

SOUTHBANK CENTRE

Benjamin Appl: Dietrich Fischer-Dieskau at 100

Sunday 2 March 2025, 7pm | Queen Elizabeth Hall

Classical music has always had reinvention at its core. Throughout our programme, we at the Southbank Centre – alongside our Resident Orchestras and Resident Artists – capture that trailblazing spirit with works that broke the mould across the ages and brand-new approaches to timeless classics.

However you choose to experience the endlessly inventive world of classical music, we're so glad that you're doing it here with us. Welcome to Classical Music: Spring/Summer 2025.

Toks Dada, Head of Classical Music, Southbank Centre

Repertoire

FIRST ENCOUNTER

Schubert Liebesbotschaft from Schwanengesang, D.957 No.1	3'
Schubert Am Bach im Frühlinge, D.361	3'40
Schubert Der Musensohn, D.764	2'10

CHILDHOOD IN BERLIN

Albert Fischer-Dieskau Heidenröslein	1'30
Klaus Fischer-Dieskau Excerpt from Nocturne for piano, Op.1 No.1	1'
Klaus Fischer-Dieskau Wehmut, Op.3 No.2	1'30

YOUTH AND FIRST STEPS AS A SINGER

Brahms Wie bist du meine Königin, Op.32 No.9	4'30
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WAR TIMES AND BEING A SOLDIER, 1944–45

Wolf Andenken (My Thoughts)	2'20
Reimann Tenebrae	3'

PRISONER OF WAR, 1945–47

Sinding Sylvelin, Op.55, No.1	2'10
Tchaikovsky None but the lonely heart (Net, tolko tot, kto znal), Op.6 No.6	3'10
Künneke Ich bin nur ein armer Wandergesell from Der Vetter aus Dingsda	1'30

RETURN TO BERLIN, 1947

Eisler Die Heimkehr	2'00
Grieg Ein Traum, Op.48 No.6	3'30

Interval

FIRST STEPS OF A WORLD CAREER

Brahms 4 Serious Songs, Op.121	18'
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SONG ACCOMPANISTS AND FRIENDS

Schubert An mein Klavier, D.342	3'20
Barber A green lowland of pianos, Op.45 No.2	2'10
Britten Proverb 3 from Songs and proverbs of William Blake for baritone & piano, Op.74	0'50

LOSS OF HIS FIRST WIFE, IRMEL, 1963

Loewe Süßes Begräbnis, Op.62 (first cycle) No.4	3'10
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DEATH OF HIS MOTHER, THEODORA, 1966

Eisler Mutterns Hände	2'15
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MARITAL LIFE (RUTH LEUWERIK, 1965–67; KRISTINA PUGELL, 1968–75; JULIA VARADY, 1977–2012)

Grothe Excerpt from Vater braucht eine Frau (Father needs a wife) (film score)	0'20
Schubert Liebhaber in allen Gestalten, D.558	2'
Clara Schumann Liebste du um Schönheit, Op.12 No.2	2'30

EPILOGUE

Weber Meine Lieder, meine Sänger, Op.15 No.1	2'30
Schubert Litanei (Auf das Fest Aller Seelen), D.343	2'
Schubert An die Musik, D.547	2'40

Performers

Benjamin Appl *baritone*
James Baillieu *piano*
Jamie Newall *actor*

This performance lasts approximately 2 hours and 20 minutes, including an interval.

For Dieter: the past and the future

'He let poetry resound and music speak'

Franz Grillparzer's draft for Schubert's gravestone inscription

Schubert's *An die Musik* expresses my great gratitude to Dieter Fischer-Dieskau for the many hours we spent together: 'Beloved art, for this I thank you!'

I met Fischer-Dieskau for the first time in 2009 when I took part in a masterclass at the Schubertiade Schwarzenberg. Afterwards he offered me the opportunity to study with him privately. From that point on until just a few weeks before his death, I had the incredible fortune of working with him regularly at his homes in Berlin and Berg.

