Fauré, Gounod, Meyerbeer, George Sand, and many more. She was beloved of the great writer Ivan Turgenev, who attached himself to the Viardot family; Brahms wrote his *Alto Rhapsody* for her; and Robert Schumann dedicated the *Liederkreis*, Op. 24, to her.

Viardot took her text for “Haï luli!” from the French writer Xavier de Maistre’s novel *Les Prisonniers du Caucase* (*Prisoners of the Caucasus*), published in 1825. In this wistful lament, a young woman worries that her lover has not appeared. Viardot begins her song with a beautifully evocative piano introduction; from treble heights, the music descends gently down-down-down, melancholy and minor. The girl and her music become more distraught with each of the three verses: The accompaniment changes for each stanza, and the climactic high pitch for the sorrowful interjections “Haï luli!” rises each time. The ways in which Viardot darkens the harmonies at certain points bespeaks her skill as a composer and tells us why this song was among her most popular.

ERNEST CHAUSSON (1855–99)

Self-critical and pessimistic, Ernest Chausson wrote beautiful songs (and much else) before his early death in a freak bicycle accident just before the turn of the 20th century. “Le temps des lilas” is perhaps his most famous song, the very essence of nostalgia for all that slips away as time goes by. We hear in it a pattern typical of this composer: a beginning in elegiac melancholy, anguish and turbulence in the middle section, and a return to opening strains made even more haunting at the close. In “Le charme,” the poet Armand Silvestre brings to the fore the link between love and melancholy; the beloved’s smile makes the lover tremble, her gaze melts his soul, but he only realizes that he is in love when he sees her weep. The touch of minor mode at the end is wonderfully plaintive. And finally, in “Sérénade italienne,” the once-fashionable writer
Paul Bourget spins his own variation on the truism that lovers have their own language, incomprehensible to workaday mortals. Lapping waves in the piano and harmonic magic at the words “On the calm dark sea, look!” usher us to an ending that vanishes into the treble sphere of rapture.

GAETANO DONIZETTI (1797–1848)
“Depuis qu’une autre a su te plaire”

We associate the name of Gaetano Donizetti with bel canto operatic masterpieces, but he also wrote songs, including in French; he moved to Paris after the death of his wife in 1837. “Donizetti seems to treat us like a conquered country; it is a veritable invasion,” said Hector Berlioz, tongue in cheek. “Depuis qu’une autre a su te plaire” comes from a set of six songs not published until 1974. In this accusatory lament, a woman named Malvina bids the lover who has left her for another to come see her one last time before she dies of sorrow.

LÉO DELIBES (1836–91)
“Les filles de Cadix”

Léo Delibes first made his name as a composer of comic operas for the Théâtre des Bouffes-Parisiens and of ballets (notably Coppélia and Sylvia), before writing a collection of songs in 1872 and turning to serious opera (Lakmé, among others). He was made a member of the Institut de France and is buried in Montmartre Cemetery. In “Les filles de Cadix,” the Romantic poet Alfred de Musset creates a Spanish idyll, complete with bullfight, boléro, castanets, and an hidalgo pushing his luck to no avail. For such exotic delights, Delibes unleashes a riot of grace notes, trills, and showy passaggi for the singer, while the piano behaves like a guitar.

GIACOMO PUCCINI (1858–1924)
“Sole e amore”; “Terra e mare”; “Mentia l’avviso”; “Canto d’anime”

Like Donizetti, Puccini too wrote songs—17 in all, several of them recycled in subsequent operas. “Sole e amore” is a mattinata, or morning song of love, first published in 1888 as a musical supplement to the magazine Paganini and the basis seven years later for the beginning of the famous quartet that ends the third act of La Bohème. The singer of “Terra e mare” dreams of the sea as
poplars rustle outside the window; there is a brief dazzle of musical brightness and a vision of the stars reflected in the sea before mournfulness returns … but the piano postlude dies away in major-mode sweetness, with poignant pinpricks of dissonance.

The character des Grieux’s aria “Donna non vidi mai” in Act II of Puccini’s 1893 opera Manon Lescaut was born of the second lento theme in his big, dramatic recitative-and-aria “Mentia l’avviso,” originally for a Moorish character named Gusmano in Felice Romani’s melodrama La Solitaria delle Asturie. “Canto d’anime,” on text by Luigi Illica (one of the librettists of La Bohème), is the swan song of an ideal that survives our earthly lives and rises, like the nightingale’s song, to the sun’s realm. Puccini matches this grandeur with a majestic march in the piano and ritualistic dotted rhythms for the voice.

