

Program Notes and Translations

Johann Sebastian Bach (1685–1750) was a renowned German composer who is widely regarded as one of the classic composers of the 18th century. Bach was known for his compositions in various musical forms except for opera. Many of his works coincided with what the composer was actively practicing on, for example many of his organ works were written when he was an organist and many of the vocal compositions were from his time at Leipzig as a cantor (music director). Bach's style was self-expressive and had individuality that other composers of the time did not possess. One of the vocal music genres he composed was the large-scale religious work, the oratorio. *Johannes-Passion* is the earliest surviving Passion by Bach, first performed on April 7, 1724. The soprano's aria "**Ich folge dir gleichfalls,**" 9th in the first movement, is from a text by an unknown author that speaks for the people who express love and loyalty to Jesus.

Ich folge dir gleichfalls mit freudigen Schritten
Und lasse dich nicht,
Mein Leben, mein Licht.
Befördere den Lauf,
Und höre nicht auf,
Selbst an mir zu ziehen, zu schieben, zu bitten.

I follow You likewise with happy steps
and do not leave You,
my Life, my Light.
Pursue your journey,
and don't stop,
continue to draw me on, to push me, to urge me.
(Translation from <https://www.vonii.org>)

Franz Schubert (1797–1828) is one of the most famed composers of his time. Schubert was known for *Lieder*, chamber music, and piano selections. Being born in Vienna, a hub for musical talent, it was a rich environment for him as a growing artist. The young composer wrote symphonies and piano pieces that became some of his most well-known works.

While living with Franz von Schober (1796–1882), Schubert wrote about 60 single songs and one of the most famous being "**An die Musik**" (To Music), whose lyrics are by Schober himself. The poem shows a sense of gratitude for how music brings joy and happiness to those who may need it. Schubert went on to compose in more professional contexts in the 1820s, after "An die Musik" was published.

Schubert composed "**Die Forelle**" (The Trout) in 1817 with lyrics by Christian Friedrich Daniel Schubart (1739–1791), who was a poet, journalist, and composer himself. His poetry was used by later generations such as Schubert. The piece is about a trout and a fisherman who is trying to catch it. The lighthearted melody and upbeat tempo with the text provide a fun and imaginative story.

The piece "**Frühlingsglaube**" (Faith in Spring), uses text by German poet Johann Ludwig Uhland (1787–1862). The poem is about the feeling of fresh spring and how this change should not scare the heart. The graceful melodic line, paired with the beautiful piano accompaniment, evokes the warmth and joy of early spring, bringing a sense of renewal and healing.

An die Musik

Du holde Kunst, in wieviel grauen Stunden,
Wo mich des Lebens wilder Kreis umstrickt,
Hast du mein Herz zu warmer Lieb' entzunden,
Hast mich in eine beßre Welt entrückt!

Oft hat ein Seufzer, deiner Harf' entflossen,
Ein süßer, heiliger Akkord von dir,
Den Himmel beßrer Zeiten mir erschlossen,
Du holde Kunst, ich danke dir dafür!

Die Forelle

In einem Bächlein helle da schoß in froher Eil
Die launische Forelle vorüber wie ein Pfeil
Ich stand an dem Gestade und sah in süßer Ruh
Des muntern Fischleins Bade im klaren Bächlein
zu.

Ein Fischer mit der Rute wohl an dem Ufer stand
Und sah's mit kaltem Blute, wie sich das Fischlein
wand

So lang dem Wasser Helle, so dacht ich, nicht
gebricht

So fängt er die Forelle mit seiner Angel nicht.
Doch endlich ward dem Diebe die Zeit zu lang
Er macht das Bächlein tückisch trübe, und eh ich
es gedacht

So zuckte seine Rute, das Fischlein, das Fishlein
zappelt dran

Und ich mit regem Blute sah die Betrogene an.

Frühlingsglaube

Die linden Lüfte sind erwacht,
Sie säuseln und weben Tag und Nacht,
Sie schaffen an allen Enden.

O frischer Duft, o neuer Klang!
Nun, armes Herze, sei nicht bang!
Nun muss sich Alles, Alles wenden.

Die Welt wird schöner mit jedem Tag,
Man weiss nicht, was noch werden mag,
Das Blühen will nicht enden.

Es blüht das fernste, tiefste Tal:
Nun, armes Herz, vergiss der Qual!
Nun muss sich Alles, Alles wenden.

