

Program Notes, Texts, and Translations

Maurice Ravel (1875–1937) was one of the leading French composers associated with Impressionism, alongside Debussy. Although he stood somewhat apart from the main musical ground, such as the *Société Nationale*, he developed a distinctive style shaped by exotic color, rhythmic energy, and strong Spanish influence. He composed “**Vocalise-étude en forme de Habanera (Vocalise-style in the form of Habanera)**” in 1907 for voice and piano. In this piece, the accompaniment maintains a repeated habanera rhythm while the vocal line features scales, trills, and staccato passages.

Francis Poulenc (1899–1963) is best known for his vocal music, especially his choral works and French *mélodies*. He composed about 150 *mélodies*, many written for specific singers, including the baritone, Pierre Bernac. They performed together in recitals for 25 years. Many of Poulenc’s finest songs were composed between the two World Wars, and most are concise, often spanning only two or three pages.

In 1943, Poulenc composed *Deux poèmes de Louis Aragon* (Two Poems of Louis Aragon). Aragon (1897–1982) was a French surrealist poet known for writing politically engaged poetry. He was a member of the French Communist Party during the Nazi occupation. Poulenc selected two poems from Aragon’s *Les yeux d’Elsa* (Elsa’s Eye, 1942). The first song, “C”, evokes the memory of crossing the bridges of Cé and reflects the sadness and nostalgia of wartime France. The repeated “cé” sound at the end of each line creates a unity. Poulenc’s expressive markings, along with his subtle shifts in tempo and dynamics, mirror the poem’s changing emotional landscape. The second song, “**Fêtes galantes (Gallant Parties)**” presents a satirical portrait of chaotic public scenes after the war. The title is ironic, since the music is far from graceful or pastoral. Poulenc sets the text in a breathless, fast patter style, using repeated “on voit (we see)” lines to heighten the sense of crowded, unsettled motion.

C

J’ai traversé les ponts de Cé
C’est là que tout a commencé
Une chanson des temps passés
Parle d’un chevalier blessé
D’une rose sur la chaussée
Et d’un corsage délacé
Du château d’un duc insensé
Et des cignes dans les fossés
De la prairie où vient danser
Une éternelle fiancée
Et j’ai bu comme un lait glacé
Le long lai des gloires faussées
La Loire emporte mes pensées
Avec les voitures versées
Et les armes désamorcées
Et les larmes mal effacées
Ô ma France ô ma délaissée
J’ai traversé les ponts de Cé.

C

I have crossed the bridges of Cé
It is there that everything began
A song of bygone days
Tells of a knight who injured lay
Of a rose upon the carriage-way
And a bodice with an unlaced stay
And the castle of an insane duke
And swans in castle moats
And of the meadow where
An eternal fiancée comes to dance
And I have drunk the long lay
Of false glories like icy milk
The Loire bears my thoughts away
With the overturned jeeps
And the unprimed arms
And the ill-dried tears
O my France O my forsaken one
I have crossed the bridges of Cé.

Fêtes galantes

On voit des marquis sur des bicyclettes
On voit des marlous en cheval-jupon
On voit des morveux avec des voilettes
On voit les pompiers brûler les pompons

On voit des mots jetés à la voirie
On voit des mots élevés au pavois
On voit les pieds des enfants de Marie
On voit le dos des diseuses à voix

On voit des voitures à gazogène
On voit aussi des voutures à bras
On voit des lascars que les longs nez gênent
On voit des coïons de dix-huit carats

On voit ici ce que l'on voit ailleurs
On voit des demoiselles dévoyées
On voit des voyous On voit des voyeurs
On voit sous les ponts passer des noyés

On voit chômer les marchands de chaussures
On voit mourir d'ennui les mireurs d'œufs
On voit périliter les valeurs sûres
Et fuir la vie à la six-quatre-deux.

(Texts by Louis Aragon)

Gallant Parties

You see fops on cycles
You see pimps in kilts
You see whipper-snappers with veils
You see firemen burning their pompoms

You see words hurled on the garbage heap
You see words praised to the skies
You see the feet of orphan children
You see the backs of cabaret singers

You see cars run on gazogene
You see handcarts too
You see sly fellows hindered by long noses
You see unmitigated idiots

You see here what you see everywhere
You see girls who are led astray
You see guttersnipes you see Peeping Toms
You see drowned corpses float beneath bridges

You see out-of-work shoemakers
You see egg-candlers bored to death
You see securities tumble
And life rushing pell-mell by.

(Translations by Richard Strokes)

Samuel Barber (1910–1981) was one of the most important American composers of the 20th century admired for his lyrical Neo-Romantic style. Though known especially for vocal music, his works span nearly every genre. Barber's extensive travels in Europe influenced his musical style. He often collaborated with composer-librettist Gian Carlo Menotti for on the operas *Vanessa* (1957) and *A Hand of Bridge* (1959).

