

Program Notes and Translations:

Like most musicians of his time, Johann Sebastian Bach (1685–1750) created a catalogue of works spanning numerous musical genres. While he is most often remembered for his sacred choral works and keyboard compositions, he also wrote several secular cantatas for use at court, weddings or in other casual settings. The two pieces in this set are examples of this tradition, they are excerpted from solo cantatas written during Bach’s time in Leipzig.

“**Schweigt, ihr Flöten, schweigt, ihr Töne**” is the central aria of *O holder Tag, erwünschte Zeit*, BWV 210 and was presumably written for a wedding in the early 1740s. The cantata celebrates the ties between the joy of music and marital bliss through a series of arias and recitatives that distill down to the most intimate experience in this aria. Here, the obbligato flute and vocal line create echoes that invite the listener to contemplate the beauty of music before the cantata builds toward its final crescendo. In almost defiant fashion, the flute does not heed the command to be silent and soars through its long breathtaking lines alongside the soprano’s voice.

Setting a text written by the German poet Christian Friedrich Heinrici (also known under his pen name Picander, 1700–1764), Bach’s *Coffee Cantata*, formally known as *Schweigt stille, plaudert nicht*, BWV 211, is more akin to a miniature opera than a chamber cantata. The work features a squabbling father and daughter who argue about the benefits and disadvantages of coffee. Although the father despises coffee and warns his daughter about its dangers, the work was most likely premiered at Zimmermann’s coffee house in Leipzig where Bach regularly directed a musical ensemble during the 1730s. “**Ei, wie schmeckt der Kaffee süße**” is sung by Lieschen in defense of her favorite beverage. Her playful melodies intertwine with the obbligato flute to create a joyful recognition of a beverage favored by many through the years.

“Schweigt, ihr Flöten, schweigt, ihr Töne”
from *O holder Tag, erwünschte Zeit*

Schweigt, ihr Flöten,
schweigt, ihr Töne,
die ihr schwebt in milder Schöne,
eilt der dunkeln Ferne zu,
meinem Leid bringt Niemand Ruh!

(Poet unknown)

“Be Silent, You Flutes; Be Silent, You Tones”
from *O Gracious Day, Desired Time*

Be silent, you flutes,
Be silent, you tones
Who float in mild beauty,
Rush toward the darkened distance,
No one brings peace to my suffering!

(Translation by Camilla Packroff)

“Ei, wie schmeckt der Kaffee süße”
from *Schweigt stille, plaudert nicht*

Ei, wie schmeckt der Kaffee süße,
lieblicher als tausend Küsse,
milder als Muskatwein.

Kaffee muß ich haben,
und wenn Jemand mich will laben,
ach, so schenkt mir Kaffee ein!

(Text by Picander)

“Ah, How Sweet the Coffee Tastes”
from *Be Silent, Stop Chatting*

Ah, how sweet the coffee tastes,
Lovelier than a thousand kisses,
Milder than muscat wine.

I must have coffee,
And when someone wants to spoil me,
Oh, just pour me some coffee!

(Translation by Camilla Packroff)

Despite his well-deserved place as one of the major composers of Lieder, Johannes Brahms (1833-1897) tended to avoid setting texts by famous German poets. While other composers of his time set masterpieces by Goethe and Heine, Brahms selected poems that often did not shine on their own. However, with his unique blend of Classical form and Romantic expressivity, Brahms brought these lesser-known texts to life.

The text of “**Von ewiger Liebe**” is often attributed to Josef Wenzig, but was actually written by the German poet August Heinrich Hoffmann von Fallersleben. The dramatic song is divided into three sections. At the beginning, a bass-line melody sets the scene as a narrator describes a dark and quiet evening. We see a young man and his girlfriend having a conversation as he escorts her home. Then that young man’s dialogue takes over, as triplet figures emerge in the piano to suggest his upcoming emotional outburst. The young man expresses his fear that their love has brought shame to his girlfriend, and offers to end their relationship to spare her from the judgement of others. Finally we hear the young woman’s reply. As the tonality shifts from minor to major, the agitation of the triplets fades away. In the most lyric section of the piece, she tells the young man that their love is stronger than iron and steel, and that it will endure forever.