To Music

Oh sacred art, how oft in hours blighted,
While into life's untamed cycle hurled,
Hast thou my heart to warm love reignited
To transport me into a better world!

So often has a sigh from thy harp drifted,
A chord from thee, holy and full of bliss,
A glimpse of better times from heaven lifted.
Thou sacred art, my thanks to thee for this.
(Translated from <https://www.lieder.net>)

The Trout

In a limpid brook the capricious trout
in joyous haste darted by like an arrow.
I stood on the bank in blissful peace,
watching the lively fish swim in the clear brook.

An angler with his rod stood on the bank
cold-bloodedly watching the fish's contortions.

As long as the water is clear, I thought,

he won't catch the trout with his rod.
But at length the thief grew impatient.
Cunningly he made the brook cloudy, and in an
instant his rod quivered,
and the fish struggled on it.
And I, my blood boiling, looked on at the cheated
creature.

(Translation from <https://www.oxfordlieder.co.uk>)

Faith in Spring

Balmy breezes are awakened;
they stir and whisper day and night,
everywhere creative.

O fresh scents, O new sounds!
Now, poor heart, do not be afraid.
Now all must change.

The world grows fairer each day;
we cannot know what is still to come;
The flowering knows no end.
The deepest, most distant valley is in flower.
Now, poor heart, forget your torment.
Now all must change.

(Translation from <https://www.oxfordlieder.co.uk>)

Composer **Reynaldo Hahn** (1875–1947) was born in Venezuela but was known for his *melodies* or French art songs. Moving into the early 1900s, his career shifted to conducting and critical works for journals such as *La presse* and *La flèche*. Hahn gained French nationality in 1907 and then joined the army to fight for France where he wrote a song cycle using the poems of Robert Louis Stevenson and began composing an opera based around Shakespeare’s *The Merchant of Venice*. Hahn was mostly known for his opera, operetta, and specific art songs.

“**Si mes vers avaient des ailes**” (If My Verses Had Wings), number two in the first volume of 20 melodies called *Premier volume de vingt melodies*, was one of his earlier pieces that helped bring him notoriety. It was dedicated to his sister Maria. It is a touching song with lyrics written by Victor Hugo (1802–1885), who was a French writer and politician. The text compares the subject’s writings to a bird, a spirit, and love. The narrator sings about someone who is kind, pure, and faithful. The soft tune and moving piano part carry the light, sweet line of the singer and slows to leave a sense of joyful longing that appears in the lyrics.

“**Fêtes galantes**” (Gallant Party) was inspired by the poem of the same name by poet Paul Verlaine (1844–1896). The text has been set by other composers such as Debussy and Fauré. The title alludes to a famous style of French painting that usually depicts people dressed in ball gowns and tails in a park setting. The poem describes a scene for the onlookers, to portray what is happening and how the scene would have been in a painting of the time.

“**À Chloris**” (To Chloris), number fourteen in the second volume of 20 melodies called *Deuxième volume de vingt mélodies*, is originally a poem by Théophile de Viau (1590–1626) who wrote many beautiful literary and theater works. The song is beautiful and has many Baroque elements to it in musical style such as the ornate piano parts under the lyrical vocal line. With Hahn’s intimate setting of the poetry, this piece is elegant and declarative.

Si mes vers avaient des ailes

Mes vers fuiraient, doux et frêles
Vers votre jardin si beau
Si mes vers avaient des ailes
Comme l'oiseau

Ils voleraient, étincelles
Vers votre foyer qui rit
Si mes vers avaient des ailes
Comme l'esprit

Près de vous, purs et fidèles
Ils accourraient, nuit et jour
Si mes vers avaient des ailes
Comme l'amour !

If My Verses Had Wings

My verses would flee, sweet and fragile,
To your garden so lovely,
If my verses had wings,
Wings as the bird has.

They would fly, these sparks,
To your laughing hearth,
If my verses had wings,
Wings as the spirit has.

To you, pure and faithful,
They would hurry, night and day,
If my verses had wings,
Wings as Love has!

(Translation from <https://www.lieder.net/>)

Fêtes galantes

Les donneurs de sérénades
Et les belles écouteuses
Échangent des propos fades
Sous les ramures chanteuses.

C'est Tircis et c'est Aminte
Et c'est l'éternel Clitandre
Et c'est Damis qui pour mainte
Cruelle fait maint vers tendre.

