



ORCHID CLASSICS

ARION

Voyage of a
Slavic Soul

Natalya Romaniw, *soprano*
Lada Valešová, *piano*



ARION			14	Otchevo, Op.6 No.5	3.24
Voyage of a Slavic Soul				(Why?)	
Nikolai Rimsky-Korsakov (1844-1908)				Sergei Rachmaninov (1873-1943)	
1	Gornimi tikho letela dusha nebesami, Op.27 No.1	2.50	15	Oh never sing to me again, Op.4 No.4	4.44
	(Softly the soul flew up to heaven)		16	The Harvest of Sorrow, Op.4 No.5	4.19
2	Nimfa, Op.56 No.1	3.27	17	How fair this spot, Op.21 No.7	2.06
	(The nymph)		18	Spring Waters, Op.14 No.11	2.11
3	Son v letnuyu noch, Op.56 No.2	5.25	19	Arion, Op.34 No.5	2.40
	(Summer Night's Dream)			Leoš Janáček (1854-1928)	
Antonín Dvořák (1841-1904)			20	Ľáska	1.44
Love Songs, Op.83				(Love)	
4	I Ó, naší lásce nekvete	2.02	21	Stálost	1.17
	(Oh, that longed-for happiness)			(Constancy)	
5	II V tak mnohém srdci mrtvo jest	2.20	22	Rozmarýn	3.13
	(So many a heart is as though dead)			(Rosemary)	
6	III Kol domu se ted' potácím	1.39	23	Muzikanti	1.23
	(Around the house now I stagger)			(Musicians)	
7	IV Já vím, že v sladké naději	2.34		Vítězslav Novák (1870-1949)	
	(I know, with sweet hope)			The Fairytale of the Heart, Op.8	
8	V Nad krajem vévodí lehký spánek	2.01	24	I Píseň melancholická	1.56
	(Over the landscape a light slumber reigns)			(Melancholy song)	
9	VI Zde v lese u potoka	2.07	25	II Zda není snem	3.03
	(In the woods by the stream)			(Is it a dream?)	
10	VII V té sladké moci očí tvých	2.00	26	III Večer	1.33
	(In that sweet power of your eyes)			(Evening)	
11	VIII Ó, duše drahá, jedinká	1.46	27	IV Podzimní nálada	1.21
	(Oh dear, matchless soul)			(Autumn mood)	
Pyotr Il'yich Tchaikovsky (1840-1893)			28	V Až přejde den	2.53
12	Nam zvizdi krotkie siali, Op.60 No.12	3.47		(When the day ends)	
	(Gentle stars were shining upon us)			Total time	73.22
13	Den li tsarit, Op.47 No.6	3.22		Natalya Romaniw, soprano	
	(Can it be day?)			Lada Valešová, piano	

Slavic culture embraces a range of ancient folk styles and is found within old Russian, Ukrainian, Czech and Moravian societies, among others. This recital explores an array of songs influenced, whether subtly or overtly, by Slavic music and poetry.

Nikolai Rimsky-Korsakov's *Gornimi tikha* ('Softly the soul flew up to heaven'), Op.27 No.1 (1882-3) was written in the wake of his opera, *The Snow Maiden*, after which he struggled creatively, feeling that he had said most of what he wanted to say. The song sets an unusual poem by Tolstoy in which a soul in heaven longs to return to Earth to provide solace to those in pain, represented by a vocal line that soars above the piano part. Rimsky-Korsakov's creative crisis lifted in 1888-9, when Wagner's *Ring Cycle* brought fresh inspiration. His *Two Songs*, Op.56, date from 1898, and set poetry by Maykov. *Nimfa* ('The nymph'), about a near miss between a lonely nymph and a sailor, features an undulating piano part full of delicious harmonies underpinning a captivating melody, while the seductive fantasy of 'Summer Night's Dream' begins with a magical piano introduction before the soprano unleashes an increasingly ecstatic, almost operatic, melody.

Antonín Dvořák began his career as a professional violist in Prague's theatrical orchestras. To supplement his paltry income, Dvořák gave piano lessons, and from 1865 he taught the daughters of a Prague goldsmith, Josefína and Anna Čermáková. He fell in love with Josefína, but his feelings were unreciprocated; like Mozart, he ended up marrying the younger sister of the woman he had first loved. Antonín and Anna were married in 1873 and had nine children, six of whom survived infancy. The song cycle *Cypřiše* ('Cypresses', B11) was written in 1865, with eight of the songs later revised as Dvořák's *Love Songs*, Op.83, in 1888; Dvořák had arranged 12 of the songs for string quartet the year before. All of the texts are by Gustav Pflieger-Moravský, and the rhythm of the words informs Dvořák's approach to his melodic lines throughout the cycle. He was

concerned with capturing the mood of each poem, in the process exhibiting a romanticism that shows the influence of Schubert and Schumann.

