



Alexander TCHEREPNIN

MY FLOWERING STAFF

A CYCLE OF 35 SETTINGS OF POEMS BY SERGEI GORODETSKY

Inna Dukach, soprano
Tatyana Kebuladze, piano
with Paul Whelan, bass
Acmeist Male Choir

FIRST RECORDING

ALEXANDER TCHEREPNIN My Flowering Staff

A Volume of Poems by Sergei Gorodetsky

Set to Music in a Cycle of 36 Songs for Voice and Piano

1	Epigraph (Op. 17, No. 1)	1:10
2 I	O God of days, do not release your violins (Op. 15, No. 3)	1:55
3 II	If only I could hear (Op. 15, No. 4)	1:06
4 III	I contemplated you, O Andromeda	1:44
5 IV	How damned is my beloved life (Op. 15, No. 2)	0:52
6 V	The millstones have cooled (Op. 15, No. 5)	1:09
7 VI	I love the feminine water	1:10
8 VII	Forgive me the enticing mist	1:13
9 VIII	Farewell, night! (Op. 15, No. 6)	1:06
10 IX	The struggle to voice words (Op. 15, No. 1)	1:10
11 X	In agitation, as I touch the morning lyre (Op. 16, No. 2)	1:14
12 XI	I am dreaming of the country (Op. 16, No. 5)	1:00
13 XII	In the wild forest (Op. 17, No. 2)	1:21
14 XIII	My soul is happy to hear	1:24
15 XIV	Some of the songs in my soul	1:37
16 XV	Perhaps life is broken in half (Op. 17, No. 3)	1:32
17 XVI	In the evening quiet hour	3:30
18 XVII	I know only one thing about God (Op. 17, No. 5)	1:26
19 XVIII	Lost souls! (Op. 17, No. 9)	1:51
20 XIX	My endless grief (Op. 16, No. 8)	1:44
21 XX	The happy laughter (Op. 17, No. 8)	1:56
22 XXI	With tormented spirit (Op. 16, No. 4)	2:24
23 XXIIa	(piano solo)	2:01
24 XXIIb	O angry idle voice	1:30
25 XXIII	Improbable sunsets	2:44
26 XXIV	I do not know how to be cruel	1:14
27 XXV	The arrogant silence of evening rivers (Op. 17, No. 7)	1:43
28 XXVI	If you want, take from the universe (Op. 16, No. 6)	1:17

29	XXVII	I beg, I sing, I adjure (Op. 17, No. 6)	1:39
30	XXVIII	For more than ten centuries	1:11
31	XXIX	The flags were waved (Op. 17, No. 4)	1:13
32	XXX	To sit endlessly and weave (Op. 16, No. 3)	3:10
33	XXXII	The solemn dance	1:19
34	XXXIII	Again, I have a desire (Op. 16, No. 7)	1:11
35	XXXV	Melancholia of the winter day	2:09
36	XXXVI	My covenant with the almighty (Op. 16, No. 1)	1:05
37		Epilogue (Op. 17, No. 10)	0:50

Inna Dukach, soprano 11–16 18–22 24–37

Paul Whelan, bass 17

Acmeist Male Choir 17

Tatyana Kebuladze, piano

TT 57:55

FIRST COMPLETE RECORDING

THE REDISCOVERY OF A MAJOR RUSSIAN SONG-CYCLE

by Benjamin Folkman

Цветущий Посох ('My Flowering Stick' or 'My Flowering Staff') is a collection of lyrics written by the poet Sergei Mitrofanovich Gorodetsky (1884–1967) in 1912 and 1913 and published in 1914. It consists of 37 untitled eight-line poems (numbered I to XXXVII), prefaced by a dedicatory verse epigraph printed in italics, also eight lines in length. The young St Petersburg-born composer Alexander Tcherepnin (1899–1977) turned to this collection around 1920 in Tiflis (Tbilisi), Georgia (having fled revolutionary turmoil in his native city), and his engagement with Цветущий Посох can only be termed an obsession; for he became embroiled in what was evidently a plan to set its full text to music, in a voluminous cycle of 38 songs. This pre-occupation seems all the more remarkable because Tcherepnin had previously given scant attention to the composition of songs, devoting his energies largely to solo piano music.

Gorodetsky had begun his career earlier in the century as a symbolist, with ties to Alexander Blok and Vyacheslav Ivanov, but soon began aiming at more simplicity of expression, forming the Guild of Poets in 1912 with Nikolai Gumilov, which advocated a style termed Acmeism. Acmeists rejected 'intimation through symbols,' seeking instead 'direct expression through images,' with an emphasis on Apollonian balance. Major poets in this movement included Osip Mandelstam and Anna Akhmatova. Цветущий Посох was one of Gorodetsky's first Acmeist efforts, as the extreme pithiness and brevity of its lyrics indicate.

Tcherepnin neatly penned the manuscripts of many of these songs into a green-covered notebook, which now resides in the Tcherepnin archive at the Sacher

¹ Mark Willhardt and Alan Michael Parker (eds.), *Who's Who in Twentieth Century World Poetry*, Routledge, Abingdon, 2001, p. 8.



Sergei Gorodetsky

Foundation in Basel. That collection is prefaced by the following dedication to the composer's mother, whom he described as a 'soprano domestica':

To my adored Mammotchka

so that this little gift may serve her as a reminder of a great musical vocation.

And that these songs may be performed to the accompaniment of her loving son

Alexander

November 8/21, 1921

The songs reflect Tcherepnin's adolescent penchant for producing compositions as private personal gifts to loved ones. When conferring such birthday or holiday pieces, Tcherepnin as a boy had not always given an actual score, but sometimes presented a hand-drawn 'voucher', to be redeemed when the recipient chose. As late as his 24th year, the composer gave his mother just such a voucher for Цветущий Посох No. XXXVI, which is reproduced here:



*Voucher for 1 one Romance
to No. 36 (Flowering Staff)*

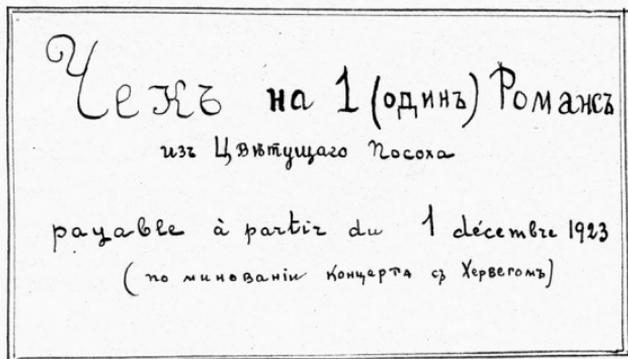
Payment will be made right after the collaboration