Leurs courtes vestes de soie
Leurs longues robes à queues
Leur élégance, leur joie
Et leurs molles ombres bleues.

Tourbillonnent dans l'extase
D'une lune rose et grise
Et la mandoline jase
Parmi les frissons de brise.

Gallant Party

The serenaders
And the lovely listeners
Exchange sweet nothings
Beneath the singing branches.

It is Thyrasis and Amyntas
And it is the eternal Clytander,
And there is Damas who for many
Cruel women writes many verses tender.

Their short jackets of silk,
Their long gowns with trains,
Their elegance, their joy
And their soft blue shadows.

Whirl in the ecstasy
Of a moon pink and grey,
And the mandolin chatters
Amid the shivers of the breeze.

(Translation <https://www.ipasource.com>)

À Chloris

S'il est vrai, Chloris, que tu m'aimes,
Mais j'entends, que tu m'aimes bien,
Je ne crois point que les rois mêmes
Aient un bonheur pareil au mien.
Que la mort serait importune
De venir changer ma fortune
A la félicité des cieux!
Tout ce qu'on dit de l'ambrosie
Ne touche point ma fantaisie
Au prix des grâces de tes yeux.

To Chloris

If it be true, Chloris, that you love me,
(And I'm told you love me dearly),
I do not believe that even kings
Can match the happiness I know.
Even death would be powerless
To alter my fortune
With the promise of heavenly bliss!
All that they say of ambrosia
Does not stir my imagination
Like the favour of your eyes!

(Translation from
<https://www.oxfordlieder.co.uk>)

Jules Massenet (1842–1912) was a prominent opera composer in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. He met occasionally with Liszt, who introduced Massenet to his future wife, during a two-year period he spent in Italy where he composed *Requiem* and a suite for orchestra. His opera works gained traction when he got back to France and wrote for the Paris Opéra. His opera *Manon* was one of the first productions that propelled his popularity in the opera community. In the aria from Act 2, Scene 4 of *Manon*, “**Adieu, notre petite table**” (Goodbye, Our Little Table), Manon describes and reflects on her time spent with her lover, des Grieux. She has been told he will be kidnapped and decides to seek safety with de Brétigny, who has posed as a guardsman.

Adieu, notre petite table

Recit

Allons! Il le faut pour lui-même...
Mon pauvre chevalier!
Oui, c'est lui que j'aime!
Et pourtant, j'hésite aujourd'hui.
Non, non!... Je ne suis plus digne de lui!
J'entends cette voix qui m'entraîne
contre ma volonté:
Manon, Manon, tu seras reine...
Reine... par la beauté!
Je ne suis que faiblesse et que fragilité...
Ah! malgré moi je sens couler mes larmes...
Devant ces rêves effacés,
l'avenir aura-t-il les charmes
de ces beaux jours déjà passés?
Peu à peu elle s'est approchée de la table toute servie.

Aria

Adieu, notre petite table,
qui nous réunit si souvent!
Adieu, adieu, notre petite table,
si grande pour nous cependant!
On tient, c'est inimaginable...
Si peu de place... en se serrant...
Adieu, notre petite table!
Un même verre était le nôtre,
chacun de nous, quand il buvait
y cherchait les lèvres de l'autre ...
Ah! pauvre ami, comme il m'aimait!
Adieu, notre petite table, adieu!
entendant Des Grieux C'est lui!

Goodbye, our little table

Recit

Come! It must be done! For his sake!
My poor Chevalier!
Oh, yes, it is he whom I love!
And yet, I hesitate today!
No! I am no longer worthy of him!
I hear that voice which entices me against my will:
“Manon, you shall be queen,
queen by your beauty!”
I am nothing but weakness and fragility!
Ah! In spite of myself I feel my tears flowing,
Before these dreams that fade!
Will the future have the charms
Of the beautiful days already passed?
Little by little, she approached the fully set table.