The opening song, *Ó naší lásce nekvete* ('Oh, that longed-for happiness'), is a tender, resigned farewell to a love that has not bloomed; *V tak mnohem srdci mrtvo jest* ('So many a heart is as though dead') is more melancholy still, reflecting on hearts bereft of love briefly hoping that it has returned. The third song, *Kol domu se teď potácím* ('Around the house now I stagger') includes folk-like motifs to illustrate the erratic wanderings of a rejected lover, while in the lyrical *Já vím, že v sladké naději* ('I know, with sweet hope'), joy is allowed to flourish until the last lines reveal that love is overshadowed by an impending threat, illustrated by Dvořák with a delicate piano postlude that ends ambiguously. *Nad krajem vévodí lehký spánek* ('Over the landscape a light slumber reigns') is structured in a similar way, full of pleasant imagery until the very last lines, with Dvořák reflecting each aspect of the text through shapely melody and varied, vivid piano writing. *Zde v lese u potoka* ('In the woods by the stream') is gently introspective, with another subtly chilling ending, while *V té sladké moci očí tvých* ('In that sweet power of your eyes') is more ardent, but again with phrasing that closely follows the text. The cycle ends with the sublime, other-worldly *Ó duše dráha jedinká* ('Oh dear, matchless soul').

In 1886, Pyotr Il'yich Tchaikovsky renewed his friendship with the Grand Duke Konstantin Romanov, who informed the composer that the Empress wanted him to write something for her. Tchaikovsky responded with the Romances, Op.60 (1886), of which No.12, *Nam zviozdi krotkie siali* ('Gentle stars were shining upon us') is to a text by Pescheyev reminiscing about past love. Tchaikovsky's songs of 1878-1885 displayed a confident facade beneath which he charted the events of his life in collections such as his Op.47 (1880), which reflected a painful encounter with Antonina Miliukova, the student he had married with disastrous

consequences in 1877. To a text by Apukhtin, *Den li tsarit* ('Can it be day?', No.6) is a full-throated outpouring of unfulfilled longing, a theme that would recur throughout the composer's life. Similarly, the earlier Op.6 songs directly addressed aspects of Tchaikovsky's personal life, in this case his courtship of the Belgian soprano Désirée Artôt in 1868. They were engaged until Artôt's refusal to move or to curtail her career put an end to the relationship. *Otchevo* ('Why?', Op.6, No.5), to words by Heinrich Heine, is a poignant reflection on faded love, articulated through an increasingly powerful soprano line supported by the piano's chordal accompaniment.

Sergei Rachmaninov composed songs throughout his career, and while their reputation may have been overshadowed by the grand passions of his large-scale works, the concision of song distills into concentrated form the very essence of his style. The Op.4 songs were written not long after the success of Rachmaninov's opera, *Aleko* in the spring of 1893. Tchaikovsky was delighted with *Aleko*, and this encouragement from one of his heroes motivated Rachmaninov to complete the Op.4 and Op.8 sets of songs during the summer and autumn of the same year. Some of the Six Romances, Op.4 had been begun earlier, and the fourth, *Oh, never sing to me again*, dates from 1892. The song begins with a melancholic introduction, the piano unfolding long, introspective phrases in the right hand over the left hand's gentle accompaniment. The melodic contours and sorrowful tone of the introduction are taken up by the voice, which enters with an anguished cry, reflecting Pushkin's text, in which the narrator seeks escape from painful memories. The next song in the set, *The Harvest of Sorrow*, is to words by Tolstoy in which the poet's thoughts are likened to grain in a field being blown in all directions before a seed of grief takes root. The soprano's line has the quality of Russian folk music, while the piano part illustrates the blustery imagery of the text.

Rachmaninov's 12 Songs, Op.21 (1900-2), were written not long after the composition of his Piano Concerto No.2 and echo its lush, Romantic style. Rachmaninov really hit his song-writing stride in the Op.12 songs, which achieve a poised balance between voice and piano. The piano's role becomes integral to the communication of each text, adding layers of musical insight or commentary to those of the voice. *How fair this spot*, Op.21 No.7, to poetry by Galina, paints a picture of an idyll in which man, God and Nature are in perfect harmony, the soprano line soaring above the piano's rich cushion of sound. This blissful mood continues in *Spring Waters*, the eleventh of the 12 Romances, Op.14, to words by Tyutchev celebrating the impending joys of spring. The piano part's running lines build up energy and anticipation, leading into passionate outbursts from both voice and piano.

In 1909 Rachmaninov embarked on his first American tour, which he did not enjoy; afterwards he retreated to his Russian country estate at Ivanovka where, over the next few summers, he wrote a number of significant works including the 14 Songs, Op.34 (1910-12). Rachmaninov's experience of writing the choral symphony, *The Bells*, with its prominent vocal solos, informed his approach to his final sets of songs, Opp.34 and 38. Rachmaninov tailored his Op.34 songs to the singers Chaliapin, Litvin, Sobinov and Nezhdanova, and used the piano part to accentuate key words in the texts, which are by prominent Russian Romantics. *Arion* (No.5) is to a brooding poem by Pushkin about a shipwreck from which the narrator is the only survivor, a subject that elicits from Rachmaninov a stormy response.