Place of sealed collection

*(stamp-seal) Director/manager Touschkan
Local Committee Alexander*

22 July-4 August 1923

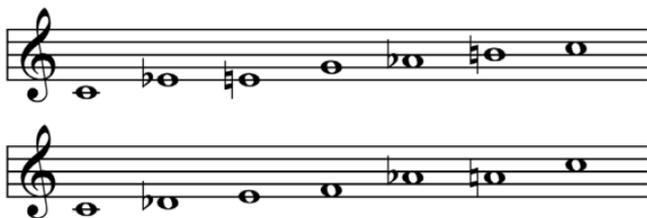
Redemption of the voucher is attested to by 'signatures' on the right of Director Manager Touschkan (the family dog) and Alexander on behalf of the Local Committee. Nor does this absurd coupon represent a mere momentary reversion to a puerile game, for at least one additional voucher for a song from the collection exists: a simpler instrument that does not evoke canine authority. Psychobiographical speculation about a link between the composer's relationship with his mother – which he himself confessed could be uncomfortably close – and the phallic nature of the 'flowering staff' as an image of creativity may not be wholly unwarranted.



*'Voucher for 1 (one) romance from Flowering Staff
payable à partir du 1 décembre 1923
(right after the concert with Herbeg)'*

Tcherepnin occasionally introduced minor changes in Gorodetsky's wording – as is often the case with composers of songs. His precocious mastery as a miniaturist and his devotion to a stripped-down modernism purged of Romantic excess (much akin to Acmeism) are reflected in the absence, in these works, of the word- and phrase-repetitions

that had been a frequent feature of the traditional art-song. The young composer was already involved here in the experimentation with synthetic scale-formation that would mark so much of his later work; specifically, he employs a six-step scale built on the regular alternation of intervals of semitones and minor thirds (half-step and step-and-a-half), as in Ex. 1. These alternating six-step-scale intervals recur frequently, endowing the music with a characteristic piquancy that serves as a unifying element in the cycle.



Ex. 1

By the end of 1921, Tcherepnin had all but completed this ambitious traversal of *My Flowering Staff*: the epigraph and the first 30 poems had been set, as well as Nos. 32, 33, 35 and 36. But at this point he put the project aside, never to return to the three remaining lyrics (indeed, he would never undertake another vocal collection remotely like this one). He had now been living in Paris for almost half a year, and there, through the good offices of his celebrated piano-teacher at the Conservatoire, Isidor Philipp, he found publishers for many of the hundreds of scores he had brought with him to the west, some of which dated back to his early teens (the overwhelming majority of these were for solo piano). Within three or four years Tcherepnin would have more than twenty publications to his credit, including piano suites with as many as ten movements, a piano concerto and a sonata for violin and piano. His Opp. 1 to 11 were all compositions for solo piano, but the firm of Heugel, which acquired Tcherepnin's

soon-to-be famous *Bagatelles*, Op. 5,² also took an interest in the Gorodetsky songs. Hardly surprisingly, the publishers chose not to issue the 35 completed settings as an integral cycle: a vocal piece more than a hundred pages long by an unknown composer would have made for a dauntingly expensive volume. The real surprise is that they accepted so generous a selection of them: about two-thirds of the series, issuing them in three separate folios containing 24 songs. Clearly Heugel deemed the songs commercially viable, even given the additional expense of having the texts translated from Russian into French.

It is not known how and by whom the 24 published songs were winnowed from the original 35, although it seems likely that Philipp, identified as editor of the printed versions, played a role in selecting, grouping and ordering them, and may even have made those decisions with minimal input from the composer. (One peculiarity of the set was eliminated: the appearance, in the midst of a soprano cycle, of a song for bass: the church evocation of No. XVI [17], which also called for an optional male chorus.) The songs reached print – with the texts appearing only in French translation – as Tcherepnin's *Six Mélodies*, Op. 15 (1925), *Huit Mélodies*, Op. 16 (1925), and *Haltes*, Op. 17 (1926).

Nothing about these publications indicated that the three albums were related to one another; indeed, the three covers were very different in visual styles, as one would expect from disparate publications. The six songs of Op. 15 were drawn from the first nine poems in Gorodetsky's collection. Op. 16 begins at the opposite end of the poetic cycle with No. XXXVI, but then continues where Op. 15 had left off, with poems X [11] and XI [12]. (It was published with a dedication to Mary Garden, a friend of Tcherepnin's future first wife.)

In marked contrast to the generic designations of Opp. 15 and 16, the French title *Haltes* ('Stopovers') of Op. 17 is suggestive of a song-cycle. The name *Haltes*, apparently prompted by the dedicatory lines 'My flowering staff! / I travel with you,' was the conceit of the translator, Léon Guillot de Saix, who saw the ten poems as points of rest

² The *Bagatelles* rapidly gained currency as teaching pieces, with pirated editions appearing in England and the United States within a few years.

on a journey, and added subtitles to the songs – ‘Woodland Stopover’ (*Halte forestière* [21]), ‘Dreaming Stopover’ (*Halte rêveuse* [16]), ‘War Stopover’ (*Halte guerrière*) [31]) – that emphasise this interpretation. For the composer’s own recording as pianist of Op. 17 with the legendary tenor Nicolai Gedda, made in December 1973 for EMI, the booklet materials preserved the title *Haltes* over the printed French text sung by Gedda, but also included Gorodetsky’s original Russian poems prefaced by the title Цветущий Посох, along with an English version entitled *My Flowering Stick*. In effect, Op. 17 was thus identified as a mini-version of the Gorodetsky cycle and, indeed, not only opens with the poet’s dedicatory epigraph, but also closes with an epilogue that bids farewell to the collection by using a text that does not appear in Цветущий Посох: an unidentified six-line lyric that may not even be by Gorodetsky.

These publications must be judged a success: although the songs never became repertory standards, neither did they fall into complete obscurity, thanks to a small but persistent public demand that kept many of them available. Still, Heugel’s method of presenting the group – as two unrelated song miscellanies and one modest cycle – was unfortunate in one respect: it had the effect of concealing the full scope and ambition of Tcherepnin’s project from the public, and even from experts: nowhere in the Tcherepnin literature is the original grandiose intent so much as hinted at. Indeed, the composer’s first Russian-language biographer, Lyudmila Korabelnikova, did not realise that the Gorodetsky poems all came from a single book, and misidentified a group of reprint collections as Tcherepnin’s sources.