Aria

Farewell, our little table,
That brought us together so often!
Farewell, our little table,
That seemed so large to us!
We took up, it is unimaginable,
So small a space when we embraced...
Farewell, our little table!
We used the same glass,
Each of us, when from it we drank,
There we searched for the lips of the other...
Ah! Poor friend, how he loved me!
Farewell, our little table, farewell!
(Translation <https://www.ipasource.com>)

Gaetano Donizetti (1797–1848) was a prolific Italian opera composer during the early 19th century. After his studies in Bologna, Donizetti began working on a commission that would later become the opera *Enrico di Borgogna*. It became such a success that the same theater company asked for him to write more for their group. The opera *L'elisir d'amore* (The Elixir of Love) was composed in 1832. The premise of the opera surrounds a wealthy landowner named Adina and a man in the town named Nemorino. Nemorino wishes that Adina would fall in love with him, but she rejects him at every turn. A man claiming to be a doctor arrives at Adina's gathering, promoting a love elixir. Nemorino, eager to win Adina's affection, decides to use it in hopes of making her fall in love with him. The duet in Act 1, Scene 3 “**Una parola, Adina...Chiedi all'aura luizingierra**” is Nemorino confessing his love to Adina, but she refuses him and tells him she will not commit herself to him.

Una parola, O Adina...Chiedi all'aura...

Recit

NEMORINO

Una parola, o Adina.

ADINA

L'usata seccatura!

I soliti sospir! Faresti meglio

A recarti in città presso tuo zio,

Che si dice malato, e gravemente.

NEMORINO

Il suo mal non è niente – appresso al mio.

Partirmi non poss'io ... Mille volte il tentai ...

ADINA

Ma s'egli more,

E lascia erede un altro? ...

NEMORINO

E che m'importa? ...

ADINA

Morrai di fame, e senza appoggio alcuno ...

NEMORINO

O di fame o d'amor ... per me è tutt'uno.

ADINA

Odimi. Tu sei buono,

Modesto sei, né al par di quel sergente

Ti credi certo d'inspirarmi affetto;

Così ti parlo schietto,

E ti dico che invano amor tu spero,

Ché capricciosa io sono, e non v'ha brama.

Che in me tosto non muoia appena è desta.

NEMORINO

Oh! Adina! ... e perché mai? ...

Aria

ADINA

Bella richiesta!

Chiedi all'aura lusinghiera

Perché vola senza posa

Or sul giglio, or sulla rosa,

Or sul prato, or sul ruscel;

Ti dirà che è in lei natura

L'esser mobile e infedel.

NEMORINO

Dunque io deggio? ...

A word, O Adina...Ask for the flattering aura

Recit

NEMORINO

A word, oh Adina.

ADINA

The used nuisance!

The usual sigh! You'd do better

To go to your uncle's town,

Which is said to be sick, and poor.

Nemorino

His illness is nothing - near mine.

I cannot leave ... A thousand times I tried ...

ADINA

But if you have more,

And leaves another heir? ...

NEMORINO

What do I care? ...

ADINA

You will die of hunger, and without any support

NEMORINO

O of hunger or love ... for me it's all one.

ADINA

Hear me. You are good,

You are modest, unlike that sergeant's par

You certainly believe what you say;

So I speak to you plainly,

And I tell you that in vain you love and hope,

I am inconsistent, and there is no desire.

That it does not die as soon as it is awakened.

NEMORINO

Oh! Adina! ... why? ...

Aria

ADINA

Good request!

Ask for the flattering aura

Because it flies without stopping

Now on the lily, or on the rose,

Or on the lawn, or on the ruscel;

He will tell you that it is in her nature

Being mobile and infidel.

NEMORINO

So I'm must? ...

ADINA
All'amor mio
Rinunziar, fuggir da me.

NEMORINO
Cara Adina! ... non poss'io.

ADINA
Tu nol puoi? Perché?

NEMORINO
Perché!
Chiedi al rio perché gemente
Dalla balza ov'ebbe vita
Corre al mar che a sè l'invita,
E nel mar sen va a morir:
Ti dirà che lo trascina
Un poter che non sa dir.

ADINA
Dunque vuoi?

NEMORINO
Morir com'esso, ma morir seguendo te.

ADINA
Ama altrove: è a te concesso.

NEMORINO
Ah! possibile non è.

ADINA
Per guarir di tal pazzia,
Ch'è pazzia l'amor costante,
Dèi seguir l'usanza mia,
Ogni dì cambiar d'amante.
Come chiodo scaccia chiodo,
Così amor discaccia amor.
In tal guisa io me la godo,
In tal guisa ho sciolto il cor.

NEMORINO
Ah! te sola io vedo, io sento,
Giorno e notte, e in ogni oggetto;
D'obliarti invano io tento.
Il tuo viso ho sculto in petto ...
Col cambiarti qual tu fai,
Può cambiarsi ogn'altro amor,
Ma non può, non può giammai
Il primiero uscir dal cor.