Leoš Janáček compiled his 53 folksong arrangements entitled *Moravská lidová poezie v písniích* or 'Moravian folk poetry in songs', JW V/2, between 1892 and 1901. Moravia is one of the three historical Czech regions, the others being Bohemia and Czech Silesia; like Dvořák and Smetana, Janáček embraced

the folk music of his homeland and arranged it or incorporated it into his own compositions. The first song, *Láska* ('Love'), is concise but deeply expressive, while *Stálost* ('Constancy'), No.16, is a restless song full of irrepressible forward motion. *Rozmarýn* ('Rosemary', No.30) features a soulful, expansive vocal line over subtly illustrative piano gestures, and the joyful *Muzikanti*, No.50, takes wedding 'Musicians' as its subject.

Vítězslav Novák was also fascinated by Moravian folk music and was deeply influenced by Janáček, with whom he became familiar in 1897 – a year after writing his *Pohádka srdce* ('A Tale of the Heart'), Op.8 for voice and piano or orchestra. Songs Nos.1, 2 and 4 are to poetry by Ivan Olbracht; No.3 sets words by Jaroslav Vrchlický, and No.5 by Josef Václav Sládek. Throughout, Novák's intimate understanding of the words shines, with vocal lines that are melodically inventive whilst following closely the nuances of the text. The set opens with the sorrowful *Píseň melancholická* ('Melancholy song'), Novák's use of melody emphasising aspects of the poem with subtle commentary from the piano. *Zda není snem?* ('Is it a dream?') is operatic in its wide-ranging emotions, contrasted with the romanticism of *Večer* ('Evening'). *Podzimní nálada* ('Autumn mood') includes blustery piano writing and an agile vocal line, ending enigmatically, and the cycle concludes with *Až přejde den* ('When the day ends'), once again demonstrating Novák's exceptional gift for melody.

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Natalya Romaniw

Despite her name, Natalya Romaniw was born in Wales. Natalya's grandfather, affectionately named 'Dido' and to whose memory this album is dedicated, was Ukrainian and settled in Wales during the Second World War. This album is dedicated to his memory.

Growing up in Swansea, with her Dido being the only musical influence in Natalya's life. She remembers fondly singing along to Ukrainian folk songs and music all played on the accordion by her Dido. She was always encouraged to take part in many a sing-along at the Ukrainian club in Morriston, Swansea. The sound of the bare voices of the Ukrainian men singing unaccompanied in harmony instilled in Natalya a vivid memory of colours, emotions and expressions painted by their raw instruments.

Later on, after she had studied at the Guildhall School of Music and Drama and at the Houston Grand Opera Studio in TX, USA, Natalya made her first poignant mark in the Slavic repertoire as the young heroine 'Tatyana' in Garsington Opera's production of *Eugene Onegin*. Her interpretation of the role has since lead to critical acclaim across the UK and opened the door to many interpretations of other Slavic heroines including Tchaikovsky's 'Lisa' in *Queen of Spades*, the title role of the same composer's *Iolanta* and the title roles of Janáček's *Jenufa* and Dvořák's *Rusalka*.

Often noted for the Slavic influence in the timbre of her voice, it is perhaps no surprise that Natalya feels a deep-rooted connection to the music of these composers and strongly feels that it is a legacy of her Ukrainian heritage.





Lada Valešová

Lada Valešová continues to make an indelible mark with her original artistry, imaginative music exploration and dramaturgy. Her album of songs and chamber music by Pavel Haas *Fata Morgana* (Resonus) was nominated for the BBC Music Magazine Awards and selected Europadisc CD of the Year. Her albums of piano music *Intimate Studies* and *Dumka* (Avie) have received universal critical acclaim. Inspired by her Czech and Russian heritage and having lived and worked most of her artistic life in London, Lada enjoys exploring and presenting to the public lesser known repertoire with Slavic and middle European links.

Lada graduated from the Prague Conservatoire and Prague Music Academy, followed by London's Guildhall School of Music and Drama where she is now a professor. She is also an opera coach at the Royal Academy of Music and has worked for a number of international opera companies including the Royal Opera House Covent Garden, the Hamburgische Staatsoper and the Kungliga Operan Stockholm.

Lada has performed at various prestigious venues and international music festivals. As Music Director and pianist of the acclaimed production *Diary of One Who Disappeared* directed by Ivo van Hove, Lada has performed on an international tour, making her debuts at the Royal Opera House's Linbury Studio, BAM New York, Beijing International Music Festival and Muziekgebouw Amsterdam among others. Building upon her all-round music and artistic experience, Lada is embracing a new chapter of her artistic journey and will be making her London debut as the conductor for the Young Artists performance of *Eugene Onegin* at the Opera Holland Park.

NIKOLAI RIMSKY-KORSAKOV

Gornimi tikho letela dusha nebesami

Горними тихо летела душа небесами,
Грустные долу она опускала ресницы,
Слёзы в пространство от них упадая звездами,
Светлой и длинной за нею вились вереницей.
Встречные тихо её вопрошали светила:
" Отчего так грустна и о чём эти слёзы во взоре?"
Им отвечала она: "я земли не забыла.
Много оставила я там страдания и горя.
Здесь я лишь ликам блаженства и радости внемлю,
Праведных души не знают ни скорби, ни злобы.
О, отпусти меня снова, создатель, на землю,
Было-б о ком пожалеть и утешить кого-бы!»