GIUSEPPE MARTUCCI (1856–1909)
“Al folto bosco, placida ombria,” Op. 68, No. 6

In a rare exception to Italian obsession with opera, Giuseppe Martucci wrote not a single one. An ardent Wagnerite, among Italy’s first, he wrote works for piano, two symphonies, chamber music, the oratorio Samson, and songs, including the song cycle La Canzone dei Ricordi (The Song of Memories), which includes “Al folto bosco, placida ombria.” The songs were dedicated to mezzo-soprano Alice Barbi, who was close friends with Brahms in his late years—apropos, as Martucci is sometimes called “the Italian Brahms.” There are Brahmsian touches throughout (the rhythmic complexities, the counterplay of lines that surge upwards in the bass while the right hand descends, and more) to go along with the Wagnerian chromaticism we hear from the start. The singer begins evocatively with quasi-chant against the soaring accompaniment; the near-magical clearing out of the harmonic texture for the acclamation “O sweet night!” is another lovely moment.

PAOLO TOSTI (1846–1916)
“L’ultimo bacio”; “Ideale”

Trained at the Naples Conservatory, Paolo Tosti wrote some 350-plus songs in Italian, English, French, and Neapolitan. He lived in London from 1875 to 1912, taught singing to Queen Victoria’s children, and was knighted in 1908. He wrote mellifluous, refined salon songs for the likes of Enrico Caruso, Nellie Melba, Victor Maurel, John McCormack, and others, among them “L’ultimo bacio.” “If
you see him, tell him that I love him,” the singer of this song tells someone—us?—to a wistful melody that rises to a peak of passion near the end before lapsing back into sadness. We hear her sighs in the piano in the song’s interior and again at the end. Tosti’s most famous work is unquestionably “Ideale,” whose lover-singer sees the beloved in everything radiant and begs for them to be reunited. Over gently swaying triplets in the piano, the singer is gifted with one of Tosti’s loveliest melodies.

GIUSEPPE VERDI (1813–1901)
“In solitaria stanza”; “Ad una stella”; “L’esule”

Verdi was, of course, almost exclusively an opera composer, but there is a volume of lovely songs on offer from him as well. “In solitaria stanza” is set to a melodramatic poem from Jacopo Vittorelli’s Anacreontic Poems to Irene, whose protagonist dashes about seeking help for Irene, in pain and alone. Verdi’s music for this scenario tells more of love than of desperation; the double dotting familiar from Italian opera and the skillful chromatic touches to evoke pain are notable details. Poets often look at the stars and compare their mysterious existence to earthly life; the prisoner in chains who sings “Ad una stella” does so as well, to words by Andrea Maffei (Verdi’s librettist for I Masnadieri and bits of Macbeth). Over a gently throbbing accompaniment, Verdi places a soaring and haunting melody.

Temistocle Solera, the poet of “L’esule,” was Verdi’s librettist for the early operas Oberto, Nabucco, I Lombardi alla Prima Crociata, Giovanna d’Arco, and Attila, all works with Risorgimento, anti-Austrian sentiments thinly concealed. Here, someone in exile laments a homeland lost, and begs for death in order to return home in spirit. In the first half of this multipartite song, the singer alternates between passionate despair and gentler lyricism, before building to an ardent conclusion.

—Susan Youens

Susan Youens is the J. W. Van Gorkom Professor of Music at the University of Notre Dame and has written eight books on the music of Franz Schubert and Hugo Wolf.
About the Artists

Superstar soprano Sonya Yoncheva has been heralded as one of the most acclaimed and exciting performers of her generation. After studying piano and voice in her hometown of Plovdiv, Bulgaria, with Nelly Koitcheva, she obtained her master’s degree in voice in Geneva, studying with Danielle Borst. She is an alumna of William Christie’s Le Jardin des Voix. She was the 2010 winner of Operalia and was honored as the 2021 Singer of the Year at the prestigious Opus Klassik Awards, as Newcomer of the Year at the 2015 ECHO Klassik Awards, as well as with the 2019 Readers’ Award of the International Opera Awards.

Career highlights include headlining new productions of Tosca and Otello at the Met, where she has also performed the title roles of Luisa Miller and Iolanta, Violetta in La Traviata, Mimi in La Bohème, and Gilda in Rigoletto; the title role of Norma (new production), Violetta, Marguerite in Faust, Antonio in Les Contes d’Hoffmann, and Micaëla in Carmen at Covent Garden; Imogene in Il Pirata (new staging) and Mimi at La Scala; Poppea in L’Incoronazione di Poppea (new production) at the Salzburg Festival; and new stagings of Médée and La Traviata at Staatsoper Berlin and of Don Carlos, La Bohème, and Iolanta at the Paris Opera, where she has also appeared in La Traviata and Lucia di Lammermoor.

She also recently sang Tosca at the Vienna State Opera, Bavarian State Opera, Staatsoper Berlin, and Opernhaus Zurich; made her role debut as Puccini’s Manon Lescaut at Staatsoper Hamburg; performed La Bohème at Staatsoper Berlin, La Traviata at the Arena di Verona, La Traviata and Giordano’s Siberia at the Maggio Musicale in Florence, Médée at Staatsoper Berlin, La Bohème at Covent Garden, Il Pirata at the Teatro Real Madrid, and Otello in Baden-Baden and Berlin; and participated in the 2020 season-opening gala at La Scala, in a Christmas concert hosted by the German president and broadcast on German television, in the Rolex Perpetual Music Gala in Berlin, and in the 2020 Concert de Paris, as well as in galas and solo concerts in Salzburg, Madrid, Monte Carlo, Budapest, Mexico City, Verona, and Antwerp.

