

Presented in partnership with Boston Modern Orchestra Project (BMOP) Voices of America

BarberFest

Distler Performance Hall, Tufts University

Concert One: Friday, September 25, 2009, 7 p.m.

Nuvoletta, opus 25 (1947)

Sarah Pelletier, soprano & Shiela Kibbe, pianist

The Daisies, opus 2 (1927)

With Rue my Heart is Laden, opus 2 (1928)

Bessie Bobtail, opus 2 (1934)

Shadi Ebrahimi, soprano & Linda Osborn-Blaschke, pianist

Of that so sweet imprisonment (*10 Early Songs*; 1935)

Love at the door (*10 Early Songs*; 1934)

Joe Dan Harper, tenor & Anne Kissel, pianist

Au Clair de la Lune (unpublished; 1926)

La Nuit (unpublished; 1925)

Sarah Pelletier, soprano & Shiela Kibbe, pianist

Mélodies Passagères, opus 27 (“To Francis Poulenc and Pierre Bernac”; 1950-51)

Puisque tout passe

Un cygne

Tombeau dans un parc

Le clocher chante

Départ

Joe Dan Harper, tenor & Anne Kissel, pianist

Pause

Strings in the earth and air (*10 Early Songs*; 1935)

My Fairyland (unpublished; 1924)

Monks and Raisins, opus 18 (1943)

Thy Love (unpublished; 1926)

Shadi Ebrahimi, soprano & Linda Osborn-Blaschke, pianist

Dere Two Fella Joe (unpublished; 1924)

Ask Me To Rest (unpublished; 1926)

Joe Dan Harper, tenor & Anne Kissel, pianist

A Nun Takes the Veil, opus 13 (1937)

Slumber Song of the Madonna (*10 Early songs*; 1925, originally for voice and organ)

October Weather (unpublished; 1923)

Shadi Ebrahimi, soprano & Linda Osborn-Blaschke, pianist

Three Songs, opus 45 (1972)

Now Have I Fed and Eaten up the Rose

A Green Lowland of Pianos

O Boundless, Boundless Evening

Sarah Pelletier, soprano & Shiela Kibbe, pianist

Concert One

Nuvoletta

Text from *Finnegan's Wake*, novel by James Joyce (1882-1941)

Nuvoletta in her light dress, spunn of sisteen shimmers,
was looking down on them, leaning over the bannistars and list'ning all she childishly could...
She was alone. All her nubied companions were asleeping with the squir'ls...
She tried all the winsome wonsome ways her four winds had taught her.
She tossed her sfumastelliacious hair like *la princesse de la Petite Bretagne*
and she rounded her mignons arms like Missis Cornwallis West
and she smiled over herself like the image of the pose of the daughter of the Emperour of Irelande
and she sighed after herself as were she born to bride with Tristis Tristior Tristissimus.
But, sweet madonine, she might fair as well have carried her daisy's worth to Florida...
Oh, how it was duusk. From Vallee Maraia to Grasyaplaina, dormimust echo!
Ah dew! Ah dew! It was so duusk that the tears of night began to fall,
first by ones and twos, then by threes and fours, at last by fives and sixes of sevens, for the tired ones were wecking; as we weep
now with them. *O! O! O! Par la pluie...*
Then Nuvoletta reflected for the last time in her little long life
and she made up all her myriads of drifting minds in one.
She cancelled all her engauzements. She climbed over the bannistars; she gave a chily cloudy cry:
Nuée! Nuée! A light dress fluttered. She was gone.

The Daisies

Words by James Stephens (1882-1950)

In the scented bud of the morning O,
When the windy grass went rippling far!
Saw my dear one walking slow
In the field where the daisies are.

We did not laugh, and we did not speak,
As we wandered happ'ly, to and fro,
I kissed my dear on either cheek,
In the bud of the morning O!

A lark sang up, from the breezy land;
A lark sang down, from a cloud afar;
As she and I went, hand in hand,
In the field where the daisies are.

With rue my heart is laden

Words by A.E. Housman (1859 – 1936)

With rue my heart is laden
For golden friends I had,
For many a rose-lipt maiden
And many a lightfoot lad.

By brooks too broad for leaping
The light-foot boys are laid;
The roselipt girls are sleeping
In fields where roses fade.