Dietrich Fischer-Dieskau was born in Berlin in 1925. His father was a schoolmaster who loved to compose, for example, he wrote the Singspiel *Sesenheim (Heidenröslein)*. Dieter's mother was denied the opportunity to become a singer, so she ensured that great care was taken over the musical education of her three sons, Klaus, Martin and Dietrich. His eldest brother, Klaus, began composing at an early age and dedicated *Nocturne* to his mother, and *Wehmut* to his brother. It soon became clear that Dieter wanted to be a singer, and the first song he studied was *Wie bist du, meine Königin*. Shortly before his military service in 1944, he became engaged to Irmgard 'Irmel' Poppen, his future wife. Torn from his homeland, he wrote many love letters full of longing for and memories of (*Andenken*) his distant beloved.

In 1944, the Nazis murdered Dieter's brother Martin. During the early years of the war and Dieter's subsequent imprisonment in Italy, he learned countless pieces of music, while regularly hearing of the atrocities at the hands of the National Socialists. Reimann's *Tenebrae* reflects on the suffering of Jewish victims during the Holocaust in a haunting way, and was written for Dieter.

His singing gave strength to thousands of prisoners. Shortly after the end of the war, he sang songs from previously hostile countries, for example, Sinding's *Sylvelin* and Tchaikovsky's *Nur wer die Sehnsucht kennt*. His repertoire also included operetta (*Ich bin nur ein armer Wandergesell*). In 1947 he finally returned to Germany, (*Die Heimkehr*) and started his international career in Berlin where he began to receive major recognition (*4 Serious Songs*).

Irmel gave birth to three sons, but tragically she died during the birth of her third child (*Süßes Begräbnis*). As is so often the case, Dieter saw music as the only path out of suffering (*An mein Klavier*). Benjamin Britten dedicated his *Songs and Proverbs of William Blake* to him – 'For Dieter: The past and the future' (*Proverb III*) after this terrible loss. Another bitter moment of grief was the death of his beloved mother, Theodora, to whom he was very close (*Mutterns Hände*).

His private life in the years to come was not very stable: his marriage to the actress Ruth Leuwerik (1965–67), famous from the film *Vater braucht eine Frau*, only lasted a short time, as did

his marriage to Kristina Pugell (1968–75) (*Liebhaber in allen Gestalten*). In 1977 he married the soprano Julia Varady (*Liebst du um Schönheit*).

Fischer-Dieskau received countless commissioned compositions during his lifetime, and took part in important premieres, such as the historically significant and emotionally stirring premiere of Britten's *War Requiem* in 1962 which he then translated into German. Additionally, Samuel Barber wrote his *Three Songs*, Op.45, especially for him.

Teaching played an important role in Dieter's later decades. Often demanding, strict and with a great attention to detail, he shared his unfathomable knowledge with his students. I fondly recall him telling me that he liked my recording of *Sterb' ich, so hüllt in Blumen meine Glieder* so much, that he would like to mentor me. From the many hours we then spent together, I particularly remember the moments when he felt unobserved, sharing his mischievous sense of humour and dancing through the living room.

When I visited Fischer-Dieskau for the final time, it was just a few weeks before his death in May 2012. Coming away that day, I somehow felt that could be the last time I would see Dieter. I wrote him a very long letter, thanking him for the experiences we had shared and expressing my gratitude for all I had learned from him. And then a few weeks later, I learned that he'd passed away.

This concert (and the accompanying CD recording) is both a personal and public dedication to this fine artist. I was and remain inspired by Dieter both from our private time together and his recordings, and this moment gives us all the chance to celebrate his enormous legacy on his 100th birthday.

Programme note © Benjamin Appl, 2025

For Dieter: the past and the future by Benjamin Appl and James Baillieu will be released in May 2025 on Alpha Classics.