*A soul flew quietly through the heavens,
Sadly she lowered her lashes,
Shedding tears into the space like stars,
They trailed behind her like a long bright row.
The oncoming bodies of light shone on her and inquired:
"Why are you so sad, with tears in your eyes?"*

*She responded: "I haven't forgotten the Earth,
I've left there much suffering and grief.
Here I see only images of bliss and joy:
The souls of the righteous know neither sorrow, nor anger.
Oh, let me return once again, Creator, to the Earth,
So that I might bring pity and comfort to someone!"*

Nimfa

Я знаю, отчего у этих берегов
Раздумье тайное объемлет дух пловцов:
Там нимфа грустная с распущенной косою,
Полузакрытая певучей осокою,
Порою песнь поёт про шелк своих волос,
Лазурь заплаканных очей, жемчуг зубов
И сердце, полное любви неразделенной.
Проедет ли челнок-пловец обвороченный,

Её заслушавшись, перестает грести;
Замолкнет ли она -- но долго на пути
Ему всё чудятся напевы над водою
И нимфа в камышах, с распущенной косою.

*I know why around these shores
A mysterious pensiveness captivates the spirit of the
sailors:
Here a melancholic water nymph
With a loose braid, half- hidden by the singing reeds,
Sometimes sings a song about the silk of her hair,
The azure of her tearful eyes, the pearls of her teeth
And her heart, full of unrequited love.
When a small boat passes by an entranced sailor
While listening to her stops rowing;
And even long after she stops singing
He seems to be hearing her songs floating over the
water
and to be seeing the nymph among the reeds, with
her loose hair.*

Son v letnuyu noch

Долго ночью вчера я заснуть не могла.
Я вставала, окно отворяла...
Ночь немая меня и томила, и жгла,
ароматом цветов опьяняла...

Только вдруг зашумели кусты под окном,
распахнулась, шумя занавеска -
и влетел ко мне юноша, светел лицом,
точно весь был из лунного блеска.

Растворились двери светлицы моей,
колоннады за ними открылись;
в пирамидах из роз вереницы огней
в алебастровых вазах светились....

Чудный гость подходил всё к постели моей,
говорил мне он с кроткой улыбкой:

«Отчего предо мною в подушки скорей
ты нырнула испуганной рыбкой!

Оглянися - я бог, бог видений и грёз,
тайный друг я застенчивой девы...
И блаженство небес я впервые принёс
для тебя, для моей королевы...»

Говорил и лицо он моё отрывал
от подушки тихонько руками;
и щеки моей край горячо целовал,
и искал моих уст он устами...

Под дыханьем его обессилела я...
На груди разомкнулися руки...
И звучало в ушах: «Ты моя! Ты моя!»
точно арфы далекие звуки...

Протекали часы... я открыла глаза...
Мой покой был уж облит зарею...
Я одна... вся дрожу... Распустилась коса...
Я не знаю, что было со мною...

*For a long time, I couldn't fall asleep last night,
I'd get up and open the window...
The silent night caressed and burned me,
Inebriating me with the aroma of the flowers...*

*Suddenly the bushes rustled under the window,
And the curtain blew open
And a bright-faced youth flew in
As if he was all made from the moon shine.*

*The doors of my bedroom opened,
Revealing colonnades behind them;
The rows of lights shone in alabaster vases
Overflowing with garlands of roses...*

*The wondrous guest approached my bed
Speaking with a gentle smile:*

*"Why did you dive so quickly at my sight
Into your pillows like a frightened little fish?*

*Look back at me - I am the God of visions and dreams,
I am a secret friend of a timid maiden...
And I have brought the rapture of heavens for the
first time
For you - my Queen..."*

*He kept speaking and trying gently to lift
My face from the pillow with his hands,
And he'd ardently kiss my cheek
While seeking my lips with his own...*

*I swooned under his breath
And unclenched my hands on my chest...
And I've heard: "You are mine! You are mine!"
Like the distant sounds of the harp...*

*The hours have flown by... I've opened my eyes...
My room was already filled with dawn light...
I'm alone... I am trembling all over... my hair is all undone.
I don't know what has happened to me...*

ANTONÍN DVOŘÁK

PÍSNĚ MILOSTNÉ

I. Ó, naší lásce nekvete

Ó, naší lásce nekvete

to vytoužené štěstí.

A kdyby kvetlo, a kdyby kvetlo, nebude
dlouho, dlouho kvéstí.

Proč by se slza v ohnivé
polibky vekrádala?

Proč by mne v plné lásce své
ouzkostně objímala?

O, trpké je to loučení,
kde naděj nezahyne.

Tu srdce cítí ve chvění,
že brzo, ach, brzo bídě zhyne.