Bessie Bobtail

Words by James Stephens (1882-1950)

As down the road she wambled slow,
She had not got a place to go:
She had not got a place to fall
And rest herself, no place at all!

She stumped along, and wagged her pate;
And said a thing was desperate.

Her face was screwed and wrinkled tight
Just like a nut and, left and right,
On either side, she wagged her head
And said a thing; and what she said
Was desperate as any word
That ever yet a person heard.

She walked behind her for a while,
And watched the people nudge and smile:
But ever, as she went, she said,
As left and right she swung her head,

O Got He Knows:
And God He knows!
And, surely God Almighty knows!

Of that so sweet imprisonment

Words by James Joyce (1882-1941), from *Chamber Music* (1907)

Of that so sweet imprisonment
My soul, dearest, is fain—
Soft arms that woo me to relent
And woo me to detain.
Ah, could they ever hold me there
Gladly were I a prisoner!

Dearest, through interwoven arms
By love made tremulous,
That night allures me where alarms
Nowise may trouble us;
But sleep to dreamier sleep be wed
Where soul with soul lies prisoned.

Love at the door

Words by Meleager (Greek)
Translated by John Addington Symonds (1840-1893)

Cold blows the winter wind: 'tis Love,
Whose sweet eyes swim with honeyed tears
That bears me to thy doors, my love,
Tossed by the storm of hopes and fears.

Cold blows the blast of aching Love,
But be thou for my wand'ring sail
Adrift upon these waves of love
Safe harbor from the whistling gale.

Au clair de la lune

manuscript inscription: "A modern setting of the old Folk-tune"; for Deems Taylor's class!!"

Au clair de la lune
Mon ami Pierrot
Prete-moi ta plume
Pour écrire un mot.

Ma chandelle est morte
Je n'ai plus de feu
Ouvre-moi ta porte
Pour l'amour de Dieu.

Au clair de la lune
Pierrot répondit
Je n'ai pas de plume
Je suis dans mon lit.

Va chez la voisine
Je crois qu'elle y est
Car dans sa cuisine
On bat le briquet.

In the light of the moon,
Pierrot, my friend
Loan me your pen
to write something down

My candle's dead,
I've got no flame to light it
Open your door,
for the love of God!

In the light of the moon,
Pierrot replied
I don't have a pen,
I'm in my bed

Go to the neighbor's,
I think she's there
Because in the kitchen
someone just lit a match.

La Nuit

Words by Alfred Meurath (dates unknown)
Translation by Florestan Recital Project

La nuit c'est l'heure du songe—
Des rêves, et de l'amour—
De la douleur qui nous ronge,
Et la fin des maux de la jour.

La nuit c'est le noir et l'ombre,
C'est l'heure du doux repos—
Pour l'homme qui dort dans l'ombre,
Les paupiers et la coeur clos—
La nuit c'est le grand silence,
La solitude et l'ennui;
Troubles en notre conscience.
Car elle songe la nuit—
Et songe à de tristes choses,
Car là dans l'ombre est l'abîme!
Heureux l'homme qui repose
Et dort dans la nuit sublime!

The night is the hour of dreaming—
Of dreams, and of love—
Of sorrow which eats us away,
And the end of the pains of the day.

The night is the black and the shadow,
It is the hour of soft repose—
For the man who sleeps in the shadow,
The eyelids and the heart closed—
The night it is the vast silence,
The solitude and the ennui;
Troubles in our consciousness.
Because it contemplates the night—
And thinks about sad things,
Because there in the shadow is the abyss!
Happy the man who rests
And sleeps in the night sublime!

Mélodies Passagères

Words by Rainer Maria Rilke (1875-1926)
Translation by Florestan Recital Project

Puisque tout passe
Puisque tout passe, faisons
la mélodie passagère;
celle qui nous désaltère,
aura de nous raison.

Chantons ce qui nous quitte
avec amour et art;
soyons plus vite
que le rapide départ.

Since all things pass

Since all things pass, let us make
a passing melody;
the one that quenches our thirst
will be the one to win us.

Let us sing what leaves us
with love and art;
let us be swifter
than the swift departure.