Another problem with Heugel’s publications, more widely recognised, is that the full aesthetic power of art-songs – their genre being marked by the most intimate interaction of music and text – is inevitably compromised when they are performed in translation. It was this latter problem that first suggested to the Tcherepnin Society that the Gorodetsky songs required some attention – an impulse that led to this recording. That they could be performed only in French served, in one sense, to keep them partly hidden from listeners; and the Society deemed it imperative to reveal them by making the original Russian lyrics available. The composer had, in fact, made some attempts

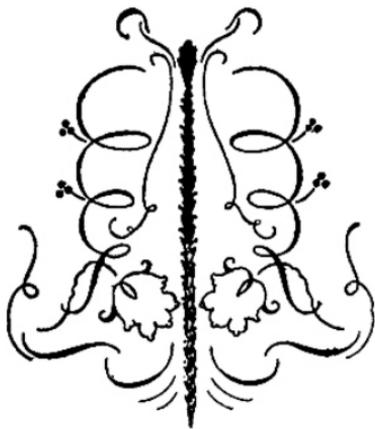
to address this language issue. Added Russian text – entered either by the composer or under his supervision – appears on printed copies of Opp. 15 and 17 in the library of the Tcherepnin Society (typewritten in the former case, by pen in the latter). Unfortunately, it was not possible to use these scores as the basis for accurate Russian restorations of the songs because they contained too many ambiguities; nor was such an annotated version of Op. 16 available. (No record exists of any performances using these modified scores.)

A different approach was required, and so in 2014 the Tcherepnin Society sent Tatyana Kebuladze (soon to join the Tcherepnin Society Board of Directors) to the Paul Sacher Stiftung in Basel to consult the composer's original manuscripts, with the aim of preparing bilingual study scores of Opp. 15, 16 and 17. In Basel, though, Ms Kebuladze discovered something quite unexpected: that along with the original Russian manuscripts of the 24 published songs, another dozen Gorodetsky songs of comparable quality existed that had never been issued. It became evident that what had seemed like three essentially unrelated collections were all fragments drawn from a single major effort far larger than anyone had suspected: a virtually complete setting of Gorodetsky's *Цветущий Посох*. As a result, the Tcherepnin Society's modest project of text restoration proved only the first phase of a considerably more ambitious initiative: the unearthing of one of the most extensive song-cycles in musical history.

The initial stage, the production of Russian-text versions of the published songs, was completed in the autumn of 2014. In performances accompanied by Tatyana Kebuladze, Op. 15 (with the mezzo-soprano Gulnara Mitzanova) and Op. 17 (with the soprano Elmira Mitzanova, Gulnara's sister) received what were apparently their Russian-language premieres, on 10 January 2015 at Montclair State University in New Jersey. On 15 November 2015, the soprano Inna Dukach, again with Tatyana Kebuladze, gave the Russian-language premiere of Op. 16 at a concert at Rutgers University in New Jersey, during which they also performed the songs of Opp. 15 and 17. They then recorded the published songs in June 2017.

By that time, phase two of the project was already underway: the Sacher Foundation had provided photocopies of the unpublished songs as performance materials. Study of these pieces alongside those published indicated that Tcherepnin originally designed

all the songs to be heard in the order Gorodetsky had numbered them; in truth, it does not appear that any presentation reflecting the very different published order would increase their effectiveness. Inna Dukach and Tatyana Kebuladze gave eleven of the twelve unpublished songs their first performances on 2 December 2018 at the New York Russian Orthodox Church Baker Mansion in New York. The performance of No. XVI by the bass Paul Whelan, again with Tatyana Kebuladze, on this recording is its world premiere; indeed, it is only on this album that it has become possible to hear Alexander Tcherepnin's cycle Цветущий Посох as he initially conceived it: a series that captures Gorodetsky's poetic work virtually whole. This 36-song cycle is concluded by the same epilogue that Tcherepnin used for the much abbreviated cycle presented in Op. 17. Although the text of this song does not appear in Gorodetsky's collection, as has been seen, its theme is similar to that of the poet's closing No. XXXVII (not set by Tcherepnin).



*The Flowering Staff:
an illustration that appeared in early editions of Gorodetsky's Collection*

This unusual collection reveals a totally unexpected dimension of a composer primarily celebrated for an output highlighted by four symphonies, six piano concertos, *concertante* works for cello and for harmonica (!), two operas, numerous ballets and a remarkable body of piano music.

Although the songs of *My Flowering Staff* do not ‘tell a story’, recurring poetic preoccupations (natural phenomena and aberrations thereof, eroticism as a blessed trap, a world that provokes a yearning for transcendence) give the cycle an indefinable yet unmistakable coherence. A gradual evolution of the poet’s world-view also occurs. Inward questions of potency dominate the early stages of the poet’s journey. Beginning in poem No. XI the poet engages with varied landscapes in the natural world. After a central prayer in the cycle (No. XVI), the poet emerges on a new, more sophisticated footing with both interior thoughts and external surroundings, the social order later comes into view, and the journey closes by soaring aloft. Tcherepnin’s flair for polished miniature expression that marks so many sparkling piano pieces in collections such as his *Bagatelles*, Op. 5, *Pièces sans titres*, Op. 7, and *Feuilles libres*, Op. 10, is fully evident in these songs, which make their points with economy and a total lack of pretension.

In the compact ‘Epigraph’ [1], a doughty striding rhythm and stark vocal declamation establish the attribute of the flowering staff as a walking stick sturdy enough to support the poet’s arduous spiritual trek in the songs to come. Very different is the gentle melodising of No. I [2], underpinned by sinuous ‘violin’ thirds and voluptuous textural echoes of Late Romanticism that embody the too easily embraceable emotional deceptions of the world. Without disrupting the flowing lyricism of No. II [3], Tcherepnin dramatises the closing confession of helplessness with a remarkable modulation in the keyboard coda. No. III [4] is best understood as a chastened reaction, whereas the vaulting melody of No. IV [5] celebrates ecstasy in damnation, its urgent vocal leaps enhanced by underlying keyboard figuration built upon the six-step-scale intervals that will appear so often in the cycle. Indeed, Nos. V [6] and VI [7] are designed as a six-step pair: the latter (Ex. 2(b)) not only inverts interval structure of the former (Ex. 2 (a))

As the cycle continues its progress in XII [13] through natural landscapes, winter chill prompts keyboard mischief and the ensuing snow flurries portrayed in rapid six-step-scale figurations amplify the delight, bringing a final vocal jest. The steadily falling harmonies of a flowing melody (which rides upon purling figuration often built upon six-step-scale intervals) emphasise the strangeness of the alienating swamp imagery of XIII [14]. Dolour in the first half of XIV [15] veers off into increasingly realised promises of consolation. Taking stock of life in XV [16] commences in stark sobriety but the hint of future light unleashes sonorities that grow steadily more sensuous, with the voice mounting to a conclusion of quiet rapture.