ADINA
To my love
Renunciate, flee from me.

NEMORINO
Dear Adina! ... I cannot.

ADINA
You cannot? Why?

NEMORINO
Why!
Ask the river why it groans
From the cliff where he lived
He runs to the sea, which invites him to himself,
And in the sea he goes to die:
He will tell you that it is dragging him
A being that can not say.

ADINA
So what do you want?

NEMORINO
To die as like it, but to die following you.

ADINA
There is love elsewhere: it's granted to you.

NEMORINO
Ah! It is impossible.

ADINA
To cure such madness,
That constant love is madness,
I must follow my custom,
Every day I change my lover.
Like a nail drives out a nail,
Thus love drives out love.
In this way I enjoy it,
In this way I have loosened my heart.

NEMORINO
Ah! It is you alone I see, I feel,
Day and night, and in every object;
In vain I try to forget you.
I have your face in my heart ...
If you change what you do,
We can change each other's love,
But it can not, it can never be
The first to come out of the heart.
(Translation from <https://www.opera-arias.com/donizetti/l'elisir-d'amore/una-parola-o-adina/>)

American composer **Leonard Bernstein** (1918–1990) was a master composer of concert music and musical theater, as well as a prominent conductor and influential music educator. Music was a part of Bernstein’s life from an early age, beginning with piano lessons at ten and later playing jazz gigs and somewhat recomposing popular classical music with his friends in high school. While studying at Harvard, he found friendship and good fortune of connecting with many talented musicians.

Some of his more famous compositions are in a jazz setting, especially in the song cycle, *I Hate Music*. Composed in 1942, the composition is dedicated to his flatmate, who used to plug her ears and say she hated music when Bernstein would teach lessons on piano. The song cycle is from the point of view of a girl named Barbara, who, like most children, is flippant and energetic. In “**Jupiter Has Seven Moons**”, the first of the cycle, Barbara is excited and pensive about learning that Jupiter has so many moons and contemplates what it would be like if Earth had just as many.

The third song in the cycle is “**I Hate Music**”, Barbara’s song about why she hates music so much. It has many jazz elements with wide and uncomfortable intervals for the singer that are unaccompanied at the beginning and end of the piece to show the way a child would make up music. The middle section contains social reductions and preconceived notions about music that she has gathered from the world around her.

The musical *West Side Story* (1957) retells the Shakespeare play, *Romeo and Juliet* and follows the tragic romance of Tony, from the group known as the Jets, and Maria, the sister of the group known as the Sharks. The song “**I Have a Love**” is sung by Maria after Tony has just killed her brother in a brawl between the Sharks and the Jets. She laments, if rather naïvely, that no matter what Tony has done, she will always love him and take care of him, even after he has killed someone she also loved.

Renowned musical theater composer **Stephen Sondheim** (1930–2021), a native of Manhattan, New York, composed and/or wrote lyrics for many of the world’s most iconic and thrilling musicals, including *West Side Story*, *Sweeney Todd: The Demon Barber of Fleet Street* and *Sunday in the Park with George*. Sondheim’s music is known for its intriguing complexity and difficulty due to the up-tempo songs with musical themes that are repeated with a range of different lyrics throughout one show. Every musical line and character choice was deliberately crafted to emphasize the individuality of each character in his productions.

Into the Woods (1987), another beloved show by Sondheim, has intertwining fairy tales, including that of the Baker and Cinderella as well as a Witch and Rapunzel. In “**On the Steps of the Palace**”, Cinderella is stuck on the steps in tar, put there by the prince to trap the mysterious lady who evaded his grasp. She contemplates her choices: should she should run and go back to servitude in her own family, or should she allow herself to be caught and enjoy the new, shiny life of being with a prince. The duet “**No One is Alone**,” near the end of the show, features Cinderella talking to Little Red Ridinghood and the Baker talking to Jack, as they reflect on the consequences their wishes have had on the kingdom and community they belong to. In the hauntingly beautiful piece “**Stay With Me**,” Rapunzel has just attempted to escape the tower where she had been held captive, and the Witch tries to convince her to stay. The song’s beauty lies in its repeated melodic line and lyrics, which, though seemingly well-intentioned, reveal a deeper emotional complexity.

(Notes by Addison Resh)