Find out more

- ▶ benjaminappl.de
- ▶ james-baillieu.com
- ▶ southbankcentre.co.uk

FIRST ENCOUNTER

Franz Schubert (1797–1828)

Liebesbotschaft from Schwanengesang, D.957 No.1

Rauschendes Bächlein,
So silbern und hell,
Eilst zur Geliebten
So munter und schnell?
Ach, trautes Bächlein,
Mein Bote sei du;
Bringe die Grüße
Des Fernen ihr zu.

All ihre Blumen
Im Garten gepflegt,
Die sie so lieblich
Am Busen trägt,
Und ihre Rosen
In purpurner Glut,
Bächlein, erquicke
Mit kühlender Flut.

Wann sie am Ufer,
In Träume versenkt,
Meiner gedenkend
Das Köpfchen hängt,
Tröste die Süße
Mit freundlichem Blick,
Denn der Geliebte
Kehrt bald zurück.

Neigt sich die Sonne
Mit rötlichem Schein,
Wiege das Liebchen
In Schlummer ein.
Rausche sie murmelnd
In süße Ruh,
Flüstere ihr Träume
Der Liebe zu.

Text by Ludwig Rellstab

Franz Schubert

Am Bach im Frühlinge, D.361

Du brachst sie nun, die kalte Rinde,
Und rieselst froh und frei dahin,
Die Lüfte wehen wieder linde,
Und Moos und Gras wird neu und grün.

Allein, mit traurigem Gemüte
Tret ich wie sonst zu deiner Flut,
Der Erde allgemeine Blüte
Kommt meinem Herzen nicht zu gut.

Hier treiben immer gleiche Winde,
Kein Hoffen kommt in meinen Sinn,
Als dass ich hier ein Blümchen finde,
Blau, wie sie der Erinnerung blühen.

Text by Franz von Schober

Murmuring brooklet,
So silvery bright,
Hurry to my beloved
So fast and light,
Oh friendly brooklet,
Be my messenger fair,
Bring my distant greetings
to her.

All the flowers
She tends in her garden,
Which she sweetly
Bears on her bosom,
And her roses
In a purple glow,
Brooklet, refresh them
With cooling flow.

When on the bank,
Immersed in dreams,
Remembering me,
She hangs her head,
Comfort my sweetheart
With a friendly glance,
For her beloved
Will soon come back.

When the sun sets
With reddening glow,
Rock my loved one
To slumber,
Murmur for her
Sweet sleep,
And whisper dreams
Of Love to her.

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You have now broken your cold crust
and you ripple merrily and freely forth.
The breezes blow gently again,
and moss and grass grow new and green.

Alone and in a mournful mood
I walk by your waters as of old.
The blossoming of the earth
does my soul no good.

Here the same winds are ever driving me,
and no hope enters my mind,
even when I find a little flower here:
blue, like the flowers blooming in my memories.

Translation © Emily Ezust, from the LiederNet Archive www.lieder.net

Franz Schubert

Der Musensohn, D.764

Durch Feld und Wald zu schweifen,
Mein Liedchen weg zu pfeifen,
So geht's von Ort zu Ort.
Und nach dem Takte reget
Und nach dem Maß beweget
Sich alles an mir fort.

Ich kann sie kaum erwarten,
Die erste Blum im Garten,
Die erste Blüt am Baum.
Sie grüßen meine Lieder,
Und kommt der Winter wieder,
Sing ich noch jenen Traum.

Ich sing ihn in der Weite,
Auf Eises Läng und Breite,
Da blüht der Winter schön.
Auch diese Blüte schwindet,
Und neue Freude findet
Sich auf bebauten Höhn.

Denn wie ich bei der Linde
Das junge Völkchen finde,
Sogleich erreg ich sie.
Der stumpfe Bursche bläht sich,
Das steife Mädchen dreht sich
Nach meiner Melodie.

Ihr gebt den Sohlen Flügel
Und treibt durch Tal und Hügel
Den Liebling weit von Haus.
Ihr lieben, holden Musen,
Wann ruh ich ihr am Busen
Auch endlich wieder aus.