In “**Meine Liebe ist grün,**” Brahms sets a poem by Felix Schumann. Brahms was close with Clara and Robert Schumann, and was the godfather to their son, Felix. While the poem itself is sometimes considered “awkward” in its phrasing, Brahms sets it in a way that captures passionate, youthful love. The singer enters almost immediately over a fast-moving piano accompaniment, with just one beat as a launchpad, as if they are unable to contain their joy.

Von ewiger Liebe

Dunkel, wie dunkel in Wald und in Feld!
Abend schon ist es, nun schweiget die Welt.
Nirgend noch Licht und nirgend noch Rauch,
Ja, und die Lerche sie schweiget nun auch.

Kommt aus dem Dorfe der Bursche heraus,
Gibt das Geleit der Geliebten nach Haus,
Führt sie am Weidengebüsche vorbei,
Reder so viel und so mancherlei:

“Leidest du Schmach und betrübest du dich,
Leidest du Schmach von andern um mich,
Werde die Liebe getrennt so geschwind,
Schnell wie wir früher vereinigt sind.
Scheide mit Regen und scheide mit Wind,
Schnell wie wir früher vereinigt sind.”

Spricht das Mägdelein, Mägdelein spricht:
“Unsere Liebe sie trennet sich nicht!
Fest ist der Stahl und das Eisen gar sehr,
Unsere Liebe ist fester noch mehr.
Eisen und Stahl, man schmiedet sie um,
Unsere Liebe wer wandelt sie um?
Eisen und Stahl, sie können zergehen,
Unsere Liebe muß ewig bestehn!”

(Text by August Heinrich Hoffman von
Fallersleben)

Eternal Love

Dark, how dark in forest and field!
Evening already, and the world is silent.
Nowhere a light and nowhere smoke,
And even the lark is silent now too.

Out of the village there comes a lad,
Escorting his sweetheart home,
He leads her past the willow-copse,
Talking so much and of so many things:

“If you suffer sorrow and suffer shame,
Shame for what others think of me,
Then let our love be severed as swiftly,
As swiftly as once we two were plighted.
Let us depart in rain and depart in wind,
As swiftly as once we two were plighted.”

The girl speaks, the girl says:
“Our love cannot be severed!
Steel is strong, and so is iron,
Our love is even stronger still:
Iron and steel can both be reforged,
But our love, who shall change it?
Iron and steel can be melted down,
Our love must endure forever!”

(Translation by Richard Stokes)

Meine Liebe ist grün

Meine Liebe ist grün wie der Fliederbusch
Und mein Lieb ist schön wie die Sonne;
Die glänzt wohl herab auf den Fliederbusch
Und füllt ihn mit Duft und mit Wonne.

Meine Seele hat Schwingen der Nachtigall
Und wiegt sich in blühendem Flieder,
Und jauchzet und singet vom Duft berauscht
Viel liebestrunkene Lieder.

(Text by Felix Schumann)

My Love is as Green

My love is as green as the lilac bush,
And my sweetheart's as fair as the sun;
The sun shines down on the lilac bush,
Fills it with delight and fragrance.

My soul has a nightingale's wings
And sways in the blossoming lilac,
And, drunk with fragrance, exults and sings
Many a love-drunk song.

(Translation by Richard Stokes)

Growing up in Vienna during the early 19th century, Franz Schubert (1797–1828) was surrounded by music from an early age. After singing in the boys' choir at the Viennese Court and taking composition lessons from Antonio Salieri, he became known especially for his contributions to the genre of Lieder. These secular songs often featured Romantic poetry and Schubert's settings highlight the rawness and humanity of the often-sorrowful texts. The three songs in this set contrast the joyful spirit of spring and nature with the sorrows of life and love through their texts and Schubert's careful attention to the underlying emotion of the words in his musical settings.

With a text written by Johann Graf von Mailath (1786–1855), "**Der Blumen Schmerz**" is a prime example of the Romantic spirit. While spring and flowers often symbolize joy and rebirth, this song uses them as a metaphor for unrequited love. Schubert's setting toys with major and minor modes as the flowers experience their first love, highlighting the shifting emotions. Ending in a quasi-funeral march, the final line reminds the listener that life will always have its ups and downs.