Upcoming engagements this season include her title-role debut in Anna Bolena at Paris’s Théâtre des Champs-Élysées and performances in La Gioconda and Fedora at La Scala, Iolanta at Festspielhaus Baden-Baden, and Norma at Barcelona’s Gran Teatre del Liceu, where she will also appear in a solo concert. At the Met, she sings a solo recital and appears as Élisabeth de Valois in the company premiere of Don Carlos.
Recognized as one of the leading accompanists of his generation, Scottish pianist Malcolm Martineau has worked with many of the world’s greatest singers, including Thomas Allen, Janet Baker, Florian Boesch, Sarah Connolly, Elīna Garanča, Susan Graham, Angela Gheorghiu, Thomas Hampson, Christiane Karg, Simon Keenlyside, Angelika Kirchschlager, Magdalena Kožená, Felicity Lott, Christopher Maltman, Karita Mattila, Ann Murray, Luca Pisaroni, Anne Sofie von Otter, Dorothea Röschmann, Fatma Said, Michael Schade, Frederica von Stade, Bryn Terfel, and Sonya Yoncheva. He made his Met debut in 2016 accompanying Anna Netrebko’s solo recital and has appeared at the world’s principal venues, including the Paris Opera, Vienna State Opera, Bavarian State Opera, Alice Tully Hall, Carnegie Hall, La Scala, Sydney Opera House, Opernhaus Zürich, Madrid’s Teatro Real, Barcelona’s Liceu, Berlin’s Philharmonie and Konzerthaus, Amsterdam’s Concertgebouw, Vienna’s Konzerthaus and Musikverein, Wigmore Hall, Covent Garden, and the Barbican, among others. He has also performed at the world’s most important festivals, including Aix-en-Provence, Aldeburgh, Baden-Baden, Edinburgh, Munich, Ravinia, Salzburg, Schubertiade, Tanglewood, and Verbier. His extensive discography includes a number of award-winning recordings, including the complete Beethoven and Britten folk songs, as well as the complete Debussy, Fauré, Mendelssohn, and Poulenc songs. His current recording projects include music by Brahms, Duparc, and Ravel. He frequently gives master classes at the Juilliard School, Marlboro Music School and Festival, and Ravinia Festival. He is also a regular collaborator in young artist programs, such as Aldeburgh, Merola Opera Program, Samling, and Salzburg, and he has been a jury member for the Kathleen Ferrier Award, Cardiff Singer of the World, Wigmore Song Competition, and Das Lied. He was given an honorary doctorate from the Royal Scottish Academy of Music and Drama in 2004 and appointed International Fellow of Accompaniment in 2009. He served as artistic director of the 2011 Leeds Lieder Festival and was awarded an OBE in the 2016 New Year’s Honours.

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HENRI DUPARC (1848–1933)

L’invitation au voyage
Text: Charles Baudelaire (1821–67)

Mon enfant, ma soeur,
Songe à la douceur
D’aller là-bas vivre ensemble;
Aimer à loisir,
Aimer et mourir
Au pays qui te ressemble!

Les soleils mouillés
De ces ciels brouillés
Pour mon esprit ont les charmes
Si mystérieux
De tes traîtres yeux
Brillant à travers leurs larmes.

Là, tout n’est qu’ordre et beauté,
Luxe, calme, et volupté.

Vois sur ces canaux
Dormir ces vaisseaux
Dont l’humeur est vagabonde;
C’est pour assouvir
Ton moindre désir
Qu’ils viennent du bout du monde.

Les soleils couchants
Revêtent les champs,
Les canaux, la ville entière,
D’hyacinthe et d’or;
Le monde s’endort
Dans une chaude lumière.

Là, tout n’est qu’ordre et beauté,
Luxe, calme, et volupté.

Invitation to the Voyage
Translation © 2000 Peter Low

My child, my sister,
think of the sweetness
of going there to live together!

To love at leisure,
to love and to die
in a country that is the image of you!

The misty suns
of those changeable skies
have for me the same
mysterious charm
as your fickle eyes
shining through their tears.

There, all is harmony and beauty,
luxury, calm, and delight.

See how those ships,
nomads by nature,
are slumbering in the canals.

To gratify
your every desire
they have come from the ends of the earth.

The westering suns
clothe the fields,
the canals, and the town
with reddish-orange and gold.

The world falls asleep
bathed in warmth and light.

There, all is harmony and beauty,
luxury, calm, and delight.
**Au pays où se fait la guerre**

Text: Théophile Gautier  
(1811–72)

Au pays où se fait la guerre  
Mon bel ami s’en est allé;  
Il semble à mon cœur désolé  
Qu’il ne reste que moi sur terre!  
En partant, au baiser d’adieu,  
Il m’a pris mon âme à ma bouche.  
Qui le tient si longtemps, mon Dieu?  
Voilà le soleil qui se couche,  
Et moi, toute seule en ma tour,  
J’attends encore son retour.