Barber's ***Knoxville: Summer of 1915***, composed in 1947 for soprano and orchestra, was commissioned by Eleanor Steber for the Boston Symphony Orchestra. Barber later arranged versions for chamber orchestra and piano with soprano or tenor, published around 1950. The text is drawn from James Agee's (1909–1955) autobiographical novel *A Death in the Family* where Agee recalls his childhood in Knoxville, Tennessee, during the summer of 1915, the time of his father's fatal car accident. Barber's setting unfolds in a series of lyrical episodes, evoking scenes of play, streetcar sounds, family gatherings, prayers, and lullaby-like conclusion. The music combines declamatory vocal writing with lyrical melody shaped by American folk influences, while Barber also incorporating Wagnerian leitmotifs.

Hyogun Kim (b. 1960) is a Korean composer and Professor of Business Administration at the Ewha Womans University in Seoul, Korea. Although not formally trained in music, he took theory and composition classes while he majored in Business at the Seoul National University. In 1981, during his junior year, Kim won first prize in a Korean Art Song Composition Competition with his song “눈 (Snow),” making his debut as a composer. Kim is acclaimed for pioneering the

Korean “Art Pop” genre, blending elements of traditional classical music with jazz, contemporary styles, and crossover influences. Among his more than 100 works, “눈” remains one of his most frequently performed songs. Kim also wrote the text, a lyrical meditation in which dreamlike snow imagery reflects love, longing, and a quiet merging with the winter landscape until the lovers become part of the snow. Each section frequently begins with a rising sixth interval, evoking a yearning reminiscent of Chopin’s *Nocturnes*.

눈

조그만 산길에 흰눈이 곱게 쌓이면
내 작은 발자국을 영원히 남기고 싶소.

내 작은 마음이 하얗게 물들 때까지
새하얀 산길을 헤매이고 싶소.

외로운 겨울새 소리 멀리서 들려오면
내 공상에 파문이 일어 갈 길을 잊어버리오.
가슴에 새겨보리라 순결한 님의 목소리
바람결에 실려 오는가 흰눈되어 온다오.

저 멀리 숲사이로 내 마음 달려가나
아 겨울새 보이지 않고 흰 여운만 남아 있다오.

눈감고 들어 보리라 끝없는 님의 노래여
나 어느새 흰눈 되어 산길 걸어간다오.

(Text by Hyogun Kim)

Snow

When the narrow mountain path lies under
snow, I wish my humble footsteps remain, never
to fade.

Until my little heart turns pure as snow,
I wish to roam the white mountain path.

Hearing a solitary winter bird in distance,
I stray, as my daydreams fly away.
I'll hold the pure voice of my beloved in my
heart; carried by the wind, it has drifted down as
snow.

When my thoughts flee into the far-off forests,
Ah, the winter bird is gone, leaving only white
behind.

Eyes closed, I listen to my beloved's unending
song; suddenly, I become white snow,
wandering the mountain path.

(Translation by Youngmi Kim)

Soon-Ae Kim (1920–2007), recognized as Korea’s first female composer, pioneered role in the 20th century Korean music. Born in Hwanghae Province (now in North Korea) to a Presbyterian pastor, her family later moved to South Korea. She studied piano at Ewha Womans University before turning to composition. She went on to complete a master’s at the Eastman School of Music and pursued doctoral studies at Florida State University. During 1953–1973, she taught composition at Ewha. She produced roughly 100 works, focusing on Korean art songs that reflect her Christian faith with the essence of the Korean lyrical melody.

Kim composed “**사월의 노래 (April Song)**” in 1953, shortly after returning from wartime evacuation, at the request of the magazine *Haksaenggye* to celebrate its founding. Mok-Wol Park (1916–1978) provided the text and it portrays a gentle spring scene of reading, writing, playing music, wandering far from home, and gazing at the stars, before ending with April as a bright but tearful season of life and dreams. In 1964, she composed “**그대 있음에 (Because You Are)**” to a poem by Nam-Jo Kim (1927–2023), commissioned by the *HanKook Ilbo* (Korean newspaper) as a New Year’s gift. The song conveys the sustaining power of a beloved’s presence, bringing joy, light, and longing among hardships. The piece blends lyricism and intimacy, moving between major and minor modes to heighten its emotion.

사월의 노래

목련꽃 그늘 아래서 베르테르의 편지 읽노라.
구름꽃 피는 언덕에서 피리를 부노라.
아 멀리 떠나와 이름 없는 항구에서
배를 타노라.
돌아온 사월은 생명의 등불을 밝혀준다.
빛나는 꿈의 계절아 눈물 어린 무지개 계절아.
목련꽃 그늘 아래서 긴 사연의 편지 쓰노라.

