

Soirée Magdalena Kožená & Friends



SOIRÉE

Ernest Chausson (1855-1899)

- 1 Chanson perpétuelle (1898) (for mezzo-soprano, string quartet & piano) 7. 20

Antonin Dvořák (1841-1904) (arr. Duncan Ward)

Selection of Songs (for mezzo-soprano, flute, clarinet, string quartet & piano)

- 2 I. Má píseň zas mi láskou zní (My song resounds with love) 2. 42
3 II. Širokými rukávy (Wide sleeves) 1. 24
4 III. Mé srdce často (My heart is often in pain) 3. 20
5 IV. Žalo dievča (The Moweress) 1. 53
6 V Když mne stará matka (When my mother taught me) 2. 40
7 VI. Struna naladěna (The strings are tuned) 1. 05
8 VII. Dobrú noc (Good night) 3. 19

Johannes Brahms (1833-1897)

Two Songs, Op. 91 (1884) (for mezzo-soprano, viola & piano)

- 9 Gestillte Sehnsucht 6. 20
10 Geistliches Wiegenlied 5. 05

Igor Stravinsky (1882-1971)

Three Songs from William Shakespeare (1953)

(for mezzo-soprano, flute, clarinet & viola)

- 11 I. Musick to heare 2. 50
12 II. Full fadom five 1. 52
13 III. When Dasies pied 2. 05

Maurice Ravel (1875-1937)

Chansons madécasses (1925-1926)

(for mezzo-soprano, flute, cello & piano)

- 14 I. Nahandove 6. 10
15 II. Aoua 4. 03
16 III. Il est doux 4. 11

Johannes Brahms (arr. Aribert Reimann)

5 Ophelia Songs WoO 22 (1873) (for mezzo-soprano & string quartet)

- 17 I. Wie erkenn' ich dein Treulieb 0. 58
18 II. Sein Leichenhemd weiß wie Schnee zu sehn 0. 30
19 III. Auf Morgen ist Sankt Valentins Tag 0. 57
20 IV. Sie trugen ihn auf der Bahre bloß 1. 05
21 V. Und kommt er nicht mehr zurück? 1. 54

Leoš Janáček (1854-1928)

Říkadla (Nursery Rhymes) (1925) (for mezzo-soprano, clarinet & piano)

22	I. Leze krtek podle meze (The mole creeps)	1. 08
23.	II. Karel do pekla zajel (Karel rode off to hell)	0. 36
24.	III Franta rasůl hrálna basu (Franta Rusal playing bass)	1. 03
25.	IV dělám, dělám kázání (Children, hear my sermon)	1. 06
26.	V. Hó, hó, krávy dó (Ho, ho, off the cows go)	1. 03
27.	VI. Kozabílá hrušky sbírá (The white goat's picking up the pears)	0. 40
28.	VII. Vašek, pašek (Vacek, scallywag)	0. 37
29.	VIII. Frantíku, Frantíku (Frantik, Frantik)	0. 25

Richard Strauss (1864-1949) (for mezzo-soprano, violin & piano)

30	Morgen! (1894)	4. 01
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Total playing time: 73. 24

Magdalena Kožená, mezzo-soprano

Wolfram Brandl, violin

Rahel Rilling, violin

Yulia Deyneka, viola

David Adorjan, cello

Andrew Marriner, clarinet

Kaspar Zehnder, flute

Sir Simon Rattle, piano



Whether or not musicians lead crazy lives is a thorny question, but many of us are so busy that to find a joint evening with friends, type the dates into our mobile phones and then throw together a quick meal at the very last minute already feels like an achievement.

Don't you sometimes long for the days when it was common for people to get together every Sunday, bringing their instruments, and after good food, wine and talk, there would be chamber music just for the sheer pleasure of it? And the alcohol would sometimes make the unplayable more or less possible: or at least it felt so...

Although we seldom had the chance to cook for each other, the relaxed atmosphere of family music was permanently present during these concerts and recording sessions, even though they were completely teetotal! Well nearly, as persuading my colleagues to sing in Czech for the Janáček songs did take a couple of drinks to get off the ground...

I would like to thank my musician friends for sharing these precious moments with me, Duncan Ward for arranging Dvořák's little jewels with such mastery and sensitivity, and finally to PENTATONE for having the courage or craziness to record such offbeat, non-commercial but utterly beguiling repertoire.

The power of song

Why does our species sing? Why do musicians turn to words and then seek out ways to express them? Why are listeners drawn to music joined with words? The reason most of the time has to do with emotions, and strong emotions at that, partial proof of which is to be found in the little-remarked-upon fact that there are no songs in praise of taking out the trash, or at least none anyone remembers. No, the countryside as a place of restoration, religious devotion, loss, warfare, death, the longing for love, love gone bad, fatal love, and from time to time harmonious love comprise the catalogue for why humans lift up their voices in song. In singing we almost always seek to understand intensely human concerns.

