

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart (1756–1791) is one of the most influential and prolific composers of his time; his music transcends time to this day. Mozart’s musical gifts displayed themselves at an early age as he learned a few music pieces from his sister’s piano book called *Nannerl’s Piano Book* at the age of four and wrote his first composition at the age of five. In his career, Mozart composed operas, symphonies, and concertos, but he devoted most of his time to writing operas. The text of “**Das Veilchen**” (**The Violet**) was written by Johann Wolfgang von Goethe (1749–1832), a German poet, in 1771. In this piece, Goethe tells the story of a violet growing in a field unseen, until it sees a young girl running through the field contently. The flower begins to hope that the young girl will pick it, and therefore wishes that there was time for it to be the most beautiful flower of all. However, the girl knew not of the flower and stepped on it. The flower died, yet still oozed gratefulness. The flower is a metaphor for a young man whose feelings are trampled on, but in the end, he remains true to his feelings. Mozart expresses the different events in this song with changes in the music, such as the piano imitating the young girl singing and the sudden change into G minor when the violet is soon to be trampled on.

Ein Veilchen auf der Wiese stand,
Gebückt in sich und unbekannt;
Es war ein herzigs Veilchen.

Da kam eine junge Schäferin
Mit leichtem Schritt und muntrem Sinn
Daher, daher, die Wiese her, und sang.

Ach! denkt das Veilchen, wär ich nur
Die schönste Blume der Natur,
Ach, nur ein kleines Weilchen,
Bis mich das Liebchen abgepflückt
Und an dem Busen matt gedrückt!
Ach nur, ach nur ein Viertelstündchen lang!

Ach! aber ach! das Mädchen kam
Und nicht in Acht das Veilchen nahm,
Ertrat das arme Veilchen.
Es sank und starb und freut' sich noch:
Und sterb' ich denn, so sterb' ich doch
Durch sie, durch sie,
Zu ihren Füßen doch.

(Text by Johann Wolfgang von Goethe)

A violet stood upon the lea,
Hunched o’er in anonymity;
So amiable a violet!

Along there came a young shepherdess
Light paced, full of contentedness
Along, along, the lea, and sang her song.

Ah! thinks the violet, “were I just
The fairest flower in the dust
For just a little while yet,
Until that darling seizes me
And to her bosom squeezes me!
For just, for just a quarter hour long!

Ah! And alas! There came the maid
And no heed to the violet paid,
Crushed the poor little violet,
It sank and died, yet filled with pride:
And though I die, I shall have died
Through her, through her,
And at her feet have died.

(Translation by Richard Stokes)

Enrique Granados (1867–1916) was a classical Spanish composer and pianist, who inspired a sense of nationalism among fellow Spaniards in the 19th century. At a young age, he went to Barcelona to study piano, and soon after continued his studies in Paris. He premiered his first suite for piano called *Goyescas* in 1911, which became his most famous work. Granados wrote chamber music, piano music, and zarzuelas, which is a Spanish genre that utilizes spoken dialogue and arias, similar to operas. “**El majo discreto**” (**My Discreet Sweetheart**) consists of a light-hearted melody which delicately bounces in the accompaniment. In this piece, a woman is addressing her loved one being unattractive. She combats this stating that he is an honest man who keeps her secrets and that makes him a handsome man.

Dicen que mi majo es feo.
Es posible que sí que lo sea,
que amor es deseo que ciega y marea.
Ha tiempo que sé que quien ama no ve.

Mas si no es mi majo un hombre
que por lindo descuelle y asombre,
en cambio es discreto y guarda un secreto
que yo posé en él sabiendo que es fiel.

¿Cuál es el secreto
que el majo guardó?
Sería indiscreto contarlo yo.
No poco trabajo costara saber
secretos de un majo con una mujer.
Nació en Lavapiés.
¡Eh, ¡eh! ¡Es un majo, un majo es!
(Text by Fernando Periquet)

Some say that my beloved is homely.
It is possible that he may be,
For love is desire which blinds and dizzies.
For long have I known that loving is not seeing.

But if my beloved is not a man
Whose beauty turns heads and astonishes,
Then he is discreet and the keeper of a secret
That I entrusted to him knowing that he is true.