XVI [17] brings the reader/listener into a church for a confession: a hymn-like melody designed to sound familiar presented in celestial keyboard colours is taken up by the poet's *basso* voice, later supported by choral chants of the utmost simplicity. The whirling thoughts of XVII [18] present themselves in a startlingly disjunct succession of musical phrases, with declamatory vocal outbursts gradually subsiding into tender song. In XVIII [19], a rapt, undulating soprano melody floats upon slow, wide-spaced piano arpeggiation suggesting forest-glade darkness. This quietude is disrupted by a fretful vocal outburst that is goaded to hysteria by jittery keyboard figuration, before the song closes with yearning for the original darkness. XIX [20] is a quiet, eloquent paean to grief that grows impassioned in both its central portion and the keyboard coda that follows the final hushed vocal utterance. In XX [21], colours of moonlight and waters emerge from a nocturnal landscape beneath song that begins in conversational informality but is prompted to lilting eloquence by the unexpected appearance of rapid keyboard descents. XXI [22] is an exercise in sepulchral grimness and agitated terror, this atmosphere carried forward in a huge piano prelude to No. XXII [23] that alternates menacing dissonant rumbles with frenzied virtuoso outbursts; whereupon a song of oracular grievance (XXIIb [24]) radiates an angered conviction of wrong, underlined by a piano coda of swelling intensity. This angst persists into XXIII [25], daringly rhythmless and built almost entirely on a single chord, with a jagged four-note piano theme first rebuked by a smoother vocal version. After the song rises to a climax, however, the

voice takes up the original version in hushed resignation. The mood lightens in XXIV [26] thanks in considerable measure to ultra-simple keyboard textures in support of a melody at once plaintive and guileless. Sparse accompaniment also marks the opening of XXV [27], which seems to begin as valedictory and reprises the characteristic six-step-scale intervals of V and VI; but after piano scales erupt, the vocal line soars, bringing a triumphant concluding piano postlude.

Six-step-scale intervals persist into the vocal melody of XXVI [28], here portraying the hollowing-out of human experience to leave a residue of haunting eroticism. Through vocal melody of oratorical severity (not, however, without a passing central hint of charm), XXVII [29] suggests a growing desperation in confronting the implacable, 'like Russia immense and dreadful'. A sonorous descending four-note proclamation dominates No. XXVIII [30], further emphasising the intractability at the core of Russian nationhood. This attitude is immediately mocked as risible, however, in XXIX [31] by a jolly, chirping *gopak*. The only result is a pyrrhic victory in the ceaseless trill of the grim No. XXX [32], mourned in a lengthy keyboard epilogue.

Although XXXII [33], with its sermon-like melody of growing fervour, nominally retreats to concentration on the core of the artist's experience, one banality it explodes is a residue of the previous songs: the myth of a 'glorious national future'. Fervour persists, waxing to grandeur in XXXIII [34] as the poet's perspective grows from the personal to the global, the increasingly magisterial vocal proclamations culminating in a final high B flat.

Chill winter luminosity of a four-note keyboard figure in No. XXXV [35] leads to flickers of seemingly unrelated thoughts from singer and keyboard, as gradually evocations of a deathbed atmosphere swell to horror. By contrast, peaceful reconciliation is the watchword of XXXVI [36], with artlessly conversational melody unfolding over a simple, transparent accompaniment. In the Epilogue [37], luminous keyboard figuration and a vaulting vocal line ascend ever higher into 'bright paradise'.

Benjamin Folkman is President of The Tcherepnin Society and the author-compiler of the unpublished 600-page Alexander Tcherepnin: A Compendium, which combines biographical and analytical studies with copious commentary from the composer's own published and unpublished writings.

Russian-American soprano **Inna Dukach** has been praised as ‘a fine actress’ (*Opera News*), ‘stunning’ (*BBC Music Magazine*), ‘exceptionally sensitive’ (MusicWeb International.com) and ‘golden-toned’ (*Opera News*), with ‘a spell binding pianissimo’ (MusicOMH.com), ‘considerable power’ (*Opera News*), ‘appealing emotional vulnerability’ (*NY Sun*) and ‘warm corners to a voice that moved smoothly up and down the staff and was enlisted in the service of the acting’ (*The New York Times*). In 2018 she made her Metropolitan Opera debut in the title role of *Madama Butterfly*, and in 2010 she made her debut with the Royal Opera House, Covent Garden, as Musetta in *La bohème* (a performance that can be seen on an Opus Arte DVD).

Internationally, Inna Dukach has performed leading roles with the Netherlands Radio Philharmonic Orchestra at the Concertgebouw in Amsterdam, Israeli Opera, Savonlinna Opera Festival, Opéra Lyra Ottawa, Opera de Oviedo, Theater Pforzheim, Opera Hong Kong, Croatian National Opera and Kaohsiung Symphony Orchestra. Regionally in the USA, she has appeared with many companies, including the New York City Opera, San Diego Opera, the American Symphony Orchestra at Alice Tully Hall, Opera Colorado, Florentine Opera, Kentucky Opera, Hawaii Opera Theatre, Anchorage Opera, Opera Omaha, Arizona Opera, Orlando Opera, Portland Symphony, Hartford Symphony and Rochester Philharmonic. Her most frequently performed roles include Cio-Cio San in *Madama Butterfly*, Mimì in *La bohème*, Tatiana in *Eugene Onegin*, Violetta in *La traviata*, Amelia in *Simon Boccanegra*, Antonia/Giulietta in *Les contes d’Hoffman*, Rosalinde in *Die Fledermaus*, Nedda in *Pagliacci*, Contessa in *Le nozze di Figaro*, Donna Anna in *Don Giovanni*, Liù in *Turandot* and Marguerite in *Faust*.