If one wanted to raise the stakes a good strategy would be to combine two or more of the above-listed elements, as does French composer Ernest Chausson

(1855-1899) in his setting of the 1879 poem “Nocturne” by Charles Cros (1842-1888) which Chausson renamed *Chanson perpétuelle* (Song Without End). Setting the scene in the first two strophes, Cros commands starlight sky, swaying woods, surrounding wind, and the alluring sound of nightingales on behalf of his female protagonist to “tell him” she is dying from the loss of love. Yet the very nature the protagonist summons is tainted with memories of the beloved’s “strong arms” that once embraced her. The union of time and place is as central to Cros’s verse as it is to Chausson’s music. The trees and stars do not merely witness the woman’s distress, they join in sympathetic vibration, a union Chausson underscores in the first stanza when the young woman laments her beloved’s departure. With the first word of the strophe’s last line, “*important mon cœur désolé*”—*taking* with him my desolate heart—Chausson harnesses music in support of poetry. Having at the start established a reassuring rising and

descending lullaby-like melody, with the third syllable of “*important*” the pattern ends just where it ought to continue, supported by an abrupt harmonic undertow from the piano, a moving display of musical foreshadowing in that the woman soon drowns in the pond by which she and her lover once met. Chausson’s disruptive harmony is like a pebble tossed into still water.

Of the seven songs by Czech composer Antonín Dvořák (1841-1904) performed here, four are from his 1880 *Cigánské melodie* (Gypsy Melodies). “*Žalo dievča, žalo trávu*” (The moweress)” and “*Dobrá noc*” (Good Night) are from the 1886 cycle *V národním tónu* (In Folk Tone), while “*Mé srdce často*” (My heart is often in pain) comes from the 1865 cycle *Cypřiše* (Cypresses). Like Chausson, Dvořák understood the merits of drawing on more than one song archetype. As the title of the opening *Cigánské melodie* makes clear, “*Má píseň zas mi láskou*

zni” (My song resounds with love), Adolf Heyduk’s poem focuses on love and sound as a force that inspires song. To this Heyduk adds loss of homeland. Because the object of love is different in each stanza, Dvořák adopts a modified strophic structure, beginning each of the three strophes similarly before moving in new directions and in so doing directing attention to what once was present yet is no longer.

As Johannes Brahms (1833-1897) reveals in his *Zwei Gesänge* (Two Songs), *Op. 91*, like Dvořák he understands that words and music together add up to something more than one or the other alone. In both songs the addition of the viola to the German art song’s traditional voice-piano combination allows for heightened expressivity, one *that in* “*Gestillte Sehnsucht*” lavishly matches the text’s first line, “*Bathed in evening’s golden glow.*” Notwithstanding Brahms’s affinity for striking melodies and rich

harmonies, in “Gestillte Sehnsucht” it is the sound world that ensues from the collaboration of voice, viola, and piano that commands centre stage. The simultaneous contradiction and confirmation of duple meter also plays a part. While the piano’s left hand affirms the meter, the right’s patterned sixteenth-note rests on successive downbeats followed by five sextuplet sixteenth notes challenge the primacy of duple meter. The viola enters with the piano’s right hand, yet its fluctuating syncopations likewise unsettle the duple pulse. Joining in only in measure 13, the voice reinforces Brahms’s delightful musical ambiguity: while singing that nature serenely rests, the ongoing rhythmic elasticity undermines repose. In a certain sense it is possible to think of rest as the conquest of time, however temporary, yet Brahms’s competing rhythms disclose that is not to be. Enduring rest is found only in death, a bleak message yet one of nineteenth-century Romanticism’s most persistent.

Although not his intension, Brahms’s lyric musings in both Opus 91 songs demonstrate how reality sometimes is more gripping than fiction. Composed twenty years apart (1864 and 1884), Brahms published the two songs in reverse order of composition, yet both were written for his friends the professional singer Amalie Schneeweiss and her husband the virtuoso violinist (and sometime violist) Joseph Joachim for whom Brahms wrote his 1878 Op. 77 Violin Concerto. Brahms composed the first of the two songs when the couple were expecting their first child. By the second song the marriage was in tatters. Even so, Brahms wrote “Gestillte Sehnsucht” hoping they would reunite. (Joachim wrongly believed Amalie of infidelity.) The “longing for rest” expressed in the song thus was directed towards a specific goal, the restoration of the Joachim marriage, a reunion that was not to be.

Human interrelationships likewise lie at the heart of the *Three Songs from William Shakespeare* (1953) by Igor Stravinsky (1882-1971), for mezzo-soprano, flute, clarinet, and viola. In the first there is Shakespeare’s Sonnet 8 which treats musical concord but also music as a metaphor for human harmony. In the second, “Full fathom five thy father lies,” the second stanza of “Ariel’s Song” from *The Tempest*, the subject is one’s response to death. “Spring,” from *Love’s Labour’s Lost*, ponders springtime nature set against the fear of marital fickleness. Interestingly, the last song’s subject parallels much of the compositional motivation and message of Brahms’s “Gestillte Sehnsucht,” namely our inclination to seek solace in nature yet nature’s inability to provide that without human intervention.