Les pigeons sur le toit roucoulent,  
Roucoulent amoureusement;  
Avec un son triste et charmant  
Les eaux sous les grands saules coulent.  
Je me sens tout près de pleurer;  
Mon cœur comme un lis plein s’épanche,  
Et je n’ose plus espérer.  
Voici briller la lune blanche,  
Et moi, toute seule en ma tour,  
J’attends encore son retour.

Quelqu’un monte à grands pas la rampe:  
Serait-ce lui, mon doux amant?  
Ce n’est pas lui, mais seulement  
Mon petit page avec ma lampe.  
Vents du soir, volez, dites-lui  
Qu’il est ma pensée et mon rêve,  
Toute ma joie et mon ennui.  
Voici que l’aurore se lève,  
Et moi, toute seule en ma tour,  
J’attends encore son retour.

**To the country where war is waged**

Translation © Victoria de Menil

To the country where war is waged  
My beautiful love departed.  
It seems to my desolate heart  
That I alone remain on earth.  
When leaving, at our kiss goodbye,  
He took my soul from my mouth.  
Who is holding him back so long, O God?  
There is the sun setting.  
And I, all alone in my tower,  
I still await his return.

The pigeons on the roof are cooing,  
Cooing lovingly  
With a sad and charming sound;  
The waters under the large willows flow.  
I feel ready to cry;  
My heart, like a full lily, overflows  
And I no longer dare to hope.  
Here gleams the white moon.  
And I, all alone in my tower,  
I still await his return.

Someone is climbing the ramp rapidly.  
Could it be him, my sweet love?  
It isn’t him, but only  
My little page with my lamp.  
Evening winds, veiled, tell him  
That he is my thoughts and my dream,  
All my joy and my longing.  
Here is the dawn rising.  
And I, all alone in my tower,  
I still await his return.
La vie antérieure
Text: Charles Baudelaire

J’ai long-temps habité sous de vastes portiques
Que les soleils marins teignaient de mille feux,
Et que leurs grands piliers, droits et majestueux,
Rendaient pareils, le soir, aux grottes basaltiques.

Les houles, en roulant les images des cieux,
Mêlaient d’une façon solennelle et mystique
Les tout puissants accords de leur riche musique
Aux couleurs du couchant reflété par mes yeux.

C’est là que j’ai vécu dans les voluptés calmes,
Au milieu de l’azur, des vauges, des splendeurs,
Et des esclaves nus, tout imprégnés d’odeurs,
Qui me rafraîchissaient le front avec des palmes,
Et dont l’unique soin était d’approfondir
Le secret douloureux qui me faisait languir.

Chanson triste
Text: Henri Cazalis (1840–1909)

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.

In a Former Life
Translation © 2008 Peter Low

For a long time I dwelt under porticoed halls,
which ocean sunshine tinged with light of many flames,
and whose majestic pillars standing straight and tall
made them appear at dusk like vast palatial basalt caves.

The sea-swells, as they rolled images of the skies,
combined through a solemn and mystical force
their overpowering music’s sonorous chords
with the colors of sunset reflected in my eyes.

There, there is where I lived in most delicious calm,
with the blue of the sky, the splendor, the waves
and the elegant bare-bodied sweet-scented slaves
Who would refresh my heated brow with fronds of palm,
and whose only duty was to intensify the secret malaise that made me ache and sigh.

Sad Song
Translation © Emily Ezust

In your heart moonlight lies dormant,
A gentle moonlight of summer;
And to flee down the troubles of life,
I will drown myself in your brightness.

I will forget past griefs,
My love, when you rock
My unhappy heart and my thoughts
In the loving tranquility of your arms.
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 tristesse,
Dans tes yeux alors je boirai
Tant de baisers et de tendresses
Que peut-être je guérirai.

Haï luli!

Text: Xavier de Maistre (1763–1852)

Je suis triste, je m’inquiète,
je ne sais plus que devenir.
Mon bon ami devait venir,
et je l’attends ici seulette.
Haï luli! Haï luli!
Où donc peut être mon ami?

Je m’assieds pour filer ma laine,
le fil se casse dans ma main …
Allons, je filerai demain;
aujourd’hui je suis trop en peine!
Haï luli! Haï luli!
Qu’il fait triste sans son ami!

Ah! s’il est vrai qu’il soit volage,
s’il doit un jour m’abandonner,
le village n’a qu’à brûler,
et moi-même avec le village!
Haï luli! Haï luli!
A quoi bon vivre sans ami?

You will lay my anxious head,
Oh! Sometimes, upon your lap,
And you will utter to it a ballad
That will seem to speak of us;

And from your eyes so full of sadness,
From your eyes I will then drink
So many kisses and so much tenderness
That perhaps at last I will be healed.

Pauline Viardot (1821–1910)

Haï luli!