What could this secret be
That my beloved is safeguarding?
It would be indiscreet for me to reveal it.
It is no small feat to learn
The secrets between a man and a woman.
He was born in Lavapiés.
Uh-huh! He is handsome, handsome is he!
(Translation by Pamela Narbona Jerez)

Giovanni Battista Pergolesi (1710–1736) was an Italian comic opera composer, who composed various dexterous pieces which set a high standard for opera buffa in the 18th century. His pieces were noted for being innovative in the Baroque era by numerous writers in his time. His pieces stood out in the Baroque era for their bold harmonies, complex layers, and expressive tunes, making them feel fresh and original to audiences of his time. Pergolesi gained most of his fame from his intermezzo, *La serva padrona* (*The Maid Turned Mistress*). He intended the intermezzo to be light-hearted, however, it quickly became a popular work of art that changed the world of opera. This piece features a maidservant named Serpina who is very headstrong about marrying her master, Uberto, and changing her status from maid to mistress. “**Stizzoso, mio stizzoso**” (**Irascible, My Irascible**) is one of the arias derived from the famous intermezzo. Throughout the aria, Serpina convinces her master that he needs her and that she knows what is best for him, for she has been by his side her whole life. In the final stages of the opera, Uberto, her master, agrees to marry Serpina.

Stizzoso, mio stizzoso,
Voi fate il borioso,
Ma nò, ma non vi può giovare;

Bisogna al mio divieto
star cheto, cheto,
E non parlare,
Zitt! ... Zitt!...
Serpina vuol così.

Cred'io che m'intendete, si,
che m'intendete, si,
Dacchè mi conoscete
son molti e molti di.

(Text by Gennaro Federico)

Irascible, my irascible
you behave with arrogance,
but no! It won't help your position.

You must keep to my prohibitions
and keep silent,
and not talk,
Shut up!... shut up!...
These are Serpina's commands.

Now I think you have understood,
Yes, you have captured the message,
Because you have known me
For a long time.

(Translation by Mario Giuseppe Genesi)

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart was an Austrian composer and widely considered the greatest composer in the history of Western European music. Mozart composed in all musical genres during his time. His composition style demonstrates a strong command of musical form, blending straightforward text with structures that align with his musical vision. In 1787, Mozart composed **“Als Luise die Briefe...” (When Luise Received the Letter...)**, to a poem written by Gabriele von Baumberg (1768–1839), a friend of Mozart. In this piece, Luise is burning the letters received from her unfaithful lover. A simple melodic line is complemented by the piano, which moves in harmony with the singer’s vocal line. The composer also uses the piano to evoke a vivid range of emotions that Luise is experiencing, employing 32nd notes to imitate the flickering of flames.

Johannes Brahms (1833–1897) was a German composer, conductor, and pianist of the mid-Romantic period. Brahms is known as the successor of Beethoven and Schubert in association with chamber music, large orchestral works, piano pieces and songs, and polyphonic choral music based in the Renaissance and Baroque style. Franz Kugler (1808–1858) was a poet, art historian, and head of the Prussian Government Department of Art. Brahms originally discovered the lyrics for “Ständchen” as a poem in Kugler's *Skizzenbuch*, a collection of poetry and music with illustrations by Kugler. In **“Ständchen” (Serenade)**, a woman thinks about her crush in a dream while she naps in the garden. Brahms uses the piano to support the text by mimicking the instruments mentioned in the lyrics. The use of eighth notes in the melody reflects the growing emotions in the girl’s dream as she swoons over her crush.

The career of Spanish composer Manuel de Falla (1876–1946) flourished when he moved to Paris in 1907 and met French Impressionist composers such as Ravel and Debussy. With this exposure he combined French and Spanish compositional techniques with the nature of Spanish folk song. He also created a set of traditional Spanish songs arranged for soprano and piano in 1914 called *Siete canciones populares* (Seven Spanish Folksong). The last piece of the cycle is **“Polo”** which originated from Andalusia in Spain and was written by an unknown poet. He uses the piano to create fierce flamenco rhythms that add both complexity and impact to the music. In this piece, a woman cannot confess her love for someone, leading her to curse both love and the person who caused this pain.

Als Luise die Briefe...