While Stravinsky surely agreed with Shakespeare’s insistence in “Musick to heare” that human harmony should match the concord of song, another reason for his

attraction to the text has to do with the fact that the bard’s words provided a well-timed statement of purpose for the musical path Stravinsky began pursuing with these songs. Since he had not composed a song set since the 1919 *Four Russian Songs* one of course wonders why he returned to the medium in 1953. One explanation is that song provided a familiar creative environment while at the same time the composer was striking out on something new: twelve-tone music, a compositional method in the early 1950s invariably associated with Arnold Schoenberg, a composer with whom Stravinsky had never been especially friendly. With Schoenberg’s death in 1951 Stravinsky at last felt free to take up “Schoenberg’s” compositional method. Doing so in “Musick to heare,” Stravinsky sings: “If the true concord of well-tuned sounds, / By unions married, do offend thine ear, / They do but sweetly chide thee.” Updated to 1953, the message is clear: if such music fails at first to please you, keep listening!

Turning to the *Chansons madécasses* (Madagascan Songs) by Maurice Ravel (1875-1937) requires expanding the register of archetypal song subjects given above to include an art-song outlier, colonial oppression, one the composer freely mixes with exoticism and overt eroticism. Published in 1926, the cycle teems with intriguing contradictions, not the least of which is a white European—Ravel’s poet Evariste de Forge de Parny (1753-1814)—assuming the voice of a black Madagascan. Other paradoxes include the twentieth-century Ravel harking back to an eighteenth-century textual source and a sound world ranging from the sparse to sumptuous provided by flute, cello, piano, and female voice. The contradictions extend to the relationship between the three songs, with the first depicting a night-time forest tryst, the second an account of betrayal, enslavement, and bloodshed, the third a return to sensual tenderness as the narrator gazes at women dancing before the setting sun.

Anyone who has not previously heard these songs yet thinks they know Ravel’s musical style and can thus predict what the composer has in store is in for many a delightful surprise. Ever taking his cue from the extremes of Parny’s poetry, Ravel varies between cool detachment and searing immediacy.

Brahms’s five *Ophelia-Lieder*, WoO 22, return us to Shakespeare by way of the German translation of nineteenth-century writers Wilhelm August Schlegel and Ludwig Tieck, specifically of *Hamlet* act four, scene five. Love and loss again constitute the song composer’s musical canvas. Almost in inverse proportion to their extreme short length—altogether they last just over five minutes—is the expressive intensity Brahms condenses into these decidedly aphoristic songs. Like the person who whispers when exceedingly distressed, the conciseness of the songs speaks — or more accurately sings — volumes. Brahms heightens the

idea of concision by adopting a style owing more to folk music than high art. Such a barebones approach goes far in underscoring Ophelia’s innocence yet also, when a character is faced with multiple traumas, disclosing how little it takes to bring on madness.

Finding a song archetype for *Řikadla* (Nursery Rhymes) would be a tall order, for in composing the 1925 work Leoš Janáček (1854-1928) effectively invented a new one, a topsy-turvy world of tuneful whimsy. The eight songs performed here, settings of Bohemian, Moravian, and Ruthenian folktales, make up the original version scored for single singer with clarinet and piano. (A year later Janáček adapted the composition for solo voices and ten instruments while adding more movements.) In the set moles, cows, and goats interact with humans and yet, unlike the real world where people usually dominate, here it is animals who call the tune, oftentimes quite literally:

drums drive goats into a pond, dogs steal sweets, the cello-playing Franta befriends an aged cow, and a white horse bears the unsuspecting Karel off to hell. Within this hyper-enchanted realm the sound of out-of-the-ordinary happenings count for everything, to which Janáček responds with boundless ingenuity. Janáček rhythms likewise are infinitely free. The second song, which depicts Karel’s hell-bound journey is anything but straightforward as the clarinet’s unpredictable patterns of seven-, six-, five-, and then six-note configurations vividly make clear. Above this, the voice must find its way, all the while negotiating the 6/8 time signature with its own rhythms that both conform and go against the meter’s norms. Hell is a destination, but getting there, as least as Janáček sees it, is not as easy as one might think.

Born in Scotland but raised in Germany, poet John Henry Mackay (1864-1933) in his eight-line poem *Morgen!* (Tomorrow!)

brings together three of the representative song types mentioned above: the countryside as a site of renewal, yearning for love, and perhaps — just maybe — even harmonious love. Compressing those topics into a mere fifty-five words, Mackay's verse gains in intensity by virtue of its brevity, a feature Richard Strauss (1864-1949) capitalizes on in his 1894 song setting. It is worth noting that each of the poem's two strophes end with ellipses, an orthographic feature calling attention to the poem's anticipated future. Strauss accentuates the latter by having the voice enter only in measure fourteen yet also starting and ending on notes other than the tonic or keynote. Indeed, the singer's last pitch is the leading tone, a note a half-step below the tonic, one readymade to heighten irresolution. Add to this, the voice never presents the melody in its entirety but instead trades off with the collaborating piano. Downbeat dissonances only gradually yielding to harmonic consonances bolster

the enchantingly unfolding, untethered dreamworld. Using as he does the building blocks of music and words, Strauss tells us that this imagined existence might become reality if it were possible to forever sing.

James Parsons



Ernest Chausson
Chanson Perpétuelle
(text by Charles Cros)

Bois frissonnants, ciel étoilé
Mon bien-aimé s'en est allé
Emportant mon cœur désolé.

Vents, que vos plaintives rumeurs,
Que vos chants, rossignols charmeurs,
Aillent lui dire que je meurs.

Le premier soir qu'il vint ici,
Mon âme fut à sa merci;
De fierté je n'eus plus souci.