Translation © 2006 David Bamberger

I am sad, I am troubled,
I no longer know what will happen!
My lover ought to come,
And I await him here alone.
Haï luli! Haï luli!
How sad it is without my love.

I sit down to spin my wool,
The thread breaks in my hand.
Well, I shall spin tomorrow,
Today I am in too much pain!
Haï luli! Haï luli!
How sad it is without my love.

Ah! if it is true; if it is true that he is faithless,
If one day he should abandon me,
The only thing is for the village to burn
And myself with the village.
Haï luli! Haï luli!
What use is it to live without my love?
Le temps des lilas, from Poème de l’Amour et de la Mer, Op. 19, No. 3
Text: Maurice Bouchor (1855–1929)
Le temps des lilas et le temps des roses
Ne reviendra plus à ce printemps-ci;
Le temps des lilas et le temps des roses
Est passés, le temps des œillets aussi.

Le vent a changé, les cieux sont moroses,
Et nous n’irons plus courir, et cueillir
Les lilas en fleur et les belles roses;
Le printemps est triste et ne peut fleurir.

Oh! joyeux et doux printemps de l’année,
Qui vins, l’an passé, nous ensoleiller,
Notre fleur d’amour est si bien fanée,
Las! que ton baiser ne peut l’éveiller!

Le charme, Op. 2, No. 2
Text: Armand Silvestre (1837–1901)
Quand ton sourire me surprit,
Je sentis frémir tout mon être,
Mais ce qui domptait nous esprit,
Je ne pus d’abord le connaître.

Quand ton regard tomba sur moi,
Je sentis mon âme se fondre;
Mais ce que serait cet émoi,
Je ne pus d’abord en répondre.

Ce qui me vainquit à jamais,
Ce fut un plus douloureux charme,
Et je n’ai su que je t’aimais
Qu’en voyant ta première larme!

The time of lilacs
Translation © 2006 by Korin Kormick
The time of lilacs and the time of roses
Will no longer come again to this spring;
The time of lilacs and the time of roses
Has passed, the time of carnations also.

The wind has changed, the skies are morose,
And we will no longer run to pick
The lilacs in bloom and the beautiful roses;
The spring is sad and cannot bloom.

Oh! Joyful and gentle spring of the year,
That came last year to bathe us in sunlight,
Our flower of love is so wilted,
Alas! that your kiss cannot awaken it!

And you, what are you doing? No budding flowers,
No bright sun at all nor cool shade;
The time of lilacs and the time of roses,
Along with our love, is dead forever.

The Charm
Translation © Thomas A. Gregg
When your smile surprised me,
I felt a shudder through my entire being,
But what tamed my spirit,
At first, I did not recognize.

When your glance fell on me,
I felt my soul melt,
But what that emotion was,
At first, I could not answer.

What conquered me forever,
That was a charm more sad,
And I did not know that I loved you
Until I saw your first tear.
Sérénade italienne, Op. 2, No. 5
Text: Paul Bourget (1852–1935)

Partons en barque sur la mer
Pour passer la nuit aux étoiles.
Vois, il souffle juste assez d’air
Pour enfler toile des voiles.

Le vieux pêcheur italien
Et ses deux fils qui nous conduisent,
Écoutent, mais n’entendent rien
Aux mots que nos bouches se disent.

Sur la mer calme et sombre, vois:
Nous pouvons échanger nos âmes,
Et nul ne comprendra nos voix
Que la nuit, le ciel, et les lames.

Depuis qu’une autre a su te plaire
Text: Anonymous

Depuis qu’une autre a su te plaire
Chaque jour me voit dépérir.
Quand Malvina ne t’est plus chère,
Malvina ne veut que mourir.
Pourtant sa faible voix t’implore,
Non pour réclamer ton amour, non non non,
Mais avant de perdre le jour,
Pour te voir une fois encore,
Avant de perdre le jour te voir,
Te voir, oh! te voir une fois encore.

Hâte toi, le trépas s’avance;
Viens voir celle qui t’adorait
Mourir sur un lit de souffrance d’amour,
De honte et de regret.
Mais ce n’est point son agonie
Ni la mort empreinte en ses traits,
Non non non …
Ah! qui te diront que pour jamais
Malvina va perdre la vie,
Pour jamais, pour jamais Malvina,
Malvina pour jamais va perdre la vie.

Italian Serenade
Translation © 2000 Peter Low

Let’s go out in a boat on the sea
to spend the night under the stars.
Look, it’s blowing just enough breeze
to swell the canvas of the sails.

The old Italian fisherman
and his two sons, who sail us out,
hear but understand nothing
of the words we say to each other.

On the calm dark sea, look:
We can exchange our souls,
and our voices will not be understood
except by the night, the sky, and the waves.

GAETANO DONIZETTI (1797–1848)

Since another has pleased you
Text: Anonymous

Since another has pleased you
Each day is witness to my fading away.
When Malvina is no longer dear to you,
Malvina only wants to die.
Still her weak voice implores you,
Not to reclaim your love, no no no,
But before her days should end
To see you once again,
Before her days should end to see you,
See you, oh! see you once again.