Text by Johann Wolfgang von Goethe

Roaming through field and wood,
Piping along my little song,
So I go from place to place!
And to my beat
And to my measure
Everything moves with me.

I can hardly wait for them,
The first bloom in the garden,
The first blossom on the tree.
My songs greet them,
And when winter returns
I still sing of that dream.

I sing them far and wide,
Through the ice's realm,
Then winter blossoms beautifully!
That bloom disappears too,
And new joy is found
In the hilltowns.

For when I, beside the linden,
Encounter young folks,
I rouse them at once.
The swaggering youth puffs up,
The naive maiden twirls
To my melody.

You give my feet wings
And drive through vale and hill
Your favorite, far from home.
You dear, kind muses,
When on her bosom
Will I finally again find rest?

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CHILDHOOD IN BERLIN

Albert Fischer-Dieskau (1865–1937)

Heidenröslein

Sah ein Knab' ein Röslein stehn,
Röslein auf der Heiden,
War so jung und morgenschön,
Lief er schnell, es nah zu sehn,
Sah's mit vielen Freuden.
Röslein, Röslein, Röslein rot,
Röslein auf der Heiden.

Knabe sprach: Ich breche dich,
Röslein auf der Heiden!
Röslein sprach: Ich steche dich,
Dass du ewig denkst an mich,
Und ich will's nicht leiden.
Röslein, Röslein, Röslein rot,
Röslein auf der Heiden.

Und der wilde Knabe brach
'S Röslein auf der Heiden;
Röslein wehrte sich und stach,
Half ihm doch kein Weh und Ach,
Musst es eben leiden.
Röslein, Röslein, Röslein rot,
Röslein auf der Heiden.

Text by Johann Wolfgang von Goethe

Passing lad a rose blossom spied,
Blossom on the heath growing,
'Twas so fair and of youthful pride,
Raced he fast to be near its side,
Saw it with joy o'erflowing.
Blossom, blossom, blossom red,
Blossom on the heath growing.

Said the lad: I shall pick thee,
Blossom on the heath growing!
Blossom spoke: Then I'll prick thee,
That thou shalt ever think of me,
And I'll not be allowing.
Blossom, blossom, blossom red,
Blossom on the heath growing.

And the lusty lad did pick
The blossom on the heath growing;
Blossom, in defense, did prick,
'Twas, alas, but a harmless nick,
Had to be allowing.
Blossom, blossom, blossom red,
Blossom on the heath growing.

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Klaus Fischer-Dieskau (1921–94)

Wehmut, Op.3 No.2 (1936)

Trocknet nicht, trocknet nicht,
Tränen der ewigen Liebe!
Ach, nur dem halbgetrockneten Auge
Wie öde, wie tot die Welt ihm erscheint!
Trocknet nicht, trocknet nicht,
Tränen unglücklicher Liebe!

Text by Johann Wolfgang von Goethe

Do not run dry, do not run dry,
Tears of eternal love!
Even to the half-dry eye
How desolate and dead the world appears!
Do not run dry, do not run dry,
Tears of unhappy love!

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YOUTH AND FIRST STEPS AS A SINGER

Johannes Brahms (1833–97)

Wie bist du meine Königin, Op.32 No.9

Wie bist du, meine Königin,
Durch sanfte Güte wonnevoll!
Du lächle nur – Lenzdüfte wehn
Durch mein Gemüte wonnevoll!

Frisch aufgeblühter Rosen Glanz
Vergleich ich ihn dem deinigen?
Ach, über alles was da blüht,
Ist deine Blüte, wonnevoll!

Durch tote Wüsten wandle hin,
Und grüne Schatten breiten sich,
Ob fürchterliche Schwüle dort
Ohn Ende brüte, wonnevoll.

Laß mich vergehn in deinem Arm!
Es ist in ihm ja selbst der Tod,
Ob auch die herbste Todesqual
Die Brust durchwüte, wonnevoll.