Mes regards étaient pleins d'aveux.
Il me prit dans ses bras nerveux
Et me baisa près des cheveux.

J'en eus un grand frémissement.
Et puis, je ne sais plus comment
Il est devenu mon amant.

1

Trembling woods, starry sky
My greatest love has abandoned me
Dragging away my desperate heart.

May the plaintive rustle of the winds
And the fascinating whistle of the
 nightingales
Announce him that I can't survive.

Since the first night he came here,
my soul knelt at his will
My pride no longer worthy.

My eyes couldn't hide my thoughts.
He held me in his nervous arms
and kissed my head close to my hair.

I felt my trembling.
and then, I no longer remember how
he became my lover.

Je lui disais: « Tu m'aimeras
Aussi longtemps que tu pourras. »
Je ne dormais bien qu'en ses bras.

Mais lui, sentant son cœur éteint,
S'en est allé l'autre matin
Sans moi, dans un pays lointain.

Puisque je n'ai plus mon ami,
Je mourrai dans l'étang, parmi
Les fleurs sous le flot endormi.

Sur le bord arrivée, au vent
Je dirai son nom, en rêvant
Que là je l'attendis souvent.

Et comme en un linceul doré,
Dans mes cheveux défaits, au gré
Du vent je m'abandonnerai.

Les bonheurs passés verseront
Leur douce lueur sur mon front,
Et les joncs verts m'enlaceront.

I told him: "You will love me
for as long as you are able."
I would sleep well only in his arms.

But he, realizing that his feeling had changed,
left some mornings ago
to a far-off land, without me.

Since I no longer have my dear,
I shall die in the pond, Falling asleep
under the water, between the flowers.

Pausing on the edge, I will speak
his name to the wind, while dreaming
that I often awaited him there.

And as if in a golden shroud,
with my hair undone, I will let myself go
wherever the wind takes me.

The happy times I have known will shed
their gentle light on my forehead,
and the green reeds will entwine me.

Et mon sein croira, frémissant
Sous l'enlacement caressant,
Subir l'étreinte de l'absent.

Antonín Dvořák (arr. Duncan Ward)
Selection of Songs

Má píseň zas mi láskou zní
(Gypsy songs, op.55, text by Adolf Heyduk)

Má píseň zas mi láskou zní,
když starý den umírá,
a chudý mech kdy na šat svůj
si tajně perle sbírá.

Má píseň v kraj tak toužně zní,
když svetem noha bloudí;
jen rodné pusty dálnou
zpěv volně z ňader proudí.

Má píseň hlučně láskou zní,
když bouře běží plání;

And my breast will believe,
as it trembles caressed and entwined,
that the absent one is embracing me.

My song resounds with love

My song resounds with love
when the old day dies
and the poor moss and its clothes
Secretly collects pearls.

My song resounds with longing
while my feet roam distant lands.
Far from my homeland
my song flows freely from my chest.

My song resounds with love
When storms range upon the plain.

když těším se, že bídy prost
dlí bratr v umírání.

Širokými rukávy
(Gypsy songs, op.55, text by Adolf Heyduk)

Široké rukávy a široké gatě
volnější cigánu nežli dolman v zlatě.
Dolman a to zlato bujná prsa svírá;
pod ním volná píseň násilně umírá.
A kdo raduješ se, tvá kdy píseň v kvěťě,
přej si, aby zašlo zlato v celém světě!

Mé srdce často
(Cypřiše (Cypresses), text by Gustav Pflieger-Moratský)

Mé srdce často v bolesti
Se teskně zadumá,
Ó, že ta láska trnů
A bolestí tolik má?

When I feel joy that my dying brother
Out of poverty remains.

Wide sleeves

Wide sleeves and broad trousers give
The gypsy more freedom than a robe of gold.
The robe of gold constricts the chest
And prevents the voice from sounding free
and happy.
And whoever rejoices with the sound of songs
Can resist the corrupt power of gold!

My heart is often in pain

My heart is often in pain
Feeling depressed,
Oh, love involves so many thorns
And how many agonies it gives?

Ta láska prejde jako sen,
tak krásná, spanilá
A za kratinko upne jen
Se na ní mohyla.

A na mohylu kámen dán,
Nad nímž tam lípa bdí
A na kameni nápis psán:
Zde srdce zvadlé spí!
Zde puklé srdce spí!

Žalo dievča
(In a Folk Mode, Op.73 no.2)

Žalo dievč, žalo trávu
neďaleko Temešváru,
keď nažalo, poviazalo,
na šuhajka zavolalo:
"Šuhaj, šuhaj z druhej strany,
poď mi dvíhaí batoh trávy!"
Nech ti dvíha otec, máti,
nechce-li ťa za mňa dáti.

Love passes like a dream,
So lovely and graceful,
But in a moment all
That is left of it is a grave.

And a stone is placed on the grave,
Over which a linden tree keeps watch
And there is an inscription on the stone:
"Here rests a heart that has withered,
Here rests a broken heart!"

5 **The Moweress**

There was a girl, she mowed the grass
Not too far away from Temesvar,
When the grass was all cut down, she
bound it
And she called out to a brilliant young man:
"Hey lad, you from the other side,
Come help me out with this bale of grass!"
Ask your parents to help you out,
As they hate the idea of you being my wife.