(Hurry, death comes closer;
Come to see the one who adored you
Dying on her love-sick bed,
Of shame and regret.
But it is not her agony
Nor death marked on her face,
No no no …
Ah! None of these will ever tell you
That Malvina will lose her life forever,
Forever, forever Malvina,
Malvina will lose her life forever.

(Please turn the page quietly.)
Mais si languissante, abattue,
Je ne sais plus compter tes pas,
Quand tu paraîtras à ma vue,
Si tout mon corps ne frémit pas,
Si tout mon regard ne peut te suivre,
Ah! si mon coeur a cessé d’aimer,
Si mon coeur a cessé d’aimer alors,
Alors j’aurai cessé de vivre.

Les filles de Cadix

Text: Louis Charles Alfred de Musset
(1810–57)

Nous venions de voir le taureau,
Trois garçons, trois fillettes.
Sur la pelouse il faisait beau,
Et nous dansions un boléro
Au son des castagnettes:
“Dites-moi, voisin,
Si j’ai bonne mine,
Et si ma basquine
Va bien, ce matin.
Vous me trouvez la taille fine?
Ah! ah!
Les filles de Cadix aiment assez cela.”

Et nous dansions un boléro
Un soir, c’était dimanche.
Vers nous s’en vint un hidalgo
Cousu d’or, la plume au chapeau,
Et le poing sur la hanche:
“Si tu veux de moi,
Brune au doux sourire,
Tu n’as qu’à le dire,
Cet or est à toi.
Passez votre chemin, beau sire
Ah! Ah!
Les filles de Cadix n’entendent pas cela.”

But so languid, downcast,
I can no longer count your steps,
When you will appear before my eyes,
If whole my body does not quiver,
If my eyes cannot follow you,
If my voice cannot call you,
Ah! if my heart has ceased to love,
Then I will have ceased to live.
If my heart has ceased to love,
Then I will have ceased to live.

The Girls of Cadix

Translation © 2003 Korin Kormick

We just saw the bull,
Three boys, three little girls
On the lawn it was a beautiful day,
And we were dancing a boléro
To the sound of castanets:
“Tell me, neighbor,
If I look well,
And if my bodice
Goes well, this morning,
Do you find my waist slim?
Ah! Ah!
The girls of Cadix rather like that.”

And we were dancing a boléro
One evening, it was Sunday,
Toward us came a dashing Spaniard
Extremely wealthy, a plume in his hat,
And his hand on his hip:
“If you want me,
Brunette with the sweet smile,
You have only to say it,
And this gold is yours.
Pass on your way, good sir.
Ah! Ah!
The girls of Cadix don’t listen to that.”
GIACOMO PUCCINI (1858–1924)

**Sole e amore**

Text: Anonymous

Il sole allegramente
Batte ai tuoi vetri. Amor
Pian batte al tuo cuore,
E l’uno e l’altro chiama.
Il sole dice: O dormente,
Mostrati che sei bella.
Dice l’Amor: Sorella,
Col tuo primo pensier pensa a chi t’ama!

**Sun and Love**

Translation © 2020 Laura Prichard

The sun joyfully
Taps at your windows. Love
Softly taps at your heart,
And so the one and the other call to you.
The sun says: Oh sleeper,
Show yourself, since you’re so beautiful.
Love says: Sister,
With your first thought, think of he who loves you!

**Terra e mare**

Text: Enrico Panzacchi (1840–1904)

I pioppi, curvati dal vento
rimuggghiano in lungo filare.
Dal buio, tra il sonno, li sento
e sogno la voce del mare.

E sogno la voce profonda
dai placidi ritmi possenti;
mi guardan, specchiate dall’onda,
le stelle del cielo fulgenti.

Ma il vento più forte tempesta
de’ pioppi nel lungo filare.
Dal sonno giocondo mi desta …
Lontana è la voce del mare!

**Land and Sea**

Translation © 2006 Anne Evans

The poplars, bent by the wind
roar again in long rows.
In the dark, half asleep I hear them
and dream of the voice of the sea.

And I dream of the deep voice
with its calm and mighty rhythms,
the stars in the sparkling firmament,
gaze at me reflected in the waves.

But the wind rages louder
through the long row of poplars
and wakes me from my joyful sleep …
Distant now is the voice of the sea!
Mentia l’avviso
Text Felice Romani (1788–1865)

Mentia l’avviso. Eppur d’Ausena è questa l’angusta valle, e qui fatal dimora mi presagiva la segreta voce che turba da più notti il mio riposo.

Tu cui nomar non oso, funesta donna dall’avel risorta per mio supplizio un’altra volta ancora promettesti vedermi, e in rio momento. Ah! chi geme? M’inganno. È l’onda e il vento. È la notte che mi reca le sue larve, i suoi timori, che gli accenti punitori del rimorso udir mi fa.