클로버 피는 언덕에서
휘파람 부노라.
아 멀리 떠나와
깊은 산골 나무 아래서
별을 보노라.
돌아온 사월은 생명의 등불을 밝혀준다.
빛나는 꿈의 계절아 눈물 어린 무지개 계절아.

(Text by Mok-Wol Park)

그대 있음에

그대의 근심 있는 곳에
나를 불러 손잡게 하라
큰 기쁨과 조용한 갈망이
그대 있음에 그대 있음에
내 맘에 자라거늘
오 그리움이어 그리움이어 그리움이어
그대 있음에 내가 있네 나를 불러 손잡게 해.

그대의 사랑 문을 열 때
내가 있어 그 빛에 살게 해
사는 것과 외롭고 고단함
그대 있음에 그대 있음에
사람의 뜻을 배우니
오 그리움이어 그리움이어 그리움이어
그대 있음에 내가 있네 나를 불러 그 빛에 살게 해.

(Text by Nam-Jo Kim)

April Song

Under the shade of magnolia blossoms, I read
Werther's letter.
On the hill where cloud-like flowers bloom,
I play the flute.
Ah, far away from home,
At a nameless harbor, I board a ship.
Returned April lifts the lamp of life aloft.
O season of shining dreams,
O season of tearful rainbows.

Under the shade of magnolia blossoms, I write a
letter of long tales. On the hill where clover
blooms, I whistle.
Ah, far away from home, under a tree in a deep
mountain valley, I gaze at the stars.
Returned April lifts the lamp of life aloft.
O season of shining dreams,
O season of tearful rainbows.

(Translation by Youngmi Kim)

Because You Are

Call me to where your sorrows dwell
And let me hold your hand.
Great joy and quiet yearning
Because you are, because you are.
Growing within my heart.
Oh, longing, longing, longing...
Because you are, I am.
Call me, and let me hold your hand.

When you open the door of your love,
Let me be there to live within that light.
Living life, with its solitude and burdens,
Because you are, because you are.
I learn the meaning of the human heart.
Oh, longing, longing, longing...
Because you are, I am.
Call me, and let me live in that light.

(Translation by Youngmi Kim)

Isang Yun (1917–1995), a Korean-born composer, was renowned for blending traditional Korean traditional music with Western techniques, including twelve-tone method. He studied at the Osaka College of Music in Japan, later continuing at the Paris Conservatory and Berlin University of the Arts. As a supporter of Korean independence, he was imprisoned in 1943, and in 1967, abducted from Germany by the South Korean authorities, imprisoned for two years, then resettled in Germany as a citizen and composition professor. Yun's output exceeds 150 works, including operas, chamber music, concertos, symphonies, choral pieces, and art songs.

His *Five Songs* for voice includes the frequently performed “**고풍의상 (Traditional Attire, 1941)**,” a setting of Ji-Hun Jo’s (1920–1968) poem portraying the beauty of Korean clothing, dance, and music. This song employs Korean pentatonic scales, grace notes, traditional rhythmic patterns, with the piano part imitating the timbres and gestures of Korean string instruments.

고풍의상

하늘로 날을 듯이
길게 뿜은 부연 끝 풍경이 운다
처마 끝 곱게 느리운 주름에 반월이 숨어
아른아른 봄밤이 두건이 소리처럼 깊어가는 밤.
곱아라 고와라 진정 아름다운지고
호장저고리 하얀동정이 화안히 밝도소이다
열두폭 긴치마가 사르르 물결을 친다.

그대는 어느 나라의 고전을 말하는 한마리 호접
호접인양 사부시 춤추라
아미를 숙이고
나는 이 밤에 옛날에 살아
눈 감고 거문곶 줄 골라보리니
가는 버들인양 가락에 맞춰
흰 손을 흔들어지이다.

(Text by Ji-Hun Jo)

Traditional Attire

The wind chimes at the end of the long,
Sky-bound eaves sing softly.
The half-moon hides, gently lowered from the
edge of the roof, the shimmering spring night
deepens like the cuckoo’s call
Lovely, truly beautiful. The colored jacket, its
white-collar shines bright. A twelve-panel long
skirt glides in waves.

You are like a butterfly, speaking an ancient tale
of some distant land —Flutter and dance gently
like the butterfly. Lowered eyebrows,
I live tonight as though in days of old.
Closing my eyes, I pluck the strings of my
geomungo (instrument), like a slender willow in
the melody, I wave my white hands.