Ešte t'a len kolimbali,
už ťa za mňa slubovali:
ešte si len húsky pásla,
už si v mojom srdci riasla.

Když mne stará matka
(Gypsy songs, op.55, text by Adolf
Heyduk)

Když mne stará matka zpívat, zpívat učívala,
podivno, že často, často slzívala.
A ted' také pláčem snědé líce mučím,
když cigánské děti hrát a zpívat učím!

Struna naladěna
(Gypsy songs, op.55, text by Adolf
Heyduk)

Struna naladěna,
hochu, toč se v kole,

When you were still a child, playing in the
cradle
They already promised you to me:
When you were still herding geese,
The thought of you already grew in my
heart.

6 **When my mother taught me**

When my old mother taught me to sing,
It was strange to see how often she cried.
And now I also weep, and make others weep
when I teach Gypsy children to play and sing!

7 **The strings are tuned**

The strings are tuned,
Young man twirl!

dnes, snad dnes převysoko,
zejtra, zejtra, zejtra zase dole.
Pozejtří u Nilu
za posvátným stolem;
struna již, struna naladěna,
hochu, toč, hochu, toč se kolem!

Today, hopefully today, reach the heights,
Tomorrow, tomorrow, tomorrow down again.
The day after tomorrow,
Beyond the holy Nile;
The taut string is stretched,
Turn, young man, turn and twirl!

Dobrá noc
(In a Folk Mode, Op.73 no.1)

Dobrá noc, má milá, dobrá noc,
nech ti je Pán Boh sám na pomoc.
Dobrá noc, dobre spi,
nech sa ti snívajú milé sny!

Snívaj sa ti sničok, ach snívaj,
keď vstaneš, sničoku veru daj,
že ťa ja milujem,
srdiečko svoje ti darujem.

Good night

Good night, my Darling, good night,
May God watch over you.
Good night, sleep well,
Have sweet dreams!

Have sweet dreams, oh dreamer!
Your dreams will come true when you wake
up,
Because I love you,
And my heart belongs to you.

Johannes Brahms
Two Songs, Op. 91

Gestillte Sehnsucht

(text by Friedrich Rückert)

In gold'nen Abendschein getaucht,
Wie feierlich die Wälder stehn!
In leise Stimmen der Vöglein hauchet
Des Abendwindes leises Weh'n.
Was lispeln die Winde, die Vögelein?
Sie lispeln die Welt in Schlummer ein.

Ihr Wünsche, die ihr stets euch reget
Im Herzen sonder Rast und Ruh!
Du Sehnen, das die Brust beweget,
Wann ruhest du, wann schlummerst du?
Beim Lispeln der Winde, der Vögelein,

Ihr sehnenenden Wünsche, wann schlaft ihr
ein?
Ach, wenn nicht mehr in gold'ne Fernen
Mein Geist auf Traumgefieder eilt,

In evening's golden twilight wreathed,
How solemnly stand the woods aglow!
In softest voices birdling songs are breathed
of evening winds that mildly blow.
What do the winds and little birds whisper?
They lull the world to sleep.

Desires, strong forever raging
In my restless heart so deep!
And you, nostalgia, upsetting our souls,
When will you finally calm down?
By the whispering of the wind and the little
birds?

You yearning desires, when will you fall
asleep?
Ah, when my soul will no longer
dreamily fly through sparkling distances,

Nicht mehr an ewig fernen Sternen
Mit sehndem Blick mein Auge weilt;
Dann lispeln die Winde, die Vögelein
Mit meinem Sehnen mein Leben ein.

No more the farthest star lets gleaming
With longing glances heeds;
Then, the winds and little birds
Will whisper my longing and life away.

10

Geistliches Wiegenlied

(text by Emanuel Geibel, after Lope de Vega)

Die ihr schwebet
Um diese Palmen
In Nacht und Wind,
Ihr heiligen Engel,
Stillet die Wipfel!
Es schlummert mein Kind.

You, who over these palms
Are hovering
In night and wind,
You, holy angels,
Silence the rustle of the leaves
My child is sleeping.

Ihr Palmen von Bethlehem
Im Windesbrausen,
Wie mögt ihr heute
So zornig sausen!
O rauscht nicht also,
Schweiget, neiget
Euch leis' und lind;
Stillet die Wipfel,
Es schlummert mein Kind.

You, palms of Bethlehem,
Hovering in the wind,
How can you wish
with such a strength today!
Calm down, please!
Be silent, bend
Softly and gently!
Silence the rustle of your leaves,
My child is sleeping.

Der Himmelsknabe
Duldet Beschwerde,
Ach, wie so müd er ward
Vom Leid der Erde.
Ach, nun im Schlaf ihm
Leise gesänftigt,
Die Qual zerrinnt,
Stillet die Wipfel,
Es schlummert mein Kind.

The celestial baby
Would suffer from it
He is already exhausted by the
Sorrow of his world
And now that in sleep
His pains
Are gently eased,
Silence the rustle of your leaves,
My child is sleeping.

Grimmige Kälte
Sauset hernieder,
Womit nur deck ich
Des Kindleins Glieder!
O all ihr Engel,
Die ihr geflügelt
Wandelt im Wind,
Stillet die Wipfel,
Es schlummert mein kind.