The warning was false
The warning was false. And yet this is the narrow valley of Ausena, and here the secret voice that has disturbed my sleep for many nights warned of a fatal resting place.

You whom I dare not name, ah, sinister woman, risen from the grave at my entreaties, you promised to see me one more time, and at a fateful moment. Ah! who is moaning? I am deceived. It is the waves and the wind. It is the night that torments me with its specters and terrors, that makes me hear the punishing sounds of remorse.

Canto d’anime
Text: Luigi Illica (1857–1919)

Fuggon gli anni gli inganni e le chimere
Cadon recisi i fiori e le speranze
In vane e tormentose disianze
Svaniscon le mie brevi primavere.
Ma vive e canta ancora forte e solo

Nelle notti del cuore un ideale
Siccome in alta notte siderale
Inneggia solitario l’usignolo.
Canta, canta ideal tu solo forte
E dalle brume audace eleva il vol lassù, A sfidar l’oblio l’odio la morte
Dove non son tenèbre e tutto è sol!

Tutto è sol! Tutto è sol!

Song of the Souls
Translation © 2020 Laura Prichard

They flee: the years, the betrayals, the foolish thoughts
Cut short are flowers and hopes
In vain and tormented desires
My brief years take flight.
But something lives and sings again, strong, by itself

In the heart of night: one ideal
Just as through deep, cold nights
The solitary nightingale sings.
Sing, sing this ideal in a loud solo
And from the mist audaciously rise above, To defy oblivion, hate, death,
Where there is no more darkness, and all is sun!
All is sun! All is sun!
GIUSEPPE MARTUCCI (1856–1909)

Al folto bosco, placida ombria,  
*Op. 68, No. 6*  
Text: Rocco Emanuele Pagliara (1856–1914)

To the thick woods, to the placid shade  
Translation © 2016 Laura Prichard

To the thick woods, to the placid shade,  
where we sang our hymn of love,  
my soul always returns,  
sad, tormented, in its distress!

Alas … maybe more faithfully, the fronds  
will preserve the echo of my sighs:  
or even, the branches, perhaps,  
will conceal the height of my ravings!

O dolce notte, o pallide stelle misteriose,  
o profumi de l’aria! o malía de le rose!

O sweet night! O pale, mysterious stars,  
O fragrances of the air! O spell cast by the roses!

Voi mi turbaste l’anima, col vostro influsso  
arcano,  
di novi desideri in un tumulto strano!  
Voi, ne silenzi estatici di mite alba lunar,

It was you who troubled my soul, through  
your mysterious influence,  
with new desires in a strange turmoil!  
You, in the ecstatic silences of the gentle  
moonrise,

you, who made me weep, you, who made  
me love!

Occhi profondi e mistici che vincer mi  
sapeste,  
chi vi compose il fascino de la pupille  
meste?

Eyes, deep and mystical, which first  
subdued me,  
who cast the spell of your sad gaze?

Still in my heart, tremble your ardent  
flames;  
I can still hear you, oh languorous sighs, oh  
fervent tones!

Ah! voi, ne l’incantesimo di bianca alba  
lunar,

Ah! it was you, in the spell of the white  
moonrise,

you, who made me weep, you, who made  
me love.

Visit metopera.org.
PAOLO TOSTI (1846–1916)

**L’ultimo bacio**
Text: Emilio Praga (1839–75)

Se tu lo vedi, gli dirai che l’amo,
che l’amo ancora come ai primi dì,
che nei languidi sogni ancor lo chiamo,
lo chiamo ancor come se fosse qui.

E gli dirai che colla fé tradita
Tutto il gaudio d’allor non mi rapì;
E gli dirai che basta alla mia vita
l’ultimo bacio che l’addio finì!

Nessun lo toglie dalla bocca mia
l’ultimo bacio che l’addio finì.
Ma se vuoi dargli un altro in compagnia
Digli che l’amo, e che l’aspetto qui.

---

**The Last Kiss**
Translation by Christopher Browner

If you see him, tell him that I love him,
that I still love him as in the first days,
that in languid dreams I still call him,
I still call him as if he were here.

And tell him that betrayed faith
Has not stolen from me all the joy of that
time;
And tell him that the last kiss, which bid
farewell,
Is enough for my entire life.

No one will take from my mouth
the last kiss, which bid farewell.
But if you want to give him another in
addition
Tell him that I love him, and that I wait for
him here.

---

**Ideale**
Text: Carmelo Errico (1848–92)

Io ti seguii com’iride di pace
Lungo le vie del cielo
Io ti seguii come un’amica face
De la notte nel velo.
E ti sentii ne la luce, ne l’aria,
Nel profumo dei fiori,
E fu piena la stanza solitaria
Di te, dei tuoi splendori.

In te rapito, al suon de la tua voce,
Lungamente sognai
E de la terra ogni affanno, ogni croce,
In quel giorno scordai.
Torna, caro ideal, torna un istante
A sorridermi ancora,
E a me risplenderà, nel tuo sembiante,
Una novella aurora.