*Oh, that longed-for happiness
does not bloom for our love;
and if it would bloom, in this world
it would not bloom for long.*

*Why would a tear
steal into fiery kisses?
Why would you embrace me
in your full love with anxiety?
Oh, bitter is that parting
where hope does not beckon:
the heart then feels, trembling,
that soon in misery it will die.*

II. V tak mnohém srdci mrtvo jest

*V tak mnohém srdci mrtvo jest,
jak v temné pustině,
v něm na žalost a na bolest,
ba, místa jedině.
Tu klamy lásky horoucí
v to srdce vstupuje,
a srdce žalem prahnoucí,
to mní, že miluje.
A v tomto sladkém domnění
se ještě jednou v ráj
to srdce mrtvé promění
a zpívá, zpívá, starou báj!*

*So many a heart is as though dead,
as in a dark wasteland;
yea, only for grief and for pain
does it have room.*

*Then delusions of burning love
enter into that heart,
and the heart, yearning in misery,
believes that it loves.*

*And in this sweet belief
the dead heart once again
transforms itself into a paradise
and sings the old tale!*

III. Kol domu se ted' potácím

*Kol domu se ted' potácím,
kdes bydlívala dříve,
a z lásky rány krvácím,
lásky sladké, lživé!*

*A smutným okem nazírám,
zdaž ke mně vedeš kroku:
a vstříc ti náruč otvírám,
však slzu cítím v oku!*

*Ó, kde jsi, drahá, kde jsi dnes,
což nepřijdeš mi vstříce?
Což nemám v srdci slast a ples,
tě uzřít nikdy více?*

*Around the house now I stagger
where you used to live,
and from the wound of love I bleed,
of that love sweet, deceitful!*

*And with a sad eye I watch
whether you step toward me:
and toward you my arms I open,
but a tear I feel in my eye!*

*Oh where are you, dear one, where are you
today?*

*Won't you come toward me?
Am I not, with delight and joy in my heart,
to behold you ever again?*

IV. Já vím že v sladké

Já vím, že v sladké naději
Tě smím přec milovat;
A že chceš tím horoucněji
Mou lásku pěstovat.

A přec, když nazřím očí tvých
V tu přerozkošnou noc
A zívám jak nebe lásky z nich
Na mne snáší moc:

Tu moje oko slzamí,
Tu náhle se obstírá,
Neb v štěstí naše za námi
Zlý osud pozírá!

*I know, with sweet hope,
that I can offer you my love;
That you will cherish
my love with ardour.*

*And yet, when I look
into your eyes on this opulent night,
And see there all the power
that love brings from the sky,*

*Suddenly my eyes well up
with tears of sadness --
Above our happiness,
cruel fate looms.*

V. Nad krajem vévodí lehký spánek

Nad krajem vévodí lehký spánek
Jasná se rozpjala májová noc;
Nesmělý krade se do listí vánek,
S nebes se schýlila míru moc.

Zadřímlo kvítí, potokem šumá
Tišeji nápěvů tajemných sbor.
Příroda v rozkoši blaženě dumá,
Neklidných živlů všad utichl vzpor.

Hvězdy se sešly co naděje světla,
Země se mění na nebeský kruh.
Mým srdcem, v němž-to kdys blaženost kvetla,
Mým srdcem táhne jen bolesti ruch!

*Over the landscape ruled by care-free dreams,
Clear May night is outstretched.
Gently a breeze steals through the leaves,
From the skies, calmness descends.*

*Flowers slumber, and through the woods,
Like a secretive choir, the brook sings.
Opulent nature muses blissfully,
Nothing remains that would bring conflict.*

*Stars are assembled to bring the light,
The earth is melding into the heaven's orb.
But in my heart, where once blessedness blossomed,
Now only illness remains.*

VI. Zde v lese u potoka já

Zde v lese u potoka já
Stojím sám a sám;
A ve potoka vlny
V myšlenkách pozírám.

Tu vidím starý kámen,
Nad nímž se vlny dmou;
Ten kámen stoupá a padá
Bez klidu pod vlnou.

A proud se oň opírá,
Až kámen zvrhne se.
Kdy vlna života mne ze světa
Odnese, kdy, ach, vlna života mne odnese?

*In the woods by the stream
I stand all alone,
And lost in my thoughts
I gaze into the stream's eddy.
There I see an old stone,
Over which the water rolls.
And that stone beneath the waves,
Always rises and falls.*

*The stone battles the waves,
And finally overturns.
When will the waves of life finally
Sweep me away from this world?*

VII. V té sladké moci očí tvých

*V té sladké moci očí tvých
jak rád, jak rád bych zahynul,
kdyby mě k životu jen smích
rtů krásných nekynul.
Však tu smrt sladkou zvolím hned
s tou láskou, s tou láskou ve hrudi:
když mě jen ten tvůj smavý ret
k životu probudí.*

*In that sweet power of your eyes
how gladly would I die,
if only the laughter of lovely
lips did not beckon me to life.
But I'll choose that sweet death at once
with that love in my breast,
if only those smiling lips of yours
will awaken me to life.*

VIII. Ó, duše drahá, jedinká

*Ó, duše drahá, jedinká,
jež v srdci žiješ dosud:
má oblétá tě myšlenka,
ač nás dělí zlý osud.
Ó, kéž jsem zpěvnou labutí,
já zaletěl bych k tobě;
a v posledním bych vzdechnutí
ti vypěl srdce v mdlobě.*

*Oh dear soul, the only one
that still lives in my heart:
my thought hovers about you,
though evil fate separates us.
Oh, were I a singing swan,
I'd fly to you
and in my final sighing would
sing out my heart to you, swooning.*

PYOTR IL'YICH TCHAIKOVSKY

Nam zviozdi krotkie siali

*Нам звёзды кроткие сияли,
чуть веял тихий ветерок,
кругом цветы благоухали,
и волны ласково журчали
у наших ног.*

*Мы были юны, мы любили,
и с верой в даль смотрели мы;
в нас грёзы радужные жили,
и нам не страшны вьюги были
седой зимы.*

*Где ж эти ночи с их сияньем,
с благоухающей красой
и волн таинственным [ронтаньем] 1,
надежд, восторжённых мечтаний
где светлый рой?*

Померкли звёзды, и уныло
поникли блеклые цветы...
Когда ж, о сердце, все, что было,
что нам весна с тобой дарила,
забудешь ты?