Bitter cold winds
Blow from above
How can I cover
My son's tender body?
You angels,
Who spread your wings,
Flying through the winds,
Silence the rustle of the leaves,
My child is sleeping.

Igor Stravinsky

Three Songs from Williams Shakespeare

Musick to heare

Musick to heare, why hear'st thou musick sadly,
Sweets with sweets warre not, joy delights in joy:
Why lov'st thou that which thou receav'st not
gladly,
Or else receav'st with pleasure thine annoy?
If the true concord of well-tunèd sounds,
By unions married, do offend thine eare,
They do but sweetly chide thee, who confounds
In singlenesse the parts that thou should'st beare:
Marke how one string, sweet husband to an other,
Strikes each in each by mutuall ordering;
Resembling sire and child, and happy mother,
Who all in one, one pleasing note do sing:
Whose speechlesse song being many, seeming
one,
Sings this to thee: "Thou single wilt prove none."

Full fadom five

Full fathom five thy father lies,
Of his bones are coral made:
Those are pearls that were his eyes,
Nothing of him that doth fade,
But doth suffer a sea-change
Into something rich and strange:
Sea-nymphs hourly ring his knell.
Ding-dong, ding-dong.
Hark! Now I hear them – Ding-dong, bell.

When Dasies pied

When Dasies pied, and violets blue
And cuckoo-buds of yellow hue
And lady-smocks all silver white
Do paint the meadows with delight.
The cuckoo, then on every tree
Mocks married men; for thus sings he,
Cuckoo. Cuckoo, cuckoo: o word of fear,
Unpleasing to a married ear.

When shepherds pipe on oaten straws,
And merry larks are ploughmen's clocks:
When turtles tread, and rooks, and daws,
And maidens bleach their summer smocks:
The cuckoo, then on every tree
Mocks married men; for thus sings he,
Cuckoo. Cuckoo, cuckoo: o word of fear,
Unpleasing to a married ear.

Maurice Ravel

Chansons madécasses

(text by Evariste de Forge de Parny)

Nahandove

Nahandove, ô belle Nahandove!
L'oiseau nocturne a commencé ses cris,
la pleine lune brille sur ma tête,
et la rosée naissante humecte mes cheveux.
Voici l'heure; qui peut t'arrêter,
Nahandove, ô belle Nahandove?

Le lit de feuilles est préparé;
je l'ai parsemé de fleurs et d'herbes
odoriférantes,

Nahandove, oh beautiful Nahandove!
The cry of the night bird has begun,
The full moon's light caresses my head,
And the first dew moistens my hair.
The time has come; who can halt you,
Oh beautiful Nahandove?

The bed of leaves is ready;
I have covered it with flowers and aromatic
herbs,

il est digne de tes charmes,
Nahandove, ô belle Nahandove !

Elle vient. J'ai reconnu la respiration
précipitée que donne une marche rapide;
j'entends le froissement de la pagne qui
l'enveloppe:
c'est elle, c'est Nahandove, la belle
Nahandove !

Ô Reprends haleine, ma jeune amie;
repose-toi sur mes genoux.
Que ton regard est enchanteur,
Que le mouvement de ton sein est vif et
délicieux
sous la main qui le presse! Tu souris,
Nahandove, ô belle Nahandove!

Tes baisers pénètrent jusqu'à l'âme;
tes caresses brûlent tous mes sens:
arrête, ou je vais mourir.
Meurt-on de volupté,
Nahandove, ô belle Nahandove?

It is worthy of your charms,
Oh beautiful Nahandove!

She is coming. I recognized the heavy breath
Caused by a brisk walk;
I can hear the rustle of her skirt:
It is her, it is Nahandove, the beautiful
Nahandove!

Take your breath back, my young love;
Rest on my lap.
How charming is your look,
How lively and delightful is the motion of
your breast
Under the hand that touches it!
You smile, oh beautiful Nahandove!

Your kisses invade my soul;
Your caresses set all my senses on fire:
Stop, if you don't want me to die!
Can anyone die of pleasure,
Oh beautiful Nahandove?

Le plaisir passe comme un éclair;
ta douce haleine s'affaiblit,
tes yeux humides se referment,
ta tête se penche mollement,
et tes transports s'éteignent dans la
langueur.
Jamais tu ne fus si belle,
Nahandove, ô belle Nahandove!

Pleasure makes time run fast;
Your sweet breath slows down,
Your moist eyes close again,
Your head droops gently,
And your passion yields to languor.
Never were you so beautiful,
Oh beautiful Nahandove!

Tu pars, et je vais languir dans les regrets et
les désirs;
je languirai jusqu'au soir;
tu reviendras ce soir,
Nahandove, ô belle Nahandove!

Now you are leaving, and I will languish
amid regrets and desires;
I will languish until sunset;
You will be back this evening,
Oh beautiful Nahandove!

Aoua

Aoua! Aoua! Méfiez-vous des blancs,
habitants du rivage.
Du temps de nos pères,
des blancs descendirent dans cette île;
on leur dit: Voilà des terres;
que vos femmes les cultivent.
Soyez justes, soyez bons,
et devenez nos frères.

Awa! Awa! Do not trust the white men,
shore-dwellers!
In our fathers' time,
White men came to this island.
Here are some lands, they were told,
Let your women work on them.
Be fair, be kind,
And become our brothers.