---

**Ideal**
Translation: © 2000 John Glenn Patona

I followed you like a rainbow of peace
along the paths of heaven
I followed you like a friendly torch
in the veil of darkness.
And I sensed you in the light, in the air,
in the perfume of flowers,
and the solitary room was full
of you and of your radiance.

Absorbed by you, I dreamed a long time
of the sound of your voice,
and earth’s every anxiety, every torment
I forgot in that day.
Come back, dear ideal, for an instant
to smile at me again,
and in your face will shine for me
a new dawn.
GIUSEPPE VERDI (1813–1901)

In solitaria stanza
Text Jacopo Vittorelli (1749–1835)

In solitaria stanza
Langue per doglia atroce;
Il labbro è senza voce,
Senza respiro il sen.

Come in deserta aiuola,
Che di rugiade è priva,
Sotto alla vampa estiva
Molle narcissus svien.

Io, dall’affanno oppresso,
Corro per vie rimote,
E grido in suon che puote
Le rupi intenerir.

Salvate, o dei pietosi,
Quella beltà celeste;
Voi forse non sapreste
Un’altra Irene ordir.

Ad una stella
Text: Andrea Maffei (1798–1885)

Bell’astro della terra,
Luce amorosa e bella,
Come desia quest’anima
Oppressa e prigioniera
Le sue catene infrangere,
Libera a te volar!

Gli ignoti abitatori
Che mi nascondi, o stella,
Cogl’angeli s’abbracciano
Puri fraterni amori,
Fan d’armonie cogl’angeli
La spera tua sonar.

Le colpe e i nostri affanni
Vi sono a lor segreti,
Inavvertiti e placidi
Scorrono i giorni e gli anni,
Nè mai pensier li novera,
Nè li richiama in duol.

In a lonely room
Translation © 2006 by Brian Pettey

In a lonely room
She languishes in terrible pain;
The lips are without voice,
Without breath her breast.

As in a deserted flower bed,
By dew abandoned,
Beneath the summer’s blaze
A weak narcissus fades.

I, from anxiety oppressed,
Race through remote paths
And scream with cries that could
Stir the cliffs

Save, O merciful gods,
This celestial beauty;
Perhaps you would not know
How to create another Irene.

To a Star

Beautiful star of the earth,
Amorous and beautiful light,
How this soul,
Oppressed and imprisoned,
Desires to break its chain,
Free to fly to you!

The unknown dwellers
That you hide from me, oh star,
Embrace the angels.
In pure fraternal love,
Making harmonies with the angels
Your hope sounds.

The faults and our worries
Are secrets to them there,
Unaware and placid
The days and the years go by,
Nor will they ever think about them,
Nor do they recall them in sorrow.

(Please turn the page quietly.)
Bell’astro della sera,
Gemma che il cielo allieti,
Come alzerà quest’anima
Oppressa e prigioniera
Dal suo terreno carcere
Al tuo bel raggio il vol!

L’esule
Text: Temistocle Solera (1815–78)

Vedi! la bianca luna
Splende sui colli
La notturna brezza
Scorre leggera ad increspare il vago
Grembo del queto lago.
Perché, perché sol io
Nell’ora più tranquilla e più soave
Muto e pensoso mi starò? Qui tutto
È gioia; il ciel, la terra
Di natura sorridono all’incanto.
L’esule solo è condannato al pianto.

Ed io pure fra l’aure native
Palpitava d’ignoto piacer.
Oh, del tempo felice ancor vive
La memoria nel caldo pensier.
Corsi lande, deserti, foreste,
Vidi luoghi olezzanti di fior;
M’aggirai fra le danze e le feste,
Ma compagno ebbi sempre il dolor.

Or che mi resta? togliere alla vita
Quella forza che misero mi fa.
Deh, vieni, vieni, o morte, a chi t’invita
E l’alma ai primi gaudi tornerà.

Texts and Translations CONTINUED

Beautiful star of the evening,
Gem in which heaven delights,
How this soul,
Oppressed and imprisoned,
Will rise from its earthly prison
And fly to your beautiful ray!

The Exile
Translation: © 2012 Melissa Malde

Look! The white moon
shines on the hills
The night breeze
flows lightly to ruffle
the charming womb of the peaceful lake.
Why, why in this hour
so tranquil and sweet
Am I alone mute and thoughtful? Here all
is joy; The sky, the earth,
all nature smiles at the enchantment.
Only the exile is condemned to weep.

And within my native air I also
Throbbed with hidden joy.
Oh, the memory of those happy times
Lives again in my ardent thoughts.
I race through grasslands, deserts, forests,
I observe scenes fragrant with flowers;
I wander through the dances and the festivals,
But pain was always my companion.

Now, what is left for me? Take away from my life
This force that makes me suffer.
Oh come, come death, I invite you
And my soul will return to its original delight!

Oh, then my native shore
will not be barred to me!
In that air, on those waves
my bared soul will fly;
I will kiss the beloved cheeks
of my dear mother
And my sad tears
will be wiped away.