*The timid stars were shining upon us,
The light breeze was flowing,
The flowers scented the air
And the waves were gently murmuring
At our feet.*

*We were young, we were in love,
And we were looking into our future with trust.
We were full of rosy dreams
And the snowstorms of the grey winter
Held no threat over us.*

*Where are those nights with their shine
And their scented beauty,
With the mysterious murmur of the waves?
And the bright trail of hopes
And the exalted dreams,
Where is it?*

*The stars have faded
And the bleak flowers hang sadly all wilted...
When, oh my heart, all that we had,
All that the Spring used to gift us,
Will you forget?*

Den li tsarit

День ли царит, тишина ли ночная,
В снах ли бессвязных, в житейской борьбе,
Всюду со мной, мою жизнь наполняя,
Дума все та же, одна роковая,
Всё о тебе!

С нею не страшен мне призрак былого,
Сердце воспрянуло снова любя...
Вера, мечты, вдохновенное слово,
Всё, что в душе дорогого, святого,
Всё от тебя!

Будут ли дни мои ясны, унылы,
Скоро ли сгину я, жизнь загубя!
Знаю одно, что до самой могилы
Помыслы, чувства, и песни, и силы,
Всё для тебя!

*Whether the day reigns or in the silence of night,
Whether in my scattered dreams or awake,
Always with me, filling my life entirely
Is one single thought of destiny:
All about you!*

*With this thought the ghosts of the past no longer
haunt me,
My heart has revived loving again...
The trust, the dreams, and the inspired word,
All that my soul holds dear or sacred,
It is all because of you!*

*Whether the rest of my days will be bright or
melancholy
Whether I perish soon ruining my life,
I only know that till my very grave
All my thoughts, my feelings, my songs and my strengths
All are for you!*

Otchevo

Отчего побледнела весной
пышноцветная роза сама?
Отчего под зелёной травой
голубая фиалка нема?

Отчего так печально звучит
песня птички, несясь в небеса?

Отчего над лугами висит
погребальным покровом роса?

Отчего в небе солнце с утра
холодно и темно, как зимой?
Отчего и земля вся сыра
и угрюмей могилы самой?

Отчего я и сам все грустней
и болезненней день ото дня?
Отчего, о, скажи мне скорей ты,
покинув, забыла меня?

*Why has paled in the spring
The voluptuously blooming rose?
Why has grown silent under the green grass
The blue violet?*

*Why so sadly resounds the song of the bird
Soaring into the skies?
Why above the meadows
Hangs the dew like a funeral shroud?*

*Why does the morning sun in the sky
Seem so cold and dark like in the winter
Why is the earth all raw
And more sombre than the grave itself?*

*Why am I myself more sad
And grow sicker from one day to another,
Oh tell me why, having left me
You've forgotten me so soon?*

SERGEI RACHMANINOV

Oh Never Sing to me again

Не пой, красавица, при мне
Ты песен Грузии печальной;
Напоминают мне оне
Другую жизнь и берег дальний.

Увы, напоминают мне
Твои жестокие напевы
И степь, и ночь, и при луне
Черты далекой, бедной девы!

Я призрак милый, роковой,
Тебя увидев, забываю;
Но ты поёшь, и предо мной
Его я вновь воображаю.

Не пой, красавица, при мне
Ты песен Грузии печальной;
Напоминают мне оне
Другую жизнь и берег дальний.

*Do not sing for me, fair beauty,
Your songs of sad Georgia:
They remind me
Of another life and distant shore.
Alas, they bring back memories,
Your cruel melodies of the steppe at night
And in the moonlight, the features of a poor
maiden far away!..
Seeing you, I forget
That dear fateful vision
But when you sing again
I imagine it before me.
Do not sing for me, fair beauty,
Your songs of sad Georgia:
They remind me
Of another life and distant shore.*

The Harvest of Sorrow

Уж ты, нива моя, нивушка,
Не скосить тебя с маху единого,
Не связать тебя всю во единый сноп!
Уж вы, думы мои, думушки,
Не стряхнуть вас разом с плеч долой,
Одной речью-то вас не высказать!

По тебе-ль, нива, ветер разгуливал,
Гнул колосья твои до-земли,
Зрелы зерна-все разметывал!
Широко вы, думы, порассыпались,
Куда пала какая думушка.
Там всходила люта печаль-трава,
Выросло горе горячее.