Les blancs promirent, et cependant
ils firent des retranchements.
Un fort menaçant s'éleva;
le tonnerre fut renfermé
dans des bouches d'airain;
leurs prêtres voulurent nous donner
un Dieu que nous ne connaissons pas;
ils parlèrent enfin
d'obéissance et d'esclavage:
Plutôt la mort!
Le carnage fut long et terrible;
mais, malgré la foudre qu'ils vomissaient,
et qui écrasait des armées entières,
ils furent tous exterminés.
Aoua! Aoua! Méfiez-vous des blancs!

Nous avons vu de nouveaux tyrans,
plus forts et plus nombreux,
planter leur pavillon sur le rivage:
le ciel a combattu pour nous;
il a fait tomber sur eux les pluies,
les tempêtes et les vents empoisonnés.
Ils ne sont plus, et nous vivons libres.
Aoua! Aoua! Méfiez-vous des blancs,
habitants du rivage.

The foreigners promised, and yet
they built entrenchments.
A menacing fortress rose up,
The thunder was enclosed
in bronze mouths;
their priests wanted to give us
a God we do not know;
Finally they spoke
of obedience and slavery.
Even Death would be preferable!
The massacre was long and terrible;
But despite their violence against us,
which destroyed entire armies,
they were all exterminated.
Awa! Awa! Do not trust the white men!

We saw new tyrants,
Stronger and more numerous,
Planting their banners on the shore:
Heaven fought in our name.
It poured heavy rains upon them,
Storms and infected winds.
They are dead, and we live free!
Awa! Awa! Do not trust the white men,
shore-dwellers!

Il est doux

Il est doux de se coucher, durant la chaleur,
sous un arbre touffu, et d'attendre
que le vent du soir amène la fraîcheur.

It is pleasing to lie down in the heat of the
day,
Under a leafy tree, waiting to enjoy the cool
Brought by the evening wind.

Femmes, approchez.
Tandis que je me repose ici
sous un arbre touffu, occupez mon oreille
par vos accents prolongés.
Répétez la chanson de la jeune fille,
lorsque ses doigts tressent la natte,
ou lorsqu'assise auprès du riz,
elle chasse les oiseaux avides.

Women, come forward.
While I rest here
Under a leafy tree, delight my ear
With your soothing voices.
Repeat the song of the young girl
While she braids her hair
Or, while sitting by the rice patch,
Chases the greedy birds away.

Le chant plaît à mon âme.
La danse est pour moi presque aussi douce
qu'un baiser. Que vos pas soient lents;
qu'ils imitent les attitudes du plaisir
et l'abandon de la volupté.

Singing is pleasing to my spirit.
Dancing for me is almost as sweet
As a kiss. Let your steps
imitate the attitudes of pleasure
And surrender to voluptuous happiness.

Le vent du soir se lève;
la lune commence à briller au travers
des arbres de la montagne.
Allez, et préparez le repas.

The evening wind awakens;
The moon begins to caress
The trees of the mountain with its light.
Go, and prepare the dinner.

Johannes Brahms***Ophelia Songs, WoO 22***

(on texts by August Wilhelm Schlegel, after
William Shakespeare's *Hamlet*)

Wie erkenn' ich dein Treulieb

Wie erkenn' ich dein Treulieb
Vor den andern nun?
An den Muschelhut und Stab.
Und den Sandalschuh'n.

How will I know your true love
From others now?
By the mussel-hat and staff.
And the sandal shoes.

Er ist lange tot und hin,
Tot und hin, Fräulein!
Ihm zu Häupten ein Rasen grün,
Ihm zu Fuß ein Stein.

He is long dead and gone,
Dead and gone, Miss!
At his head green grass,
At his feet a stone.

Sein Leichenhemd weiß wie Schnee zu sehn

Sein Leichenhemd weiß wie Schnee zu sehn,
Geziert mit Blumensegen,
Das still betränt zum Grab muß gehn
Von Liebesregen.

18

White his shroud as the mountain snow,
Larded with sweet flowers;
Which bewept to the grave did go
With true-love showers.

Auf morgen ist Sankt Valentins Tag

Auf morgen ist Sankt Valentins Tag,
Wohl an der Zeit noch früh,
Und ich 'ne Maid am Fensterschlag
Will sein eur Valentin.
Er war bereit, tät an sein Kleid,
Tät auf die Kammertür,
Ließ ein die Maid, die als 'ne Maid
Ging nimmermehr herfür.

19

Tomorrow is St. Valentine's Day,
All in the early morning time,
And I, a maid at the window
Will be your Valentine.
He was ready, put on his clothes,
Opened up the chamber door,
Let in the maid, who as a maid
Nevermore departed.

Sie trugen ihn auf der Bahre bloß

Sie trugen ihn auf der Bahre bloß,
Leider, ach leider,
Und manche Trän' fiel in Grabes Schoß --
Ihr müßt singen: "Nunter"
Und ruft ihr ihn "nunter",
Denn traut lieb Fränzel ist all meine Lust.

20

They carried him on a bier,
Alas, oh alas,
And many a tear fell on the grave
You shall sing: "down"
And call him "down",
As my faithful dear Francis is all I want.