Erzeugt von heißer Phantasie,
In einer schwärmerischen Stunde
Zur Welt gebrachte, geht zu Grunde,
Ihr Kinder der Melancholie!

Ihr danket Flammen euer Sein,
Ich geb' euch nun den Flammen wieder,
Und all' die schwärmerischen Lieder,
Denn ach! er sang nicht mir allein.

Ihr brennet nun, und bald, ihr Lieben,
Ist keine Spur von euch mehr hier.
Doch ach! der Mann, der euch geschrieben,
Brennt lange noch vielleicht in mir.

(Text by Gabriele von Baumberg)

When Luise Received the Letter

Generated by ardent fantasy;
in a rapturous hour
brought into this world - Perish,
you children of melancholy!

You owe the flames your existence,
so I restore you now to the fire,
with all your rapturous songs.
For alas! he sang them not to me alone.

I burn you now, and soon, you love-letters,
there will be no trace of you here.
Yet alas! the man himself, who wrote you,
may still perhaps burn long in me.

(Translation by Emily Ezust from lieder.net)

Ständchen

Der Mond steht über dem Berge,
So recht für verliebte Leut;
Im Garten rieselt ein Brunnen,
Sonst Stille weit und breit.

Neben der Mauer, im Schatten,
Da stehn der Studenten drei
Mit Flöt' und Geig' und Zither,
Und singen und spielen dabei.

Die Klänge schleichen der Schönsten
Sacht in den Traum hinein,
Sie schaut den blonden Geliebten
Und lispelt: „Vergiß nicht mein!“
(Text by Franz Kugler)

Polo

Ay! Guardo una pena en mi pecho.
que a nadie se la diré.
¡Malhaya el amor, malhaya.
y quien me lo dió a entender! Ay!
(Text by anonymous)

Serenade

The moon shines over the mountain,
Just right for the people in love;
A fountain purls in the garden –
Otherwise silence far and wide.

By the wall in the shadows,
Three students stand
With flute and fiddle and zither,
And sing and play.

The sound steals softly into the dreams
Of the loveliest of girls,
She sees her fair-headed lover
And whispers “Remember me.”
(Translation by Richard Strokes)

Polo

Ay! I have an ache in my heart
of which I can tell no one.
A curse on love, and a curse
on the one who made me feel it! Ay!
(Translation by Richard Strokes)

George Gershwin (1898–1937) was an influential American composer, pianist, and conductor. Starting as a “song plugger” (a pianist who played and promoted new songs) in New York’s Tin Pan Alley, he became renowned for his Broadway shows and later as a leading composer of concert music. Born to Russian immigrant parents, Gershwin’s early life was marked by frequent moves, reflecting his father’s entrepreneurial spirit. By age 30, Gershwin was celebrated for both his Broadway hits and classical compositions. “**Summertime**” is an aria from the opera *Porgy and Bess*. The song, with its evocative and lullaby-like melody, reflects the deep yearning for a better life amid the struggles of the characters. Set in the context of the opera’s storyline, it offers a poignant and soulful glimpse into the hopes and dreams of the characters as they envision a more promising future. Gershwin’s masterful blend of jazz and classical elements creates a timeless piece that continues to resonate with audiences.

Christoph Willibald Gluck (1714–1787) was a Bohemian-Austrian composer known for his influential role in opera during the late 18th century. Renowned for reforming opera by simplifying complex plots and focusing on expressive music that enhanced the drama, Gluck shifted away from the rigid conventions of Metastasian opera seria, helping to shape the genre. Gluck’s “**O del mio dolce ardor,**” (**Oh, My Sweet Ardor**) is an aria from the opera *Paride ed Elena*. In this poignant piece, the character Elena expresses deep sorrow and longing as she reflects on her passionate love for Paris. The aria captures the emotional intensity and inner conflict of Elena as she grapples with her feelings of love and separation. Gluck’s composition masterfully blends lyrical beauty with dramatic expression, highlighting his commitment to emotional depth and clarity in operatic music.