*O you my field, dear field of mine,
You can't be mowed down at one stroke
You can't be bound up in one sheaf
O you my thoughts, dear little thoughts
You can't be shaken off with a single shrug
You can't be told in a single tale!
Have you not been battered by the wind, field,
Your ears of grain bent down to the ground,
Your ripe grain scattered here and yonder!
You've been scattered thoughts, far and wide
And wherever a thought fell
The bitter grass of sorrow sprouted up
And grew into burning misery. Ah! Ah!*

How Fair This Spot

Здесь хорошо...
Взгляни, вдали
Огнём горит река;
Цветным ковром луга легли,
Белеют облака.
Здесь нет людей...
Здесь тишина...
Здесь только Бог да я.
Цветы, да старая сосна,
Да ты, мечта моя!

*Here it's so fine...
Look: in the distance the river glitters like fire,*

*The meadows are a carpet of colour,
There are white clouds overhead.
Here there are no people...
Here it's so quiet...
Here are only God and I.
And the flowers and the old pine tree
And you, my dream.*

Spring Waters

Ещё в полях белеет снег,
А воды уж весной шумят --
Бегут и будят сонный брег,
Бегут, и блещут, и гласят...

Они гласят во все концы:
«Весна идёт, весна идёт!
Мы молодой весны гонцы,
Она нас выслала вперёд.

Весна идёт, весна идёт,
И тихих, тёплых майских дней
Румяный, светлый хоровод
Толпится весело за ней!

*The fields are still white with snow,
But already the waters are proclaiming spring,
Running along and waking sleepy riverbanks,
Running and glittering and declaring.
They declare in all directions:
"Spring is coming! Spring is coming!
We are the heralds of young spring,
She sent us in advance.
Spring is coming! Spring is coming!"
And the still, warm days of May
In a rosy, bright circle-dance,
Crowd together and gaily follow behind*

Arion

Нас было много на челне:
Иные парус натягали,
Другие дружно упирали
В глубь мощны вёсла.

В тишине,
На руль склонясь, наш кормищик умный
В молчаньи правил грузный чёлн;
А я беспечной веры полн
Пловцам я пел...

Вдруг лоно волн
Измял с налёту вихорь шумный...
Погиб и кормщик и пловец!
Лишь я, таинственный певец,
На берег выброшен грозою.
Я гимны прежние пою,
И ризу влажную мою
Сушу на солнце под скалою.

*There were many of us in the boat: Some pulled
the sail,
Others powerfully pushed,
Their oars into the deep.
In silence,
Upon the rudder leaning, our wise captain Without
speaking guided our heavy vessel; But I, full of
careless faith
To sailors sang...
Suddenly the depth of waves
Was rumped strongly by the noisy wind... The
captain and the sailors perished!
Only I, a mysterious bard,
On the shore was brought by the storm.
The same old hymns I now sing, And my wet robes
I dry on the sun beneath a cliff.*

LEOŠ JANÁČEK

Ľáska.

Ej ľásko, ľásko, ty nejsi stáťa,
Jako voděnka mezi brehami.
Voda uplyne, ľáska pomine,
Jako lísteček na rozmarýně.

*Oh love, love, you are not constant,
Like the water between the shores.
Water flows away and love fades away,
Like a little leaf of a rosemary sprig.*

Stálost

Zelené sem seťa,
Červené mi schodí,
Povězmi, synečku, kdo tebe rozvodí;
Povězmi, synečku, kdo tebe rozvodí.

Rozvodí, rozvodí
Celá má rodina,
Že si ty chudobnej
Maměnky děvčina.

Nedaj, Bože, nedaj
Fíalence rozkvést,
Nedaj sa
Od cérečky rozvést.

Šak já nedám, nedám,
Ani nerozvedú,
Dokud' já, cérečko,
Dokud' já živ budu.

*In the green that I planted the red colour is blossoming,
Tell me, sonny boy: who is trying to break us up?
My entire family is trying to separate us,
Because you are only the daughter of a poor Mother.*

*Just as God doesn't stop the little violet from blooming
Don't let them, my sonny boy, break us up.*

*I won't let them, and as long as I live,
They will never drive us apart, my dear girl!*

Rozmarýn

Pod našima oknama,
Rozmarýn prokvítá

Chodívá k nám šohajko
Ode mňa ho pýtá

Nepýtaj ho ode mňa
Ode mňa od samej

Lež ho pýtaj od otca,
Od mamičky mojéj

Já mám takých rodičů,
Co má rádi majú

Prídi ku nám šohajko
Oni má ti dajú

*Under our windows
Rosemary is blooming:*

*A young lad often comes here
Asking it of me.*

*Do not ask of it from me,
From me myself,*

*But rather, ask for it from my father,
And from my Mother.*

*I have such parents
Who love me so much,*

*Come to visit us young lad:
They will give my hand to you.*

Muzikanti

Muzikanti co děláte,
Aj, máte husle a nehráte

Zahréte mně na husličky,
A rozveselte ty dróžičky

Zahréte mně na cimbále,
Ať moja milá veselá je

Zahréte mně na tó basu,
A rozveselte všecku chasu

Zahréte mně všeci spolu,
A vyprovod' te mně až domu

*Musicians what are you doing?
You have the fiddles and yet you don't play!*

*Play for me on those little fiddles
And cheer up the bridesmaids.*

*Play for me on the cimbalom
And make my darling jolly!*

*Play for me on the double bass
And cheer up all the wedding guests.*

*Then play for me all together
And accompany me all the way home!*

VITĚSLAV NOVÁK

Píseň melancholická

Jsou v světě srdce ubohá,
Jež neví, co je štěstí,
Jimž každý den a každá noc
Jen novou bolest věští.
Jsou v světě srdce ubohá,
Jež neví, co je láska,
V něž záhy již za mladých let
Tak mnohá vryta vráska.
Jsou v světě srdce ubohá,

Jež znají jenom touhy,
Jsou v světě srdce ubohá,
Jež znají jenom touhy,
Však málokdo si vzpomene,
Jak v touhách život dlouhý.