Known also for her interpretations of Russian art-song, Inna Dukach has appeared with the Russian Chamber Arts Society, and she has presented a recital of Pushkin in song in New York City, Boston and Washington, D.C.

Born in Moscow, Inna Dukach was raised in New York, earning an undergraduate degree in Psychology from Smith College in Massachusetts, and her Masters in Vocal Performance at Mannes College of Music in New York. In 2003 she was a New England regional finalist in the Metropolitan Opera National Council Auditions and went on to win the Dutka Arts Foundation Competition in 2004. After winning the 2005 Liederkranz Competition, she joined



the roster of New York City Opera and sang Mimì in *La bohème* there for two consecutive seasons in 2006 and 2007.

This album marks her recording debut.

A native of Kyiv, Ukraine, the pianist **Tatyana Kebuladze** studied with Tamia Kozlova, and graduated from the Glière State Music College in her home town, the alma mater of Vladimir Horowitz. Arriving in America in 1998, she continued her studies at Montclair State University in New Jersey, graduating with honours and winning the School of the Arts Talent Award. She then continued earning a Master of Music degree at Rutgers University in New Jersey, where she now serves on the piano faculty. For four years, she was the accompanist for the New Jersey Children's Choir, performing throughout the United States and Canada. She has also performed as guest artist with the New Jersey Chamber Music Society.



Her appearances as a soloist and accompanist have included concerts at the Kosciuszko Foundation, Carnegie Weill Recital Hall, 92nd Street Y and St Bartholomew's Church in New York, a lecture-recital at Columbia University Teachers' College, also in New York, the New Jersey Performing Art Center and the Cathedral Basilica of the Sacred Heart in Newark, New Jersey. She was a guest pianist at the Niagara Falls International Summer Festival, Ontario, in 2000. More recently, she presented a piano master-class and evening recital at Agder University in Kristiansand, Norway.

In 2014 Tatyana Kebuladze received a grant from The Tcherepnin Society to conduct research at the Paul Sacher Stiftung Archiv und Forschungszentrum für die Musik des 20. und 21. Jahrhunderts, Basel, and in 2018 she joined the Tcherepnin Society Board of Directors, where she serves as Artist Laureate. In March of that year she was awarded the prestigious Genia Robinor Pedagogy Teaching Excellence Award presented by the Piano Teachers Society of America in the Weill Recital Hall at Carnegie Hall, New York. Later that spring she accepted an invitation from the Conservatorio Giuseppe Verdi in Milan to give a lecture and demonstration on different approaches to teaching secondary piano.

Paul Whelan was born in New Zealand and studied at the Wellington Conservatoire and the Royal Northern College of Music, where he won several prestigious prizes and scholarships. In 1993 he won the Lieder Prize in the Cardiff Singer of the World Competition, and since then he has enjoyed an illustrious career, performing with many of the world's leading opera companies, orchestras and conductors. Career highlights include the roles of Ned Keene (*Peter Grimes*) and Schaunard (*La bohème*) at the Metropolitan Opera and Royal Opera House and Potap in Tchaikovsky's *The Enchantress* with Valery Gergiev. He also sang in the world premieres of Stuart MacRae's *The Assassin Tree* and Dominique Legendre's *Bird of Night*. Other highlights have included the role of Gremin (*Eugene Onegin*) with the Lyric Opera of Kansas City and that of Hagen in selections from *Götterdämmerung* with the Jacksonville Symphony, the title role in *Don Giovanni* at the Sydney Opera House, New Zealand Opera and Lithuanian Opera and performances of *Messiah* at the Kremlin, Royal Albert Hall and the Berlin Philharmonie. The conductors with whom he has worked include Richard Hickox, Yehudi Menuhin, Kent Nagano and Sir Simon Rattle. He has given recitals in the Wigmore Hall and Purcell Room in London, St David's Hall in Cardiff and at the Théâtre du Châtelet in Paris.



His recordings include Britten's *A Midsummer Night's Dream* with the London Symphony Orchestra under Sir Colin Davis (then Philips and now re-released on Decca) and Kurt Weill's *Der Silbersee* under Markus Stenz (BMG). For Chandos he has recorded Edgar Bainton's *English Idyll* (with the BBC Philharmonic under Martyn Brabbins) and Howells' *By the Waters of Babylon*, for Hyperion *Fra Giacomo* by the Scottish composer Cecil Coles (with the BBC Scottish Symphony under Martyn Brabbins) and for Naxos Stravinsky's *Le rossignol* (with the Philharmonia Orchestra under Robert Craft). In 2013 Virgin-Erato released a DVD of Monteverdi's *L'Incoronazione di Poppea*, conducted by Emmanuelle Haim and filmed at the Opéra de Lille, and Atoll Records in New Zealand brought out a recording of *The Prodigal Son*, a chamber opera by Michael F. Williams.

Text and Translations

1 Эпиграф

Посох мой цветущий,
Друг печальных дней,
Вдаль на свет ведущий
Вечных звезд верней!

Ты омочен в росах,
Ты привык к труду.
Мой цветущий посох!
Я с тобой иду.

2 I

Господи дней, удержи Свои скрипки,
В мире встревоженном глуше рыдай!
Разум мой сознанный, очерк мой зыбкий
На расщепленье во тьму не отдай

Все ль совершу, что во мне Ты затеял.
Я-ль утаю хоть песчинку бремени?
Только чтоб вихорь до срока не взвезал
Тесный и милый, земной этот сон.

3 II

Если б я мог девственным слыхивал
слухом,

Оком нестертым круги озирал,
Ясным младенчески голубем-духом
Тьму зачинаний Твоих облетал,-

Громов сильнее и молний светлее
Знаки Твои были б радостны мне.
Но ведь былинки осенней слабее
Чуткий предел мой, истлевший в огне.

Epigraph

My flowering staff,
Friend of my sad days,
Leading me to the distant light,
More faithful than the eternal stars!

You are damp with dew.
You get used to hard work,
My flowering staff!
I travel with you.

O God of days, do not release your violins,
To sob more hollowly in a disturbed world!
Do not allow the darkness to split my
conscious mind from my unsteady image!

Will I accomplish all you intended for me?
Will I evade even a speck of the burdens?
I wish only that the vortex may not
prematurely disperse
This narrow and dear earth dream.