Similarly, the song "**Im Frühling**" also utilizes the signs of spring as a connection to lost love. In Ernst Schulze's (1789–1817) text, which may have been inspired by the untimely loss of his fiancée, the sight of the spring blossoms brings back memories of love, both good and bad. This is again underscored by a shift in tonality from major to minor as the emotions take control. The final stanza adds a lighthearted wish to be carefree and free like the birds on the side of the hill.

The final song, "**Die Vögel**", responds to this wish in a lighthearted way. Written from the perspective of the birds, the text by Friedrich von Schlegel (1772–1829) picks on humans for their inability to fly. While the birds fear the rifle of the huntsman, their response is to get back at him by stealing all his harvest. Schubert's setting maintains the simplicity of the poem, it pairs an arpeggiated accompaniment with a vocal line that mimics the birds' flight through the air.

Der Blumen Schmerz

Wie tönt es mir so schaurig
des Lenzes erstes Wehn,
wie dünkt es mir so traurig,
dass Blumen auferstehn.

In ihrer Mutter Armen
da ruhten sie so still,
nun müssen, ach, die Armen,
hervor ans Weltgewühl.

Die zarten Kinder heben
die Häupter scheu empor:
wer ruft uns ins Leben
aus stiller Nacht hervor?

Der Lenz mit Zauberworten,
mit Hauchen süßer Lust,
lockt aus den dunkeln Pforten
sie von der Mutter Brust.

In bräutlich heller Feier
erscheint der Blumen Pracht,
doch fern schon ist der Freier,
wild glüht der Sonne Macht.

Nun künden ihre Düfte,
dass sie voll Sehnsucht sind;
was labend würzt die Lüfte,
es ist der Schmerzen Kind.

Die Kelche sinken nieder,
sie schauen erdenwärts:
O Mutter, nimm uns wieder,
das Leben gibt nur Schmerz.

Die welken Blätter fallen,
mild deckt der Schnee sie zu;
ach Gott, so geht's mit Allen,
im Grabe nur ist Ruh.

(Text by Johann Graf von Mailath)

The Flowers' Pain

How eerie it sounds to me,
The first cry of the spring.
How sad it feels to me,
That flowers are returning to life.

In their mother's arms,
They rested so peacefully,
Now they must, oh poor ones,
Enter the chaos of the world.

The tender children lift
Their heads shyly from the ground:
"Who calls us into life
From the quiet of the night?"

Spring, with magic words,
With scents of sweet pleasure,
Lures them from the darkness
Away from their mother's chest.

In bright bridal celebration
The glory of the flowers appears,
But long gone is their groom,
the powerful sun is glowing bright.

Now their scents are announcing
That they are full of longing;
What so sweetly fills the air
is born of pain.

Their heads bow down,
They look towards the earth:
"O mother, take us back,
Life is full of pain."

The dry leaves fall,
The snow gently covers them;
Oh God, this is how it all goes,
Only in the grave there is rest.

(Translation by Camilla Packroff)

Im Frühling

Still sitz' ich an des Hügels Hang,
der Himmel ist so klar,
das Lüftchen spielt im grünen Thal,
wo ich beim ersten Frühlingsstrahl
einst, ach, so glücklich war.

Wo ich an ihrer Seite ging,
so traulich und so nah,
und tief im dunkeln Felsenquell
den schönen Himmel, blau und hell,
und sie im Himmel sah.

Sieh, wie der bunte Frühling schon
aus Knosp' und Blüthe blickt!
Nicht alle Blüthen sind mit gleich,
am liebsten pflückt' ich von dem Zweig
von welchem sie gepflückt.

Denn Alles ist wie damals noch,
die Blumen, das Gefild,
die Sonne scheint nicht minder hell,
nicht minder freundlich schwimmt im Quell
das blaue Himmelsbild.

Es wandeln nur sich Will' und Wahn,
es wechseln Lust und Streit;
vorüber flieht der Liebe Glück,
und nur die Liebe bleibt zurück,
die Lieb' und ach, das Leid.