Text by Georg Friedrich Daumer

How blissful you are, my queen,
When you are gentle and good!
Merely smile, and spring fragrance wafts
Through my spirit blissfully!

The brightness of freshly blooming roses,
Shall I compare it to yours?
Ah, soaring over all that blooms
Is your bloom, blissful!

Wander through dead wastelands,
And green shadows will be spreading,
Even if fearful sultriness
Broods there without end... blissfully!

Let me die in your arms!
It is in them that Death itself,
Even if the sharpest pain
Rages in my breast... is blissful!

Translation © Emily Ezust, from the LiederNet Archive www.lieder.net

WAR TIMES AND BEING A SOLDIER, 1944–45

Hugo Wolf (1860–1903)

Andenken (My Thoughts)

Ich denke dein,
Wenn durch den Hain
Der Nachtigallen
Akkorde schallen!
Wann denkst du mein?

Ich denke dein
Im Dämmerchein
Der Abendhelle
Am Schattenquelle!
Wo denkst du mein?

Ich denke dein
Mit süßser Pein
Mit bangem Sehnen
Und heissen Tränen!
Wie denkst du mein?

O denke mein,
Bis zum Verein
Auf besserm Sterne!
In jeder Ferne
Denk ich nur dein!

Text by Friedrich von Matthisson

I think of you
When through the grove
The nightingales
Sing out their chords!
When do you think of me?

I think of you
At the twilight
Of evening
By the shadowy spring!
Where do you think of me?

I think of you
With sweet pain,
With anxious longing
And hot tears!
How do you think of me?

O think of me
Until our union
On a better star!
However distant I may be
I think only of you!

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Aribert Reimann (1936–2024)

Tenebrae

Nah sind wir Herr,
nahe und greifbar.

Gegriffen schon, Herr,
ineinander verkrallt, als wär
der Leib eines jeden von uns
dein Leib, Herr.

Bete, Herr,
bete zu uns,
wir sind nah.

Windschief gingen wir hin,
gingen wir hin, uns zu bücken
nach Mulde und Maar.

Zur Tränke gingen wir, Herr.

Es war Blut, es war,
was du vergossen, Herr.

Es glänzte.

Es warf uns dein Bild in die Augen, Herr,
Augen und Mund stehn so offen und leer, Herr.

Wir haben getrunken, Herr.
Das Blut und das Bild, das im Blut war, Herr.

Bete, Herr.
Wir sind nah.

Text by Paul Celan

We are near, Lord,
near and within reach.

Already taken, Lord,
clinging to each other as if
the body of each of us were
your body, Lord.

Pray, Lord,
pray to us,
we are near.

We went there bowed,
we went to bend
over hollow and pool.

We went there to drink, Lord.

It was blood, it was,
that you shed, Lord.

It glistened.

It cast your image in our eyes, Lord,
Our eyes and mouths are so open and empty, Lord.

We drank, Lord.
The blood and the image that was in the blood, Lord.

Pray, Lord.
We are near

Translation: Anon

PRISONER OF WAR, 1945–47

Christian Sinding (1856–1941)

Sylvelin, Op.55 No.1

O Sylvelin, segne Gott
Dich auf Erden zu jeder Stund'!
Dein Aug' ist blau, Dein Antlitz licht
Und rot Dein Mund.

Wie Sonnenschein auf den Feldern,
Des Morgens nach langer Nacht
Hast Du erhellt mir den dunklen Sinn,
mich Traurigen froh gemacht.

Sylvelin, Sylvelin! Allnächtlich schliess' ich
in mein Gebet Dich ein.
Gott segne Dich alle Tage,
Er weiss: Dein Herz ist rein.

Text by Vette Vislie/Wilhelm Henzen

Oh Sylvelin, God bless
You on earth at every hour!
Your eyes are blue, your face is bright
And your mouth red.

Like sunshine in the fields,
In the morning after a long night
You have enlightened my dark mind,
turned my sadness to joy.

Sylvelin, Sylvelin! Every night I
include you in my prayers.
God bless you always,
He knows: your heart is pure.