If only I could hear with my virgin ear,
And see with my open eyes,
And fly like an infantile dove-spirit
All over the multitude of your undertaking,

Louder than thunder, brighter than lightning
Your signs would then gladden me.
But now, alas, weaker than an autumnal blade
of grass,
You see my clear limitations, reduced to ash.

4 III

Я созерцал тебя, туманность Андромеды, –
Продолговатый свет вокруг первоядра,
И мира дальнего зачатая игра
Была вещанием неведомой победы.

Творящей радости восторг в себе тая,
Затейливости Божьей ответ в сумрак сея,
Меня учила ты вольней и веселее
Носить подвижные оковы бытия

5 IV

Как жизнь любимая проклята,
Какое горькое вино
Мне в чаше кованного злата
Рукой прекрасною дано!

Но пью, не ведая соблазна:
Ужели зверь небытия
Протянет лапой безобразной
Мне ковш медового питья?

6 V

Хлеб перемолоть, жернова остыли,
И мельник тихо дремлет у дверей.
И ангелы ржаные в даль уплыли
Небесных, огнедышашщих морей.

Оплакавши истерзанные зерна
И всходы новые благословив,
Учусь я жизни, кротко и упорно,
У матерей смиренно-мудрых, нив.

I contemplated you, O Andromeda nebula, –
The oblong light around the first nucleus,
The conceived game from a far-distant world
Was an omen of mysterious victory.

Through begetting the delight of creative joy
And pulverising the reflection of God's
ingenuity,
You taught me to bear gaily and in freedom
The mobile fetters of existence.

How damned is my beloved life!
How bitter is the wine
In the forged golden cup
Given to me by a beautiful hand!

But I drink unaware of the temptation:
That it is the beast of nonexistence
Who would offer me a ladle of honeyed drink
With his ugly paw?

The millstones have cooled; they cannot grind
the bread,
And the miller is dozing quietly at the doors.
And the rye angels swam far away
To the distance of skyfire's spitting seas.

Mourning over the mutilated grains
And blessing the new shoots,
I learn meekly and steadily from life
And from humbly wise mothers – fields of grain.

7 VI

Люблю я женственную воду,
 Огонь, как юноша, живой,
 Камней надменную породу
 И землю с нежною травой

Люблю ра згул пространства мрачный,
 И звездных вихрей торжество,
 Но воздух наш, земной, прозрачный
 Люблю я более всего.

8 VII

Прости, пленительная влага
 И первоздания туман!
 В прозрачном ветре больше блага
 Для сотворенных к жизни стран,

Изсякла свято кровь рожденья,
 И мудро стынет пыл утроб,
 И в стройной плоти воплощенья
 Достиг косматый зверь чащоб

9 VIII

Ночь, прощай! Я день свой встретил,
 Тьму родную разлюбил.
 Что узнал в ее ответе,
 Ей в молчанье возвратил.

Пусть хранит, пускай колышет
 Волны злого ведовства.
 Воздух ясен. Дух мой дышет.
 Просветляются слова.

I love the feminine water,
 And fire, lively like a young man,
 I love the arrogance of rocks
 And the soil bearing humble grass

I love the sombre raging of space,
 And the triumph of stars' vortices,
 But our transparent terrestrial air
 I love most of all.

Forgive me the enticing mist
 Of the world's beginning!
 Were that wind transparent it would confer
 a far larger blessing
 Upon countries created to live,

As the holy blood of birth dries up,
 The fervour of the womb wisely cools,
 And the shaggy beast reaches the thicket
 In the slender flesh of incarnation.

Farewell, night! I have met my day.
 I love no more my native darkness.
 What I learned from her answer
 In darkness, I silently returned.

Let her keep and stir up
 The waves of wicked knowledge.
 The air is clear. My spirit is breathing.
 My words are becoming lucid.

IX

Невыразимых слов движение
 Дыхание стесняет мне.
 Я жизни чувствую волнение
 И в бледной мертвенно весне.

Налет неуловимой ночи,
 Двух зорь таинственная страсть
 Мне двуединый плен пророчит,
 А музыке и девам – власть.

X

В волнении, до утренней коснувшись лиры,
 Я небывалый слышу и смятенный звук:
 Как будто ближе бог, и туже божий лук,
 И менее мои вздыманья в песню сиры.

Как будто, окружен крылатыми друзьями,
 Невидимо влекущими лететь вольней,
 Я после долгих молчаливо- косных дней
 Безплотных струн безплотными достиг
 перстами.

XI

Мне стали сниться страны, земли,
 Дор-ги, дали и пути,
 Меня желание объемлет
 В уединение уйти.

Услышать птиц, увидеть снова,
 Как зори утра хороши.
 И властью радостного слова
 Творить чудесное в тиши.

The struggle to voice words for inexpressible
 thoughts
 Constricts my breath.
 I feel life's agitation
 Even in the fatal pale spring.

The thin veneer of an elusive night,
 The mysterious passion of dawn and sunset
 Prophecies to me – a double captivity,
 Yet to music and maidens it prophesies power.

In agitation, as I touch the morning lyre,
 I hear a fantastic and disturbing sound:
 As if God were closer and his bow were bent
 tighter,
 And as if my elevations to song were less solitary.

As if surrounded by winged friends,
 Who invisibly drew me to fly more freely,
 After long, quietly stagnated days,
 I reached the intangible strings with my
 intangible fingers.

I am dreaming of the country, lands,
 Roads, and faraway places.
 I am filled with the desire
 To go into seclusion.

To hear the birds, to see again
 How dawns are beautiful,
 And to create marvels amid the quietude
 With the power of a happy word.

13 XII

В диком лесу на валун вековой
Сел, отмахнув пелену снеговую.
Полнится лес стокательной молвой,
Из снега дея весну огневою.

Падают пышные хлопья с ветвей,
Лезет на свет молодой можжевельник.
Всяких людских зачинатель затей,
В диком лесу я сижу, как бездельник.

14 XIII

Из болота зеленого, топкого
Слышать голос тоскующий гада
Крупноглазого, нежного, робкого,
Человечья душа моя рада.

Есть в безвыходном этом смирении
Память истины дальней и тайной,
Как в девическом сладостном пении
Светлокозой красавицы Аино.

15 XIV

Какие то песни в душе отзвучали,
И с чем то проститься настала пора,
Как будто окончилась в жизни игра,
И слышится шелест вечерней печали

Она незнакома, закутана в облак,
Но крылья ее, как у вешней зари.
Я тихо ей молвил: иди, говори,
Прекрасен и странен твой вкрадчивый
облик.