Un cygne

Un cygne avance sur l'eau tout entouré
de lui-même, comme un glissant tableau;

ainsi à certains instants
un être que l'on aime est tout un espace mouvant.

Il se rapproche, doublé, comme ce cygne qui nage,
sur notre âme troublée...

qui à cet être ajoute la tremblante image
de bonheur et de doute.

Tombeau dans un parc

Dors au fond de l'allée,
tendre enfant, sous la dalle,
on fera le chant de l'été
autour de ton intervalle.

Si une blanche colombe
passait au vol là-haut,
je n'offrirais à ton tombeau
que son ombre qui tombe.

Le clocher chante

Mieux qu'une tour profane,
je me chauffe pour mûrir mon carillon.
Qu'il soit doux, qu'il soit bon
aux Valaisannes.

Chaque dimanche, ton par ton,
je leur jette ma manne;
qu'il soit bon, mon carillon,
aux Valaisannes.

Qu'il soit doux, qu'il soit bon;
samedi soir dans les channes
tombe en gouttes mon carillon
aux Valaisans des Valaisannes.

Départ

Mon amie, il faut que je parte.
Voulez-vous voir
l'endroit sur la carte?
C'est un point noir.
En moi, si la chose
bien me réussit, ce sera
un point rose
dans un vert pays.

A swan

A swan moves over the water encircled all around
by itself, like a painting that glides;

thus, at certain moments,
a being that one loves is a whole moving space.

It draws near doubled over, like the drifting swan,
over our troubled soul...

adding to that being the trembling image
of happiness and doubt.

Tomb in the park

Sleep at the end of the row,
dear child, beneath the stone;
around your space we shall sing
the song of summer.

Should a white dove
pass overhead,
as sole offering for your tomb,
I'll present its falling shadow.

The bell-tower sings

Better warmed than a secular tower
am I to ripen my carillon.
May it be sweet, may it be good
for the girls of the Valais.

Every Sunday, tone by tone,
I cast to them my manna;
may it be good, my carillon,
for the girls of the Valais.

May it be sweet, may it be good;
into their beers on Saturday nights
my carillon falls, drop by drop,
for the boys of the girls of the Valais.

Departure

My love, I must leave.
Would you care to see
the place on the map?
It's marked in black.
In me, if things
work out, it will be
a pink mark
in a green land.

Strings in the earth and air

Words by James Joyce (1882-1941), from *Chamber Music* (1907)

Strings in the earth and air
Make music sweet;
Strings by the river where
The willows meet.

There's music along the river
[For Love wanders there,]¹
Pale flowers on his mantle,
Dark leaves on his hair.

All softly playing,
With head to the music bent,
And fingers straying
Upon an instrument.

My Fairyland (to Miss Schmidt and Dr. Kerlin)
words by Robert T. Kerlin (dates unknown)

Tomorrow! Oh sweet tomorrow!
Tomorrow is my Fairyland!
Sadly, I think of Yesterday
A barren wreck strewn stretch of sand
Beneath low skies of grey.
Tomorrow! Oh divine Tomorrow!
I shall be brave and wise Tomorrow!
Weakness and failure marred Today!
My strength was sapped by pain and sorrow!
I stumbled in the way!
Tomorrow, God! Oh, sweet Tomorrow!
Untouched and pure that new world lies!
Thy world, and mine—a golden strand!
A golden dawn in cloudless skies!
Tomorrow is my Fairyland!

Monks and Raisins

Words by José Garcia Villa (1908-1997)

I have observed pink monks eating blue raisins.
And I have observed blue monks eating pink raisins.
Studiously have I observed.
Now, this is the way a pink monk eats a blue raisin:
Pink I she and it is blue and the pink
Swallows the blue.
I swear this is true.
And the way a blue monk eats a pink raisin is this:
Blue is he and it is pink and the blue
Swallows the pink.
And this also is truth.
Indeed I have observed and myself partaken
Of blue and pink raisins.
But my joy was different:
My joy was to see the blue and the pink counterpointing.