(Translation by Youngmi Kim)

Heitor Villa-Lobos (1887–1959) was one of the most influential Brazilian composers of the 20th century. Villa-Lobos was largely self-taught and learned from popular music. During his travels throughout Brazil, he collected folk melodies and texts, which became the base of his most work. He composed more than 1,000 works, including orchestral music in various forms, chamber music, instrumental and vocal works, and film music. He used a variety of instrumental combinations for his orchestral works including the nine *Bachianas Brasileiras* (Bachian Brazilian Pieces).

Between 1930 and 1945, Villa-Lobos composed the nine *Bachianas Brasileiras*. His admiration for Bach and Baroque music led him to use contrapuntal motives, fugal textures, pedal notes, cadences, and suite-like forms (ABA form). *Bachianas Brasileiras*, No. 5, one of his best-known works, consists of two movements: *Aria* (cantilena), composed in 1938, and *Dança* (martelo), composed in 1945. He scored this work for soprano and eight cellos (his favorite instrument) and later arranged versions with piano and guitar. The first movement, *Aria*, opens with pizzicato as the soprano sings a vocalise in long, arching phrases, evoking Puccini like lyricism. The walking bass in the accompaniment suggests a Baroque element while syncopated vocal line evokes Brazilian popular music. The declamatory middle section sets a text by Ruth Valladares Corrêa (1904–ca. 1963), who also premiered the work. The text describes sunset meeting a moonrise, while a maiden dreams of becoming beautiful.

Aria

Tarde uma nuvem rósea lenta e transparente,
Sobre o espaço, sonhadora e bela!
Surge no infinito a lua docemente,
Enfeitando a tarde, qual meiga donzela
Que se apresta e a linda sonhadoramente,
Em anseios d'alma para ficar bela
Grita ao céu e a terra toda a Natureza!

Cala a passarada aos seus tristes queixumes
E reflete o mar toda a sua riqueza...
Suave a luz da lua desperta agora
A cruel saudade que ri e chora!
Tarde uma nuvem rósea lenta e transparente
Sobre o espaço, sonhadora e bela!

(Text by Ruth Valladares Corrêa)

Evening, a rosy, slow and transparent cloud
Over the space dreamy and beautiful
The Moon sweetly appears in the horizon,
Decorating the afternoon like a nice damsel
Who rushes and dreamy adorns herself
With an anxious soul to become beautiful
Shout all Nature to the Sky and to the Earth!

All birds become silent to the Moon's complains
And the Sea reflects its great splendor.
Softly, the shining Moon just awakes
The cruel longing that laughs and cries.
Evening, a rosy, slow and transparent cloud
Over the space dreamy and beautiful...

(Translation by Mirna Rubim)

“**Samba Clássico**” (1950) was composed during the later years of Villa-Lobos’ career, when his creative output remained active despite declining health. Originally written for voice and orchestra and later arranged for voice and piano, this piece pays tribute to Brazilian Popular composers and uses a text by Villa-Lobos under his pen name, Epaminondas Viallaba Filho. Cast in an ABCBA’ form: the piece contrasts a syncopated samba-based opening and closing with a speech-like B section and a warmer, more lyrical C section, resulting in a vivid fusion of popular rhythm and concert style.

(Notes by Youngmi Kim)

Samba Clássico

Nossa vida vive, nossa alma vibra,
Nosso amor palpita na canção do samba.
E a saudade intensa de uma vida inteira
E a lembrança imensa que jamais se esquece...
Oh! Quanta beleza
Que faz pensar na doçura de sua melodia!
Oh! Faz viver um sofrimento esquisito,
Melancólico e triste!
Também tem o sabor de alegria
De viver na comunhão dos seres da terra
E do céu do Brasil,
Tudo é bom e justo
Tudo é belo enfim
Cheio de esplendor na grandeza infinda
É feliz quem vive nesta terra santa
Que não elege raça nem prefere crença
Oh! Minha gente! Minha terra!
Meu país! Minha pátria!
Para frente! A subir! Sambar!

(Text by Epaminondas Viallaba Filho)

Classic Samba

Our life lives, our soul vibrates,
Our love flutters in the samba song.
And the intense longing of a whole life
And the immense memory that is never
forgotten... Oh! What beauty
That makes you think of the sweetness of its
melody! Oh! It makes you live a strange,
Melancholic and sad suffering!
It also has the taste of joy
Of living in communion, of the beings of the
earth and the sky of Brazil,
Everything is good and just,
Everything is beautiful in the end
Full of splendor in endless greatness
Happy is the one who lives in the holy land
That does not choose race nor prefer belief
Oh! My people! My land!
My country! My homeland!
Forward! To rise! Samba!

(Translation by Diana Pequeno)