In the wild forest, after brushing off a sheet
of snow,
I sit on an ancient boulder.
A multitude of sounds fills the forest,
Preparing, beneath the snow, the flaming spring.

Fluffy snowflakes fall from the branches,
A young juniper is sprouting toward the light.
And I, the creator of many human deeds,
I am sitting in the wild forest.

My soul is happy to hear,
As it wafts from the green and boggy swamp,
The grieving voice of a tender reptile
With huge eyes.

In this desperate resignation
There is memory of truth, ancient and distant,
As in the honeyed singing
Of the beautiful, light-braided Aino.

Some of the songs in my soul ceased
resounding
The time has come to bid them goodbye,
As if the game in life were over,
And one could hear the rustle of evening sorrow.

She is unfamiliar, wrapped in a cloud,
But her wings are like those of early dawn.
I quietly told her: 'Go, speak!
Your ingratiating manner is beautiful'

16 XV

Должно быть, жизнь переломилась,
И пол-пути уж пройдено,
Все то, что было, с тем, что снилось,
Соединилось в одно.

Но словно отблеск предраассветный
На вешних маковках ракист,
Какой-то свет, едва заметный,
На жизни будущей лежит.

17 XVI

В вечерний тихий час
Прости меня, мой Боже,
Как всех несчастных нас,
Деливших с девой ложе.

Есть Сын Единый Твой
И Мать Его Мария...
Но льстивой речью змея
Отравлен путь земной.

18 XVII

Про Бога знаю я одно,
Что Он – синеглазый.
И разве мне меньше дано,
Чем дарят экстазы?

Я людям поверил в одном,
Что сердце их – роза –
И разве не краше мой дом,
Чем в чарах наркоза?

Perhaps life is broken in half.
And half the journey has already passed.
Everything that happened and everything
I dreamt
Are united as one.

But like a gleam before dawn
On the springtime buds of shrubs,
Some barely noticeable light
Is thrown onto the future life.

In the evening quiet hour
Forgive me, my God,
Like all of us wretches
Who shared a couch with a maiden.

There is only your unique Son
And His mother Maria.
But Earth's journey is poisoned
By flattering serpent's speech.

I know only one thing about God:
That He is blue-eyed.
Am I really given less
Than is given by ecstasies?

I trust people in one thing:
That their heart is a rose.
Isn't it true that my house is really better
Than the charms of narcosis?

19 XVIII

Заблудившиеся души!
Вы мне радостны, как лес,
Где, чем путанней и глуше,
Тем смелее ждешь чудес.

И быть может, в вас плутая,
Я затем ау кричу,
Что опять, как в ночи мая,
Заблудиться сам хочу.

20 XIX

Неизбывное горе моё,
Неизбежное сердца страданье
Запятнали давно бытиё
Голубого, как сон, мирозданья.

Ничего отвратить не могу.
Но от миролюбви отречения
Ни в огни, ни в полярном снегу
Никакие не вырвут мученья.

21 XX

Счастливый смех над лунною водою...
Благословенны слитые уста!
Прекрасны вы, неведомые двое,
Земная нерушима красота

В мученьях духа, с песней одинокой,
Я мимо прохожу и, слыша счастья смех,
Молюсь земле, ее луне высокой,
Молюсь, как в детстве, всем, всему, о всех

Lost souls!
I like you, as I like the forest.
The more tangled and overgrown it is,
The more miracles one expects.

And, maybe if, wandering among you,
I am yelling 'Halloo',
It is because again, as on May nights,
I myself want to be lost.

My endless grief,
Inevitable suffering of the heart
Long ago stained the existence
Of a blue dreamlike universe,

I cannot prevent anything,
But no matter how I suffer,
I will never cease to love this world
Neither in flame nor in polar snow.

The happy laughter over the moonlight water...
Blessed be your merging lips!
You are beautiful, you two strangers.
The beauty of our earth is indestructible.

With tormented spirit, and with lonely song,
I pass by and hear the laugh of happiness,
I pray to the earth, to her moon high above.
I pray, as in my childhood, to everybody, to
everything, and for everybody.

24 XXI

Серое море шумит заунывно.
Сколько видений во мраке летит!
Кто там затихнул с рукою призывной,
Кто там недвижно на туче стоит?

Дальше, о, дальше седое виденье!
Шепот осенний и так нестерпим,
Сердцу и так нестерпимо мученье,
Быть, как преступник надменный, немым.

24 XXII

Несмолкающей тревоги
Голос праздный, голос злой!
Что смущаешь мой убогий
Человеческий покой?

Иль тебе отгула мало
В огнедышащих мирах,
Что грохочут пляской алой
Над землей, почившей в снах?

25 XXIII

Невероятные закаты
Меня замучили тоской:
Чей на земле я, и какой –
Благословенный иль проклятый?

Людей люблю, люблю природу,
Но в них единства не найду
И оттого, как змей в аду,
Зываю к огненному своду.

The grey sea makes a mournful noise.
So many phantoms are flying in the darkness!
Who among them fell silent with an inviting
arm?
Who is standing still on the cloud?

Go further, further away, grey-haired phantom!
The autumn's whispering is unbearable enough.
And for the heart, the torment is already
unbearable
Of being like a wicked criminal, numb.

O angry idle voice
Of unceasing anxiety!
Why do you disturb
My miserable human peace?

Don't you have enough freedom
In fire-breathing worlds
That rumble in a scarlet dance
Beyond a sleeping Earth rapt in dreams?

Improbable sunsets
Tormented me with melancholy:
Who am I on Earth, and of what kind –
Blessed or damned?

I love people, I love nature,
But I could not find unity in them.
And that's why, like a serpent in hell,
I appeal to the fiery vault.

26 XXIV

Я быть жестоким не умею,
Но с тем, кто ласков, смерть дружит.
Вот жизнь моя меня кружит,
И вьюсь я, вьюсь, подобно змею.

И уж забыл я, что улыбка,
И что жестокость на земле,
И не страшит меня ошибка,
Взлетая к свету, сгинуть в мгле.

27 XXV

Вечерних рек надменное молчанье
И напряженный лик седой луны
Сулят мне скорое с земли изгнание,
Мгновенности иной чужие сны

Но с матерью несносно разлучатся
В тревожный час раздумья, в полпути.
Я буду вещей тьме сопротивляться,
Я буду дальше по земле идти.