O del mio dolce ardor bramato oggetto,
L'aura che tu respiri, alfin respiro.
O vunque il guardo io giro,
Le tue vaghe sembianze amore in me dipinge:
Il mio pensier si finge le più liete speranze;
E nel desio che così m'empie il petto
Cerco te, chiamo te, spero e sospiro.
(Text by Raniero de'Calzabigi)

Oh, desired object of my sweet ardor,
The air which you breathe, at last I breathe.
Wherever I turn my glance
Your lovely features paint love for me:
My thoughts imagine the most happy hopes,
And in the longing which fills my bosom
I seek you, I call you, I hope, and I sigh.
(Translation by Paul Hindemith)

Oscar Hammerstein II (1895–1960) was an American lyricist, librettist, producer, and publisher. Richard Rogers (1902–1979) was an American composer, who showed great promise for the piano in the early stages of his life and collaborated with Hammerstein II on many popular musicals during the 1930s. “**Stepsisters’ Lament**” was composed for the musical *Cinderella*, which premiered on March 31, 1957, on a television broadcast by CBS. This song was originally a duet for Cinderella’s two stepsisters. They begin to sing while watching Cinderella—whom they don’t recognize—dance with the prince. Filled with jealousy, they start commenting on her appearance. They also express their frustration, wondering why the prince doesn’t prefer someone like them. The rise and fall of the vocal line musically portray the stepsister’s growing frustration and jealousy.

William Grant Still (1895–1978) was an American composer and arranger born in Woodville, Mississippi. Raised by his mother in Little Rock, Arkansas, after his father's death, Still studied violin and sang in his church choir. He composed nearly 200 classical works and made significant contributions to theater, radio, film, and television, breaking barriers along the way. His song “**Grief**,” set to a moving text by poet LeRoy V. Brant (1890–1969), is a powerful expression of sorrow and loss. Through its haunting melody and deeply evocative lyrics, Still captures both personal and collective experiences of mourning. The song reflects Still’s unique ability to translate complex emotions into music, blending beauty with profound emotional depth. “Grief” is a testament to his gift for conveying the raw human experience of sadness and longing.

Harry T. Burleigh (1866–1949) was an American singer, composer, arranger, and music editor. Born in Erie, Pennsylvania, he studied various instruments and voice before winning a scholarship to the National Conservatory of Music in New York in 1892. At the Conservatory, he worked closely with Victor Herbert and Antonín Dvořák, serving as Dvořák’s copyist and librarian. Burleigh’s performance of plantation songs and spirituals, learned from his grandfather, influenced Dvořák’s work, including the iconic *Symphony No. 9*. “**My Lord, What a Mornin’**,” arranged by Harry T. Burleigh, is a poignant spiritual that reflects themes of hope and divine deliverance. Burleigh infuses this piece with a profound sense of spiritual longing and celebration. The song embraces the hopeful anticipation of a heavenly morning, brought to life through its soulful melody and lush harmonies. His arrangement beautifully reflects the heart of African American spirituals, merging deep emotional resonance with a stirring message of faith and redemption.

Margaret Bonds (1912–1972) was an American composer and one of the first African American composers to gain recognition in the United States. She was born in Chicago, Illinois, and began her musical studies with her mother. While attending Northwestern University and the Juilliard School of Music, she became a close friend, student, and creative collaborator of

Florence B. Price. Bonds' composition, "**The Negro Speaks of Rivers,**" reflects her strong sense of cultural identity using spiritual materials, jazz harmonies, and social themes, set to a poem originally written by Langston Hughes (1901–1967). This piece personifies rivers like the Nile, Euphrates, and Mississippi, which have witnessed the unfolding of history, including the history of African American people, around the world.

H. Leslie Adams (b.1932) is from Cleveland, Ohio and first began his studies of piano, music theory, and voice at a young age with his teachers Dorothy Smith and Mina Eichenbaum. Throughout his lifetime, Adams has been deeply influenced by African American jazz and folk songs. He has also drawn inspiration from African American poets of the Harlem Renaissance and the Civil Rights era, incorporating many of their works into his compositions, including those of James Weldon Johnson (1871–1938). "**Sence You Went Away**" emphasizes the swing elements of jazz while maintaining lyrical expression throughout the piece. It conveys the emotional experience of losing a loved one, friend, or love itself, and how everything that was once felt beautiful now seems changed.