O wär' ich doch ein Vöglein nur
dort an dem Wiesenhang;
dann blieb' ich auf den Zweigen hier
und säng' ein süßes Lied von ihr
den ganzen Sommer lang.

(Text by Ernst Schulze)

In Spring

Quietly I sit on the hillside,
The sky is so clear,
The breezes are playing in the green valley,
Where, during the first sunbeams of spring,
Once, alas, I used to be so happy.

Where I walked by her side,
So intimate and so close,
And deep in the dark rocky springs,
I saw the blue sky,
And her reflection in the sky.

Look, how the colorful spring
Already peeks out of the buds and blossoms!
Not all blooms are the same to me,
My favorite ones to pick are from the branch
From which she once picked hers.

Because everything is still as it used to be,
The flowers, the fields,
The sun is not any less bright,
The spring does not reflect any less
Of the blue skies.

But now will and delusion are changing,
Pleasure and fighting are alternating;
The joy of love passes,
And only love remains,
Love, and alas, the suffering.

O if only I were a little bird,
There on the hillside.
Then I would stay here on the branches
And sing a sweet song about her
The whole summer long.

(Translation by Camilla Packroff)

Die Vögel

Wie lieblich und fröhlich,
zu schweben, zu singen,
von glänzender Höhe
zur Erde zu blicken!

Die Menschen sind töricht,
sie können nicht fliegen.
Sie jammern in Nöthen,
wir flattern gen Himmel.

Der Jäger will tödten,
dem Früchte wir pickten;
wir müssen ihn höhnen,
und Beute gewinnen.

(Text by Friedrich von Schlegel)

The Birds

How lovely and joyful,
to fly, to sing,
From glowing heights,
We are looking down to the earth!

Men are foolish,
They cannot fly.
They complain in times of need,
We fly toward the sky.

The huntsman wants to kill,
So we picked his fruits;
We have to mock him,
And take our spoils.

(Translation by Camilla Packroff)

From the Roman Empire through their expulsion in 1492, there was a relatively large Jewish community in Spain and Portugal. These Jews and their descendants are commonly known as Sephardic Jews. This community built a robust cultural identity separate from that of the Ashkenazi Jews, who lived in Central and Eastern Europe during the same period. Central to this identity was the Sephardic Jewish language of Ladino. While Ladino is based in Old Castilian Spanish, it is heavily influenced by Hebrew and Aramaic, with some elements from other Mediterranean languages. While there are only 50,000-100,000 speakers today, Ladino lives on through poetry, song, religious texts, and more.

Simon Sargon (1938-2022) was born in Mumbai, India to an Ashkenazi Jewish mother and a Sephardic Jewish father. After centuries in India, his family had lost touch with the Ladino language and much of Sephardic culture. In 1992, Sargon, who was then living in the US, began researching Sephardic music for a series of lectures in honor of the 500th anniversary of the expulsion of the Jews from Spain. After discovering the vast repertoire of Ladino folk songs, Sargon describes being “bowled over” by “the great number of them, their range of mood and subject, and their beauty.”

Sargon chose to arrange a few selections from Alberto Hemsí's *Cancionero sefardi*, so that singers could bring them to life on the classical concert stage. He had previously published an arrangement of Yiddish folk songs entitled *At Grandmother's Knee* in honor of his mother's Ashkenazi heritage, so it was only fitting that he would title this collection *At Grandfather's Knee* (1995).

In “**El Punchon y La Rosa**,” Sargon blends dance-like rhythms with moments of sharp dissonance as the singer speaks to a scorned lover. “**Los Arvolles Llorosos**” also speaks of lost love, this time in an aching lament. The “weeping trees” of the title are captured in the descending arpeggios in the piano throughout the piece. “**A La Una**” is playful and lighthearted, and hints at a scale commonly used in Jewish music each time the singer repeats the text “Alma, vida, y corazon” – “soul, life, and heart.”

El Punchon y La Rosa

Puncha, puncha, la rosa huele
y el amor mucho duele.
Tú no nacites para mí
presto, aléxate de aquí.