28 XXVI

Если хочешь, возьми у вселенной,
Как у Иова, всё, что имеет:
Пусть душа, как и плоть, станет тленной,
Смеркнет солнце, поэт онемее.

Только ласку оставь – этим живы
В темноте, в немоте, во мгновение –
Алых уст вековое огниво,
Под рукой девьих персей биенье.

I do not know how to be cruel,
But those who are tender are befriended
by Death.

That's how my life keeps going in circles,
And I am twisting like a snake.

And I forgot about both that smile,
And that cruelty we know on earth,
And I'm not scared by the error
Of flying up and vanishing in haze.

The arrogant silence of evening rivers
And the tense face of a grey-haired moon
Promise my swift exile from the earth –
Alien dreams from different moments.

But it is unbearable to be separated from your
mother

Midway through the disturbed hour
of a thoughtful mood.

I will resist the prophetic darkness,
I will go further on earth.

If you want, take from the universe,
As from Job, everything that it has.
Let the soul, like the flesh, become mortal.
Let the sun grow dark, let the poet become numb.

Keep only the caress, since in the darkness,
In the numbness, in the moment,
Only the caress gives life to the eternal flame
of scarlet lips
And to the pulsation of maiden's fingers
under my arm.

29 XXVII

Я молю, я пою, я клянусь,
Но безмолвствуешь Ты, Ты не дышешь,
И, быть может, меня Ты не слышишь,
Как наш спутник приливов волну.

Что же делать мне с царством Твоим,
Словно Русь, необъятным и страшным?
Разрушать? Или кинуться к брашнам
И упасть с хороводом хмельным?

30 XXVIII

Меж молотом и наковальной
Мы уж десятый век живем!
Полувоскреснем, приумрем –
Судьбины не было печальной.

Восток все ближе, все упорней,
А запад бьет все тяжелей.
Россия, казнь преодолей,
Иль стань земли мечтою горней!

31 XXIX

Знамена взвевали, и в бой,
Сыны несчастий, мы помчались.
Сражались мы, но с кем сражались, –
С врагом людским, или судьбой?

Одолеваем мы врага,
Хоть будь он многоглавым змеем.
Но пред судьбой своей немеем,
Как наши мертвые снега.

I beg, I sing, I adjure.
But you are silent. You don't breathe.
It could be that you do not hear me.
As our satellite does not hear the waves
of the tide.

What can I do with your kingdom,
Which is, like Russia, immense and dreadful?
Should I destroy it? Or rush to the Brahmins
And fall down in intoxicated round dance?

For more than ten centuries
We have lived between the hammer
and the anvil!
Half-resurrected, half-dead –
There was no more grievous fate.

The East nears and grows more persistent,
And the West knocks more and more heavily.
Russia, surmount the torture,
Or become the Earth's celestial dream!

The flags were waved,
And we, sons of disaster, rushed in at full
speed.
We were fighting, but with whom?
With a human enemy or with fate?

We conquer our enemy,
Even if it is a multiheaded serpent.
But like our dead snows,
We are numb before fate.

82 XXX

Так, без конца, сидеть и прясть
То шерсть снегов, то зелень вёсен,
То старым смерть, то юным страсть –
Такой удел, как стыд, несносен.

Не верю в Парок я седых!
Одна у каждой жизни Парка:
Я сам ползу во мхах земных
Иль в звездах загораюсь ярко.

83 XXXI

Торжественная пляска будней,
Пустынных дней позорный ряд
Безумных женщин безразудней
Мне о прекрасном говорят.

Я в каждом жесте, в каждой маске
Убитых пошлостью людей
Читаю призрачные сказки
О красоте грядущих дней.

84 XXXII

Мне опять захотелось губить,
Алый девичий цвет принимать,
К хмелю новому в пьянь приникать
В тихом воздухе вихря испить.

Тишину к небесам на поля
Отогнать от земли навсегда:
Пусть мерцает любая звезда
Но земля не звезда, а земля!

To sit endlessly and weave
Either wool of snows or green of springs,
Either death for the elderly or passion
for the youth,
This destiny is unbearable like shame.

I do not believe in grey-haired Fates!
Every life has its own singular fate.
I myself may crawl in earthly mosses
Or may glow brightly in the stars.

The solemn dance of prosaic existence,
Brings a shameful succession of deserted days
That are more reckless than mad women.
All of it purports to tell me about Beauty.

In every gesture, in every mask
Of people slaughtered by banality
I read illusory tales
About the beauty of future days.

Again, I have a desire to fall ruinously in love.
To accept the scarlet maiden's colour.
To press myself against new intoxication,
To drink a storm in the quiet air.

To push the quietness away
From the earth to the fields and to the sky –
forever.
Let any star twinkle,
But the earth is not a star. It is the earth!

85 XXXV

Меланхолия зимнего дня,
Белоснежных пушинок слетанье
Овевает чудесно меня,
Как больного в бреду умиранье.

Ни забот, ни тоски, ни кручин...
Только ласки звенящих снежинок
И чуть слышная мысль: ты один,
Ты окончил с судьбой поединок.

86 XXXVI

У меня завет с Владыкой не мудрёный:
Быть всегда, как Он,- не уставать творить.
Хорошо мне было в мир придти зелёный,
Хорошо с землёю плодородной жить.

Может быть на звёздах, в темноте стоокой.
Есть еще какой-нибудь иной завет,
Но пока я в людях, до исхода срока,
Не хочу иного. Здесь иного нет.

87 Эпилог

Душу твою
Я понесу
В светлом раю усыплений.
Будет она
Светом полна
В мире надзвездных видений.

Melancholia of the winter day,
The white snowflakes flying together
Fan me marvellously
As dying fans a sick person.

There is no more anxiety, depression, or
anguish...
Only the caresses of ringing snowflakes
And the barely audible thought: 'You are alone,
You have finished the duel with Fate.'

My covenant with the almighty is not
complicated:
To be always like Him – to create tirelessly.
It was good to come into this green world.
It is good to live in this fertile land.

Maybe there is another covenant
For those in the stars, in the hundred-eyes'
darkness.
But as long as I am among people, before the
end of my time,
I want nothing else. There is nothing else here.

Epilogue
I will carry your soul
Into the bright paradise
of dreams.
It will be full of light
In the world of mirages
beyond the stars.

English translations by Dina Dukach



Recorded on 21–23 June 2017, 29 December 2018 and 4 January 2019
in the Gurari Studios at The National Opera Center, New York City
Producer-engineer: Jeremy Gerard

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