Florence B. Price (1913–1972) was a female African American composer, pianist, organist, and music teacher. She is the first African American woman to receive widespread recognition as a symphonic composer in the 1930s. Price began her musical training with her mother from an early age, and then went on to study composition at the New England Conservatory in Boston, MA. "**Resignation**" expresses the hardship and sadness of a person struggling to get by in society. Their only hope for relief from this pain lies in the Lord's word and their faith in Heaven. The person's pain and anguish are conveyed through the grace notes, ornamentation, and the yearning intervals between two notes in the melody.

Stephen Schwartz (b. 1948) is an American composer and lyricist who is most famous for his musical works, *Pippin*, *Wicked*, and *Godspell*. Schwartz studied piano and composition at the Juilliard School of Music in high school. He provided lyrics for *Pocahontas*, *The Prince of Egypt*, *Enchanted*, and *The Hunchback of Notre Dame*. He has won four Grammy Awards, three Academy Awards, and six Tony awards currently in his career. *The Prince of Egypt* tells the biblical story of Moses, an Egyptian prince with Hebrew roots, who embarks on a journey to free his people from bondage. "**River Lullaby**" unveils the feelings of Moses's mother as she sees her son off for the last time and wishes that he will be safe as he drifts down the river. Moses's sister, Miriam, watches as he drifts down the river, praying that he will come back soon to deliver their people from the hands of the Egyptians. This song evokes deep emotions and is encouraged to be looked upon through a spiritual lens.

Cole Porter (1891–1964) was a renowned composer, songwriter, and lyricist known for his wit and sophistication. Born in Peru, Indiana, Porter began his musical training early, studying violin and piano and composing his first song at age 10. He performed in various musical roles, including piano accompaniment for silent films and acting in school productions. Porter's celebrated career spanned Broadway and film, where he crafted memorable songs that continue to captivate audiences with their elegant melodies and clever lyrics. "**Night and Day**," composed by Cole Porter, is a song from the 1932 musical *The Gay Divorce*. Known for its sophisticated melody and rhythmic complexity, the song explores the theme of unending love and longing. Porter's lyrics reflect the narrator's deep devotion, expressing that their feelings persist "night and day" regardless of circumstances. The song's timeless appeal lies in its elegant portrayal of romantic yearning, showcasing Porter's talent for blending witty lyrics with captivating melodies.

Randy Newman, born on November 28, 1943, in Los Angeles, is a celebrated singer, songwriter, and pianist. From a musical family, he began writing songs as a teenager and worked as a staff songwriter while still in high school. Known for hits like "I Think It's Going to Rain Today," his work has been covered by artists such as Three Dog Night and Bonnie Raitt. **"Almost There"** is a spirited and hopeful song from Disney's *The Princess and the Frog*. In this number, the protagonist, Tiana, expresses her unwavering determination and optimism as she strives to achieve her dreams of owning her own restaurant. The song encapsulates her belief that she is on the verge of reaching her goal, highlighting themes of perseverance and self-belief. With its infectious rhythm and inspiring lyrics, "Almost There" captures the essence of Tiana's journey and the challenges she overcomes along the way.

Camille Saint-Saëns (1835–1921) was a French composer, pianist, organist, and writer. He was a musical prodigy and contributed to every genre of French music during his career. One of his notable operas is *Samson et Dalila*, with the librettist Ferdinand Lemaire (1832–1879). Premiering in Germany in 1877, the opera tells the story of Samson, who leads the enslaved Hebrews in revolt against their Philistine oppressors. Later, his former lover Dalila, a Philistine woman, tries to seduce Samson to discover his hidden strength, intending to have him captured and killed. In Act 2, Dalila sings **"Mon cœur s'ouvre à ta voix" (My Hearts Open to Your Voice)** to seduce Samson. The aria's increasing passion and the large leaps between notes reflect Dalila's longing for the days when Samson was her lover and her desire for him to stay with her for just one night.

Mon cœur s'ouvre à ta voix,
 comme s'ouvrent les fleurs aux baisers de
 l'aurore! Mais, ô mon bienaimé,
 pour mieux sécher mes pleurs,
 que ta voix parle encore!
 Dis-moi qu'à Dalila tu reviens pour jamais.
 Redis à ma tendresse les serments d'autrefois,
 ces serments que j'aimais!
 Ah! réponds à ma tendresse!
 Verse-moi, verse-moi l'ivresse!

