

TEXT AND TRANSLATIONS

Vincenzo Bellini (1801-1835)

L'abbandono from *Composizioni da Camera* (1820-30)

"L'abbandono"

Solitario zeffiretto,
a che movi i tuoi sospiri?
Il sospiro a me sol lice,
ché, dolente ed infelice,
chiamo [Dafne]¹ che non ode
l'insoffribil mio martir.

Langue invan la mammoletta
e la rosa e il gelsomino;
lunge son da lui che adoro,
non conosco alcun ristoro
se non viene a consolarmi
col bel guardo cilestrino.

Ape industrie, che vagando
sempre vai di fior in fiore,
ascolta, ascolta.

Se lo scorgi ov'ei dimora,
di' che rieda a chi l'adora,
come riedi tu nel seno
delle rose al primo albor.

Text by Vincenzo Bellini

Antonio Vivaldi (1678-1741)

Un certo non so che (1716)

Un certo non so che
Mi giunge e passa il cor,
E pur dolor, non è.
Se questo fosse amor?
Nel suo vorace ardor,
Già posi incauta,
Posi il piè!

Text by Anonymous

Gabriel Fauré (1845-1924)

Cinq mélodies "de Venise" Op. 58 (1891)

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,

"The abandonment"

Lonely breeze
why do you sigh?
Sighs are meant for me alone
for, grieving and unhappy,
I call on Daphnis who does not hear
my unbearable torment.

The sweet-smelling violet, the rose and the jasmine
languish in vain;
I am far from him whom I adore,
and I have no relief
unless he comes and console me
with his beautiful blue gaze.

Industrious bee, who always flit
from flower to flower,
listen, listen:

If you find him where he is,
tell him to come back to the one who adores him,
as you come back to the bosom of the roses
at the first light of dawn.

Translation by Paolo Montanari

Something intangible, unknown
Is reaching and passing through my heart
And yet pain it is not.
What if this were love?
Into its ferocious burning passion,
And reckless abandon,
I have already stepped!

Translation by Nicholas Cornforth

The gallant serenaders
And their fair listeners
Exchange sweet nothings
Beneath singing boughs.

Tircis is there, Aminte is there,
And tedious Clitandre too,
And Damis who for many a cruel maid
Writes many a tender song.

Their short silken doublets,
Their long trailing gowns,
Their elegance, their joy,
And their soft blue shadows

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

Text by Paul Verlaine

Nadia Boulanger (1887-1979)

Cantique (1909)

A toute âme qui pleure,
A tout péché qui passe,
J'ouvre au sein des étoiles
Mes mains pleines de grâces.

Il n'est péché qui vive,
Quand l'amour a parlé,
Il n'est âme qui meure,
Quand l'amour a pleuré.

Et si l'amour s'égaré
Aux sentiers d'ici-bas,
Ses larmes me retrouvent
Et ne s'égareront pas.

Text by Maurice Maeterlinck

Georges Bizet (1838-1875)

Vingt mélodie No. 3, Vieille chanson (1873)

Dans les bois l'amoureux Myrtil
Avait pris Fauvette légère :
"Aimable oiseau, lui disait-il,
Je te destine à ma bergère.
Pour prix du don que j'aurai fait,
Que de baisers !... Si ma Lucette
M'en donne deux pour un bouquet,
J'en aurai dix pour la Fauvette."

La Fauvette dans le vallon
A laissé son ami fidèle,
Et [fait tant]¹ que de sa prison
Elle s'échappe à tire-d'aile.
"Ah ! dit le berger désolé,
Adieu les baisers de Lucette !
Tout mon bonheur s'est envolé
Sur les ailes de la Fauvette."

Myrtil retourne au bois voisin,
Pleurant la perte qu'il a faite ;
Soit par hasard, soit à [dessein]²,
Dans le bois se trouvait Lucette :
[Sensible]³ à ce gage de foi,
Elle sortit de sa retraite,
En lui disant: "[Console-toi]⁴,
Tu n'as perdu que la Fauvette!"

Text by Vieille Chanson

Whirl madly in the rapture
Of a grey and roseate moon,
And the mandolin jangles on
In the shivering breeze.

Translation by Richard Stokes

To all weeping souls,
To all fleeting sins,
I open, cradled by stars,
My hands full of grace.

No sin can live
When Love has spoken,
No soul can die
When Love has wept.

And if Love goes astray
On terrestrial paths,
Its tears will find me
And not go astray.

Translation by Richard Stokes

The besotted Myrtil
Has caught in the woods the dainty warbler;
You, my lovely bird, he told him:
Are meant to be a present for my shepherdess
If I offer you for a present
She will show her gratitude with kisses, if my Lucette
usually gives me two for a bouquet
for such a present it will be ten for sure for the warbler.