Si me quieres ver otra vez,
sale a la Puerta, te hablaré.
Echa los ojos a la mar,
Allí mos vamos a encontrar.

Abaxando la escalera
Vide una sangre mur correra;
es la sangre de las morenas
que es más dulce que la miel.

Los Arvoles Llorosos

Arvoles lloran por lluvias
Y montañas por aires;
Ansí lloran los mis ojos
Por ti, querida 'mante!
Torno, torno y digo que va ser de mi.

Blanca sos, blanca vistas
Blanca la tu figura,
Blancas flores caen de ti,
De la tu hermosura.
Torno y digo que va ser di mi
En tierras ajenas yo me vo morir.

Lluvia hizo y se mojó
La calle y el cortijo.
Anda dezilde al mi amor
Que es de los ojos míos.
Torno y digo que va ser di mi
En tierras ajenas yo me vo morir.

The Thorn and the Rose

Pierce, pierce the rose is fragrant
And love hurts greatly.
You were not born for me
Quickly, go far from here.

If you wish to see me once again,
Go to the door, I will speak with you.
Lift your eyes to the sea
There is where we'll meet.

When you descend the stairs
Look at the blood running;
It's the blood of the dark-haired girls
Which is sweeter than honey.

The Weeping Trees

Trees weep for rain
And mountains for air.
Thus do my eyes weep
For you, my beloved.
I repeat and say what will become of me.

You are white, and your dress is white
And your figure is white.
White flowers fall from you
From your beauty.
I repeat and say what will become of me.
In foreign lands I am going to die.

Rain has fallen and soaked
The street and the courtyard.
Go and tell my beloved
It is from my eyes that the water has come.
I repeat and say what will become of me.
In foreign lands I am going to die.

A La Una

A la una naci
A las dos m'engrandeci
A las tres tomi amante
A las cuatro me cazi.
Alma vida y corason.

Yendome para la guerra
Dos bezos al aire di
El uno es para mi madre
Y el otro para ti.
Alma vida y corason.

At One

At one I was born
At two I grew up
At three I took a lover
At four I married.
Soul, life, and heart.

Going off to war
I threw two kisses in the air.
One is for my mother
And the other for you.
Soul, life, and heart.

(Text from Alberto Hemsí's *Cancionero sefardi*)

During medieval times, when manuscripts had to be painstakingly handwritten, a common practice by the scribes was to add marginalia – comments, annotations or notes – into the margins of the books. These notes were sometimes related to the original text or could be reflections or thoughts of the author themselves. For the creation of his *Hermit Songs* cycle, Samuel Barber (1910 – 1981) used translated marginalia and other manuscripts written by Irish monks as the foundation of his work. These texts range from devout and reflective to candid and lighthearted. Barber cleverly utilizes the range and colors of the piano to illustrate the content of these poems alongside the vocal line.

The set starts with a soothing lullaby for a newborn Christ in “**St. Ita’s Vision**,” rocking the baby to sleep to a seemingly simple yet captivating melody. “**The Heavenly Banquet**” imagines a world where the Holy Family is invited to a joyful celebration. The rapid vocal line takes on an almost breathless quality as the imaginary party is conjured. In drastic contrast, “**Sea-Snatch**” uses a similarly frantic vocal line to highlight the panicked feeling of the text. The vocal line emerges from the chaotic piano accompaniment to culminate in a captivating exclamation. The final song, “**The Monk and His Cat**,” sets a well-known text that describes the relationship between an Irish monk and his feline companion, Pangur. As an ode to pet owners across time and space, the cat sneakily inserts itself into the song’s accompaniment. The performer dedicates tonight’s performance to her three “Pangurs”: Daphne, Marshmallow and Mochi.

St. Ita's Vision

"I will take nothing from my Lord," said she,
"Unless he gives me His Son from Heaven
In the form of a baby that I may nurse Him."
So that Christ came down to her,
In the form of a Baby and then she said:
"Infant Jesus, at my breast,
Nothing in this world is true
Save, O tiny nursling, You.
Infant Jesus, at my breast,
By my heart ev'ry night,
You I nurse are not a churl
But were begot on Mary the Jewess
By Heaven's Light.
Infant Jesus, at my breast,
What king is there but You who could
Give everlasting Good?
Wherefore I give my food.
Sing to Him, maidens, sing your best!
There is none that has such right
To your song as Heaven's King
Who ev'ry night
Is Infant Jesus at my breast."