Ainsi qu'on voit des blés les épis onduler
 sous la brise légère, ainsi frémit mon coeur,
 prêt à se consoler, à ta voix qui m'est chère!
 La flèche est moins rapide à porter le trépas,
 que ne l'est ton amante à voler dans tes bras!
 Ah! réponds à ma tendresse!
 Verse-moi, verse-moi l'ivresse!

(Text by Ferdinand Lemaire)

My heart opens to your voice
 Like the flowers open to the kisses of the dawn!
 But, oh my beloved,
 To better dry my tears, let your voice speak
 again! Tell me that you are returning to Delilah
 forever!
 Repeat to my tenderness the promises of old
 times, those promises that I loved!
 Ah! respond to my tenderness!
 Fill me with ecstasy!

Like one sees the blades of wheat that wave
 In the light wind, so trembles my heart,
 Ready to be consoled, by your voice that is so
 dear to me! The arrow is less rapid in bringing
 death, Than your love is by flying into your
 arms! Ah! respond to my tenderness!
 Fill me with ecstasy!

(Translation from opera-aria.com)

Léo Delibes (1836–1891) was a French Romantic composer known for his contributions to opera and ballet. Delibes studied at the Conservatoire under Tariot, Benoist, and Adolphe Adam. Despite a modest Conservatory career and never competing for the Prix de Rome, Delibes made a significant impact with his melodic and orchestrally rich compositions, including the beloved **"Sous le dôme épais"** from *Lakmé*, also known the **"Flower Duet."** *Lakmé* was

inspired by a novel *Le mariage de Loti* by Pierre Loti (1850–1923). This novel is based in 19th century India, under British-rule, and is centered around the daughter of a Brahmin priest, Lakmé. Edmond Gondinet (1828–1888) and Philippe Gille (1831–1901) provided the libretto. This duet, performed by the characters Lakmé and her servant Mallika, is set in a lush garden where the two characters gather flowers in Act 1. The piece is celebrated for its exquisite harmonies and flowing melodies, which beautifully evoke the serene and enchanting atmosphere of the garden. The duet reflects the characters’ deep bond and their joyous interaction with nature, showcasing Delibes’ talent for blending melodic charm with vivid orchestral color. The 6/8-time signature creates a beautiful lilting of the notes which is mirrored by the rise and fall of the vocal line.

LAKMÉ

Dôme épais le jasmin,
 A la rose s’assemble,
 Rive en fleurs frais matin,
 Nous appellent ensemble.
 Ah! glissons en suivant
 Le courant fuyant:
 Dans l’on de frémissante,
 D’une main nonchalante,
 Gagnons le bord,
 Où l’oiseau chante, l’oiseau, l’oiseau chante.
 Dôme épais, blanc jasmin,
 Nous appellent ensemble! Ah!

MILLIKA

Sous le dôme épais, où le blanc jasmin
 A la rose s’assemble,
 Sur la rive en fleurs riant au matin,
 Viens, descendons ensemble.
 Doucement glissons
 De son flot charmant
 Suivons le courant fuyant:
 Dans l’on de frémissante,
 D’une main nonchalante,
 Viens, gagnons le bord,
 Où la source dort
 Et l’oiseau, l’oiseau chante.
 Sous le dôme épais,
 Sous le blanc jasmin,
 Ah! descendons ensemble! Ah!
(Text by Edmond Gondinet and Philippe Gille)

LAKMÉ

Thick dome jasmine,
 At the rose assembles,
 Fresh flowering shore in the morning,
 We call together.
 Ah! slide next
 The current running away:
 In the quivering one,
 With a nonchalant hand,
 Let's win the edge,
 Where the bird sings, the bird, the bird sings.
 Thick dome, jasmine white,
 Call us together! Ah!

MILLIKA

Under the thick dome, where the jasmine white
 At the rose assembles,
 On the bank in blooming laughing in the
 morning, Come, let's go down together.
 Gently gliding
 From its charming flow
 Let's follow the current running away:
 In the quivering one,
 With a nonchalant hand,
 Come, win the edge,
 Where the source is sleeping
 And the bird, the bird sings.
 Under a dome,
 Under the jasmine white,
 Ah! let's go down together! Ah!
(Translation from opera-aria.com)