The warbler however
had his mate in the valley
And as soon as possible wriggled free
and dashed away on clapping wings.
Och! Thought the despairing shepherd,
No more kisses from my Lucette!
All my hopes flew away
on the wings of the warbler!

Sadly Myrtil returned to the close wood
Mourning his loss.
But there, be it mere luck, be it destiny
Was his Lucette.
Well aware of his good intentions
She left her hideaway
And said: rest assured,
You only lost the warbler.

Translation by Charles Hubert Millevoey

Charles Gounod (1818-1893)

Ah! Je ris de me voir from *Faust* (1859)

O Dieu! que de bijoux! ... est-ce un rêve charmant
Qui m'éblouit, ou si je veille? ...
Mes yeux n'ont jamais vu de richesse pareille! ...

Si j'osais seulement
Me parer un moment
De ces pendants d'oreille! ...
Elle tire des boucles d'oreille de la cassette
Ah! voici justement,
Au fond de la cassette,
Un miroir! ... comment
N'être pas coquette?

Ah! je ris de me voir,
Si belle en ce miroir!
Est-ce toi, Marguerite?
Réponds-moi, réponds vite! -
Non! non! - ce n'est plus toi!
Non! non! - ce n'est plus ton visage!

C'est la fille d'un roi,
Qu'on salue au passage! -

Ah, s'il était ici! ...
S'il me voyait ainsi!
Comme une demoiselle,
Il me trouverait belle.
Elle se pare du collier.
Achevons la métamorphose!
Il me tarde encor d'essayer

Le bracelet et le collier!
Elle se pare du bracelet et se lève.
Dieu! c'est comme une main qui sur mon bras se pose!

Ah! je ris de me voir
Si belle en ce miroir!
Est-ce toi, Marguerite?
Reponds-moi, reponds vite! -
Ah, s'il était ici! ...
S'il me voyait ainsi!
Comme une demoiselle,
Il me trouverait belle.

Marguerite, ce n'est plus toi,
Ce n'est plus ton visage,
Non! c'est la fille d'un roi,
Qu'on salue au passage!

Text by Jules Barbier and Michel Carre

O goodness! What a lot of jewels!
Is this some bewitching dream
Which dazzles me,
Or am I really awake?

If only I dared
Adorn myself, for a moment,
With these earrings!
Ah! there is a mirror
At the bottom of the casket!
How could one help admiring oneself?

Ah! I laugh to see how lovely
I look in this mirror!
Is it really you, Marguerite?
Answer me, answer me quickly!
No, no, it is you no longer,
It is no longer your face!

This is the daughter of a king,
To whom everyone bows as she goes past.

Ah, if only he were here,
if only he could see me thus!
He would find me as handsome
As a young lady!
Let's complete the transformation!
I am longing to try on as well

The bracelet and the necklace!
She puts them on, first the necklace, then the bracelet.
Gracious! It feels like a hand
Clasping my wrist.

No, no, it is you no longer,
It is no longer your face!

This is the daughter of a king,
To whom everyone bows as she goes past.
Ah, If he saw me like this!
Like a young lady,
He would find me beautiful.

Marguerite, it's not you anymore,
It's not your face anymore,
No! she is the daughter of a king,
Everyone bows to you as you pass!

Translation by Marc Verzatt

Franz Schubert (1797-1828)
Der Hirt auf dem Felsen, D. 965, Op. 129 (1828)
"Der Hirt auf dem Felsen"

Wenn auf dem höchsten Fels ich steh',
In's tiefe Tal hernieder seh',
Und singe,

Fern aus dem tiefen dunkeln Tal
Schwingt sich empor der Widerhall
Der Klüfte.

Je weiter meine Stimme dringt,
Je heller sie mir wieder klingt
Von unten.

Mein Liebchen wohnt so weit von mir,
Drum seh'n' ich mich so heiß nach ihr
Hinüber.

In tiefem Gram verzehr ich mich,
Mir ist die Freude hin,
Auf Erden mir die Hoffnung wich,
Ich hier so einsam bin.

So sehnend klang im Wald das Lied,
So sehnend klang es durch die Nacht,
Die Herzen es zum Himmel zieht
Mit wunderbarer Macht.

Der Frühling will kommen,
Der Frühling, meine Freud',
Nun mach' ich mich fertig
Zum Wandern bereit.

Text by Wilhelm Müller

"Shepherd on the Rock"

When I stand on the highest rock,
Look down into the deep valley
And sing,

From far away in the deep dark valley
The echo from the ravines
Rises up.

The further my voice carries,
The clearer it echoes back to me
From below.

My sweetheart lives so far from me,
Therefore I long so to be with her
Over there.

Deep grief consumes me,
My joy has fled,
All earthly hope has vanished,
I am so lonely here.

The song rang out so longingly through the wood,
Rang out so longingly through the night,
That it draws hearts to heaven
With wondrous power.

Spring is coming,
Spring, my joy,
I shall now make ready to journey.

Translation by Richard Stokes