(Attributed to Saint Ita, 8th century,
Translated by Chester Kallman)

The Heavenly Banquet

I would like to have the men of Heaven
in my own house;
With vats of good cheer laid out for them.
I would like to have the three Marys,
Their fame is so great.
I would like people
from ev'ry corner of Heaven.
I would like them to be cheerful
in their drinking;
I would like to have Jesus sitting here
among them.
I would like a great lake of beer
for the King of Kings.
I would like to be watching Heaven's family
Drinking it through all eternity.

(Attributed to Saint Brigid, 10th century,
Translated by Sean O'Faolain)

Sea-Snatch

It has broken us, it has crushed us,
it has drowned us,
O King of the starbright Kingdom of Heaven;
The wind has consumed us, swallowed us,
As timber is devoured by crimson fire from
Heaven.
It has broken us, it has crushed us,
it has drowned us,
O King of the starbright Kingdom of Heaven.

(Anonymous, 8th-9th century,
Translated by Kenneth H. Jackson)

The Monk and His Cat

Pangur, white Pangur,
How happy we are
Alone together
Scholar and cat.
Each has his own work to do daily;
For you it is hunting, for me study.
Your shining eye watches the wall;
My feeble eye is fixed on a book.
You rejoice when your claws
Entrap a mouse;
I rejoice when my mind
Fathoms a problem.
Pleased with his own art,
Neither hinders the other;
Thus we live ever
Without tedium and envy.
Pangur, white Pangur,
How happy we are
Alone together,
Scholar and cat.

(Anonymous, 8th or 9th century,
Translated by W. H. Auden)

While initially they may initially appear unrelated, these three songs by 20th and 21st century American composers form a group of “unorthodox” prayers – expressions of hope and gratitude towards something bigger than oneself, but outside of a traditional liturgical context.

While the text of “**Simple Song**” may be more traditional than the others in the set, the work from which it originates is anything but. In *Mass: A Theatre Piece for Singers, Players, and Dancers* (1971), Leonard Bernstein turns the Roman Catholic Mass into a journey through the loss and rediscovery of faith. Bernstein juxtaposes the modern and traditional, weaving Latin texts with new English lyrics by both himself and Stephen Schwartz, and scoring the work to include a full classical orchestra in the pit and both a rock band and marching band onstage. “Simple Song” is perhaps the best-known movement of the work. Sung by the Celebrant, this variation of Psalm 121 breaks through the cacophony of the previous movement as a pure expression of personal faith.

John Corigliano’s “**Forever Young**” is also a setting of a well-known text, but from a very different origin. In his cycle *Mr. Tambourine Man* (2000), Corigliano sets Bob Dylan’s lyrics as poetry. However, Corigliano’s melodies are not arrangements or variations of Dylan’s songs – in fact, Corigliano intentionally did not listen to the original songs until completing his cycle. “Forever Young” is the final song in the cycle, and is described by the composer as a “folk-song benediction.” Dylan’s lyrics capture a parent’s hopes for their child, and are reminiscent of the Priestly Benediction that Jewish parents commonly bestow on their children on Shabbat. Corigliano’s mostly a cappella setting allows the singer to highlight the text, while the delicate piano accompaniment adds tenderness to the choruses.

The set closes with Michael Tilson Thomas’ “**Grace**” (1988). With text written by the composer, this playful song is an expression of gratitude for many facets of life, big and small. The piece was written to celebrate Leonard Bernstein’s 70th birthday, and references “Lenny” alongside famous composers Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart, Gustav Mahler, and George Gershwin. Tilson Thomas ends with an “amen,” framing this outpouring of appreciation for food, music, and friendship as a form of prayer. The core message, “the truth is life is good,” resonated with Bernstein, who asked that this piece be sung before meals and gatherings during the last few years of his life.