Und kommt er nicht mehr zurück?

Und kommt er nicht mehr zurück?
Und kommt er nicht mehr zurück?
Er ist Tot, o weh!
In dein Todesbett geh,
Er kommt ja nimmer zurück.

21

So won't he ever come back?
So won't he ever come back?
He is dead, oh grief!
Go in your deathbed,
He will never return.

Sein Bart war so weiß wie Schnee,
Sein Haupt dem Flachse gleich:
Er ist hin, er ist hin,
Und kein Leid bringt Gewinn:
Gott helf' ihm ins Himmelreich!

His beard was white as snow,
His head looked like a tendon:
He is gone, he is gone,
And grief does not provide anything:
May God help him in heaven!

Leoš Janáček

Říkadla (Nursery Rhymes)

Leze krtek podle meze

Leze krtek podle meze,
vyměřuje louku.
Sysel za ním pytle veze,
že bude mlít mouku.

Karel do pekla zajel

Karel do pekla zajel
na bílém koni, čert ho tam honí.
Nevěděl kudy, koupil si dudy.
Nevěděl ještě, koupil si kleště.
Nevěděl nic, koupil si klíč.

22

The mole creeps

The mole creeps along the hedgerow,
Measuring out the meadow.
The squirrel is behind him with a sack,
Because he's going to grind some flour.

23

Karel rode off to hell

Karel rode off to hell
On a white horse, a devil chasing him.
He didn't know which way to go, so he
bought some bagpipes.
He didn't know yet, so he bought some
pliers.
He didn't know anything, so he bought a
key.

24

Franta rasůl hrál na basu

Franta rasů, hrál na basu,
staré krávé u ocasu.
Stará, kráva byla ráda,
že má Frantu kamaráda.

Dělám, dělám kázání

Dělám, dělám kázání,
čtyři kočky svázaný,
a pátý pes, do pece vlez,
ukrad tam topinku,
běžel s ní po rynku.
Potkala ho kráva,
to byla jeho máma.
Potkal ho bulíček,
to byl ten tatíček,
potkal ho bejček,
to byl ten strejček.
Potkal ho hřebeček,
to byl ten dědeček.
Potkala ho kozička,
to byla jeho babička!

Franta Rasul playing bass

Franta Rasul played the bass-fiddle,
by the old cow's tail.
The old cow was very pleased
To have Franta as a friend.

25

Children, hear my sermon

Children, hear my sermon
Four cats all tied up,
And the fifth, a dog, got into the stove,
There he stole some toast
And ran around the square with it.
He met a cow,
That was his Mummy.
He met a little bull,
That was his Daddy,
He met a calf,
That was his Uncle.
He met a foal,
That was his Grandpa.
He met a Kid,
That was his Grandma!

Hó, hó, krávy dó

Hó, hó, krávy dó,
nesó mlíko pod vodó,
nesó mlíko půl židlíka.
Kde je naše jalová?
U božího kostela.
Kostel se boří,
stodola hoří!
Skoč panenka do vody,
máš tam zlaté korály.
Nač bych já tam skákala,
sukýnky si máchala,
kde bych si je sušila?
U pastýřa v koutku,
na zeleném proutku.

26

Ho, ho, off go the cows

Ho, ho, off go the cows,
Carrying milk down to the water,
Carrying half a ladleful of milk.
One cow has no calf at all,
Hides behind the church spire.
The church is falling down,
The barn is burning!
Jump into the water, dear,
There are some golden corals there for you.
Why should I jump in,
I'd get my fine new skirt splashed,
Where would I dry it?
At the shepherd's over in the corner,
On a green branch.

Kozabílá hrušky sbírá

Koza bílá hrušky sbírá,
strakatá je těse.
Bílá je ponese
zítra do Kolína!

27

The white goat's picking up the pears

A white goat's picking pears,
A spotted one's shaking them down.
The white one, she'll take them
Tomorrow to Kolin.

Vašek, pašek

Vašek, pašek, bubeník,
zahnal kozy za rybník.
Kozy se mu splašily,
do vody mu skočily.

28

Vacek, the scallywag

Vacek, the scallywag,
Drove his goats to the pond.
The goats got away from him
And jumped into the water.

Frantíku, Frantíku

Frantíku, Frantíku,
dobrá kaša na mlíku,
ešče lepší na smetaně,
ale sa ti nedostane!

29

Frantik, Frantik

Frantik, boy, Frantik, boy,
Gruel with milk is all your joy
Even better with cream, I'll bet
But cream's something you will not get!

Richard Strauss**Morgen!**

(Text by John Henry Mackay)

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

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

Tomorrow the sun will rise again,
And on the path that I will take,
We, the happy, will meet again, united by
the rays of sun shining upon this sun-
breathing earth...

And on this wide shore, bathed by the blue
waves,
We will descend quietly and slowly,
Without a word, we'll look each other in
the eye,
and joyful silence will fill our souls...

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Il giardino dei sospiri is a collection of scenes from secular cantatas on tragic love, ranging from Handel's Qual ti riveggio to new editions of works by Leo, Marcello and Gasparini. The tragic heroines of these love stories are interpreted by Czech star mezzo-soprano Magdalena Kožená, who is accompanied by Václav Luks and Collegium 1704.

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