*There are poor hearts in the world,
Which do not know happiness
And to whom every day and every night
Promise only a new pain.
There are poor hearts in the world,
Which do not know love,
And already at a young age
A deep wrinkle has been carved into them.
There are poor hearts in the world,
Which know only longing,
But it occurs only to few of us
How very long life feels when lived only in longing.*

Zda není snem

Zda není snem, že vinul jsem tě k sobě
A líbal ručky, líbal tváře obě
A celoval zas vášné tvoje retы
Až v moři blaha pomíjely světy?
Zda není snem, že vinul jsem tě k sobě?

Zda není snem, to celé moje štěstí,
Že zkvetly znovu lásky ratolesti,
Že srdce tvoje na mých prsou bilo,
Jak o tom dlouho srdce mé jen snilo,
Zda není snem, to celé moje štěstí.

Ach, byl to den tak luzný, beze stínu,
Já v myšlenkách tě ještě k sobě vinu
A líbám znova, líbám vroucně zase,
Ač vše již zašlo v neúprosném čase.

To znovu zas jsem poznal,
A jaké blaho láska lásce věští,
To opět žil jsem den v tom světě zdejším,
Jenž žití mého dnem byl nejkrásnějším.
Zda není snem, že vinul jsem tě k sobě,
Zda není snem?

*Was it not just a dream that I embraced you,
And kissed your dainty hands and your cheeks
And kissed your tempting lips
Until the universes would dissolve in a sea of bliss?
Was my entire happiness not just a dream?
That the new offshoots of our love blossomed again,
That your heart was beating on my chest,
Just as my heart always dreamt about?*

*Ah, it was such a soft day without shadows,
And in my thoughts, I am still embracing you,
And I am again kissing you ardently,
Although everything has passed now with merciless time.*

*And so, one more time I've felt the happiness
And the bliss that one love can bring to another,
Once again, I've relived that day of times gone by:
The most beautiful day of my life.
Wasn't it just a dream that I was embracing you?
Was it not a dream?*

Večer

Jest večer, kouří se z lesů,
Červánek stromy prokmitá,
Kytici z vřesu ti nesu, je celá rosou pokryta.
Každý ten nejmenší kalich plá,
Jak by protkán rubíny,
Nesu ti v těch kvítkách malých
Své lásky velké hlubiny.

*It's evening: fog pours from the woods,
The sunset glances through the trees,
I bring you a poise of dew-covered heather.
Each small chalice is shining
As though embroidered with rubies:
I bring you in these tiniest of flowers,
The greatest depths of my love.*

Podzimní nálada

*Juž přišel podzim, sníh a mráz,
Květ se stromů a listí střás
A smutek přines v duši.
Jen upomíněk rychlý let
Mně chvíle štěstí vrací zpět,
Jak jaro mizu hruší.
A vzpomínám na vonný les,
Kde v náruč tvou jsem poprv kles,
Tě zlíbal v stromů stínu.
Ó, drahá, vrat' ty chvíle zas,
Necht' hřejí v srdci v zimní čas
Což nevidíš, jak hynu?
Což nevidíš, jak hynu?*

*The Autumn has already arrived with the snow
and frost,
It shook the blooms and the leaves off the trees
And brought sadness into one's soul.
Only the fast fleet of the memories
Brings back to me the moments of happiness
As the Spring brings the sap to the pear tree.
And I remember the scent-filled forest,
Where I sunk into your arms for the first time,
And kissed you in the shade of the tree.
Oh beloved, give me back those moments again
So that they may warm my heart in the wintertime:
Can't you see I'm perishing?*

Až přejde den

*Až přejde den, až budu spát,
Přijď' na můj hrob se podívat.
Jen podívat a neplač moc,
Jen podívat a neplač moc:
Kdo usnul již, spí každý rád,
A svatá je ta tichá noc
A svatá je ta noc, když přejde den.
Měl jsem tě rád, a ty to víš,
Jak snadnila jsi dnů mi tíž,
Co setřelas mi slzí s řas,
Jen přijď', jen přijď' a řekni:
Ty už spíš, ty už spíš,
Však na mne někde čekáš zas
Však na mne někde čekáš zas,
Vždyť' měls mne rád
Vždyť' měls mne rád.*

*When the day is gone and I shall sleep,
Come to my grave, but do not weep.
Just come and stay, but don't cry much.
The one who sleeps, he sleeps so well,
And holy is that silent night when day is gone.
I loved you so, you know that well,
Oh, how you've eased the burden of my days,
How many tears you've wiped from my eyes;
Just come and tell me: "Now you sleep,
But once again you somewhere wait for me,
Because you loved me, because you loved me so."*

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To the memory of my loving Ukrainian Grandfather, affectionately known as Dido, my great musical inspiration.

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