“Simple Song” from *Mass*

Sing God a simple song: Lauda, Laude
Make it up as you go along: Lauda, Laude
Sing like you like to sing.
God loves all simple things,
For God is the simplest of all,
For God is the simplest of all.

I will sing the Lord a new song
To praise Him, to bless Him, to bless the Lord.
I will sing His praises while I live
All of my days.

Blessed is the man who loves the Lord,
Blesses is the man who praises Him.
Lauda, Lauda, Laude
And walks in his ways.

I will lift up my eyes
To the hills from whence comes my help.
I will lift up my voice to the Lord
Singing Lauda, Laude.
For the Lord is my shade
Is the shade upon my right hand,
And the sun shall not smite me by day
Nor the moon by night.

Blessed is the man who loves the Lord,
Lauda, Lauda, Laude,
And walks in his ways.
Lauda, Laude, Laude.
Lauda, Lauda di da di day, all of my days

(Text by Leonard Bernstein and Stephen Schwartz,
based on Psalm 121)

“Forever Young” from *Mr. Tambourine Man*

May God bless and keep you always,
may your wishes all come true
May you always do for others
and let others do for you
May you build a ladder to the stars
and climb on every rung
May you stay forever young,
forever young, forever young
May you stay forever young.

May you grow up to be righteous,
may you grow up to be true
May you always know the truth,
and see the lights surrounding you
May you always be courageous,
stand upright and be strong
May you stay forever young,
forever young, forever young
May you stay forever young.

May your hands always be busy,
may your feet always be swift
May you have a strong foundation
when the winds of changes shift
May your heart always be joyful,
may your song always be sung
May you stay forever young,
forever young, forever young,
May you stay forever young.

(Text by Bob Dylan)

Grace

Thanks to whoever is there
for this tasty plate of herring!
Thanks to whoever may care
for this tasty plate of herring.
Yesterday swimming swift in a salty sea
and today silver offerings made to me!
So if you please won't you pass me
whatever's still left of this tasty treat we're sharing
'cause the truth is it tastes good.
Mm mm mm.

Thanks to whoever is there
for the sacred joy of music
and thank you fiddlers and flutists and divas
and rock and roll drummers.
Thanks to whoever has dared
give us brave new sounds of music.
Thank you composers, professors,
and casual off-the-cuff hummers.
So commend singers down through the centuries,
cherished friends,
Wolfgang, Gustav, George, dear Lenny.
It seems to me that we all feel so close to the truth
in the notes our souls declaring
and the truth is it feels good.
Mm mm mm.

So many people calling out to one another,
help us to hear them,
teach us that all men are brothers,
so many people, so many stories, so many questions,
so many blessings make us grateful
whatever comes next
in this life on earth we're sharing.
For the truth is life is good.
So many mem'ries...
Amen

(Text by Michael Tilson Thomas)

Along with his numerous works for solo voice and piano, Robert Schumann (1810–1856) published several collections of vocal duets and small ensemble pieces. One of these collections is his *Mädchenlieder* (Girls' Songs) from 1851. The four duets in this set feature texts by Elisabeth Kulmann (1808–1825), an incredibly prolific poet who penned over 1000 poems before her tragic death at age 17 and was deeply admired by Schumann. “**Frühlingslied**” celebrates the return of spring and conjures the joyful spirit of the season through its simplistic vocal lines and arpeggiated accompaniment.

Frühlingslied

Der Frühling kehret wieder
und schmücket Berg und Tal;
schon tönen rings die Lieder
der süßen Nachtigall.

Wie steigt hoch die Sonne
ins Himmelblau hinauf,
verbreitet Lust und Wonne
auf ihrem weiten Lauf.

Es eilen Schaf' und Rinder
Der grünen Wiese zu,
es blickt auf's Spiel der Kinder
der Greis aus seiner Ruh.

(Text by Elisabeth Kulmann)

Spring Song

Spring is returning
And decorating the mountains and valleys;
Already one can hear the songs
Of the sweet nightingale.

How high up the sun is rising
Into the blue skies,
Spreading excitement and joy
On her long path.

Sheep and cows are rushing
Toward the green meadow,
Watching the children play
Is the old man from his resting spot.

(Translation by Camilla Packroff)