Thy Love

words by Elizabeth Barrett Browning (1806-1861)
heavily excerpted from Sonnet 14, *Sonnets from the Portuguese*

If thou wouldst love me, let it be for naught,
Except for love's sake only. Do not say
“I love her for her smile—her way of speaking gently,
*[for a trick of thought
That falls in well with mine, and certs brought
A sense of pleasant ease on such a day”]

For these things, in themselves, Belov'd, may
Be changed, or change for thee;
*[and love, so wrought,
May be unwrought so. Neither love me for
Thine own dear pity's wiping my cheeks dry, -
A creature might forget to weep, who bore
Thy comfort long, and lose thy love thereby!]
But love me for love's sake, that evermore
Thou may'st love on, through love's eternity.
*not set by Barber

Dere Two Fella Joe

manuscript inscription: "An Encore Song in French-Canadian Dialect"

"The words related to the composer by a White Mountain Guide—Spoken by a French-Canadian father, very much excited and mystified by the arrival of twins in his family"

Dere two fella Joe!
And wan se nam Pete
Stick a yo' finga in Joe's mout;
A-ha! She bite! Das Pete!

Ask Me To Rest

Words by Edward Hicks Streeter Terry (exact dates unknown; late 19th century)

Ask me to rest when I can show the world
That I have toiled: then will I heed thy plea;
But now—with nothing done, I must go on,
I pray, I pray thee ask it not of me!

Ask me to rest when every voice I hear
Speaks happiness: then will I heed thy plea:

But now—with nothing done, I could not rest,
My heart would break with pent-up agony.

Ask me to rest when Hate and Greed are stilled
When Warfare's o'er: then will I heed thy plea;

But now—that these are here—I must assist
In setting Man, thus bound, at liberty!

A Nun Takes the Veil

Words by Gerard Manley Hopkins (1844-1889)

I have desired to go
Where springs not fail,
To fields where flies no sharp and sided hail
And a few lilies blow.

And I have asked to be
Where no storms come,
Where the green swell is in the havens dumb,
And out of the swing of the sea.

Slumber Song of the Madonna

Words by Alfred Noyes (1880-1958)

Sleep, little baby, I love thee;
Sleep, little king, I am bending above thee!
How should I know what to sing
Here in my arms as I sing thee to sleep?

Hushaby low, rockaby so.

Kings may have wonderful jewels to bring,
Mother has only a kiss for her king!
Why should my singing so make me to weep?
Only to know that I love thee, I love thee,
Love thee, my little one, sleep.

October Weather

Words attributed to Barber

October mountain weather!
With joy sing ah__!
Now blooms the wayside heather!
Bright colors blend together!
The time of the year when the birds homeward fly!
And the flowers and shrubs must fall downward and die.
But am I full sorrowful? No, not I!
'Tis October weather!
October mountain weather!
With joy sing ah__!
Now blooms the wayside heather!
Oh come and sing together!
For if winter must come, there the spring must come, too,
And if birds fly away they will come back to you!
So we'll sing for the leaves and the skies of pure blue
In October weather!

Now have I fed and eaten up the rose

Words by James Joyce (1882-1941), after the German of Gottfried Keller (1819-1890)

Now have I fed and eaten up the rose
Which then she laid within my stiffcold hand.
That I should ever feed upon a rose
I never had believed in liveman's land.

Only I wonder was it white or red
The flower that in the dark my food has been.
Give us, and if Thou give, thy daily bread,
Deliver us from evil, Lord, Amen.

A Green Lowland of Pianos

Words by Czeslaw Milosz (b. 1911)

Translated from the Polish by Jerzy Harasymowicz (1933-1999)

in the evening
as far as the eye can see
herds
of black pianos

up to their knees
in the mire
they listen to the frogs

they gurgle in water
with chords of rapture

they are entranced
by froggish, moonish spontaneity

after the vacation
they cause scandals
in a concert hall
during the artistic milking
suddenly they lie down
like cows

looking with indifference
at the white flowers
of the audience

at the gesticulating
of the ushers

O boundless, boundless evening

Words by Christopher Middleton (b. 1926)

From the German of Georg Heym (1887-1912)

O boundless, boundless evening. Soon the glow
Of long hills on the skyline will be gone,
Like clear dream country now, rich-hued by sun.
O boundless evening where the cornfields throw
The scattered daylight back in an aureole.
Swallows high up are singing, very small.
On every meadow glitters their swift flight,
In woods of rushes and where tall masts stand
In brilliant bays. Yet in ravines beyond
Between the hills already nests the night.