Translation: Anon

Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky (1840–93)

None but the lonely heart (Net, tolko tot, kto znal), Op.6 No.6

Nur wer die Sehnsucht kennt
Weiss, was ich leide!
Allein und abgetrennt
Von aller Freude,
Seh' ich an's Firmament
Nach jener Seite.
Ach! der mich liebt und kennt
Ist in der Weite.
Es schwindelt mir, es brennt
Mein Eingeweide.
Nur wer die Sehnsucht kennt
Weiss, was ich leide!

Text by Johann Wolfgang von Goethe

Only one who knows longing
Knows what I suffer!
Alone and cut off
From all joy,
I look into the firmament
In that direction.
Ah! he who loves and knows me
Is far away.
I am reeling,
My entrails are burning.
Only one who knows longing
Knows what I suffer!

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Eduard Künneke (1885-1953)

Ich bin nur ein armer Wandergesell from Der Vetter aus Dingsda

Ich bin nur ein armer Wandergesell,
gute Nacht, liebes Mädel, gut Nacht.
Gar dünn ist mein Wams und gar dick ist mein Fell,
gut Nacht, liebes Mädel gut Nacht.

Und oft da dacht ich, ich packte das Glück,
doch immer da zog mir's die Patschhand zurück.
Da hab ich geweint und gelacht.

Text by Herman Haller/Fritz Oliven 'Rideamus'

I'm just a poor wandering companion,
goodnight, dear girl, goodnight.
My doublet is very thin and my fur is very thick,
good night, dear girl, good night.

And often I thought I was seizing happiness,
but every now and then the bad hand pulled me back.
I cried and laughed then.

Translation: Anon

RETURN TO BERLIN, 1947

Hanns Eisler (1898-1962)

Die Heimkehr

Die Vaterstadt, wie find ich sie doch?
Folgend den Bomberschwärmen
Komm ich nach Haus
Wo liegt sie mir?

Dort, wo die ungeheueren
Gebirge von Rauch stehn
Das in den Feuern dort
Ist sie

Die Vaterstadt, wie empfängt sie mich wohl?
Vor mir kommen die Bomber. Tödliche Schwärme
Melden euch meine Rückkehr. Feuersbrünste
Gehn dem Sohn voraus

Text by Bertold Brecht

My native city, in what sort of state do I find it?
Following the swarms of bombers,
I return home.
Where then is my city?

Where the ominous
Mountains of smoke stand,
There in the fires,
There it is.

My native city, how will it receive me?
Before me come the bombers. Deadly swarms
Announce my return to you. Raging fires
Precede the son.

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Edvard Grieg (1843-1907)

Ein Traum, Op.48 No.6

Mir träumte einst ein schöner Traum:
Mich liebte eine blonde Maid;
Es war am grünen Waldesraum,
Es war zur warmen Frühlingszeit:

Die Knospe sprang, der Waldbach schwoll,
Fern aus dem Dorfe scholl Geläut'-
Wir waren ganzer Wonne voll,
Versunken ganz in Seligkeit.

Und schöner noch als einst der Traum
Begab es sich in Wirklichkeit --
Es war am grünen Waldesraum,
Es war zur warmen Frühlingszeit:

Der Waldbach schwoll, die Knospe sprang,
Geläut' erscholl vom Dorfe her --
Ich hielt dich fest, ich hielt dich lang --
Und lasse dich nun nimmermehr!

O, frühlingsgrüner Waldesraum!
Du lebst in mir durch alle Zeit!
Dort ward die Wirklichkeit zum Traum,
Dort ward der Traum zur Wirklichkeit!

Text by Friedrich Martin von Bodenstedt

I once had a beautiful dream:
I was in love with a fair-haired young woman,
we were in a green forest glade,
it was warm spring weather,

the buds were sprouting, the brook was running strong,
the sounds of the distant village could be heard,
we were full of joy,
immersed in bliss.

And even more beautiful than the dream
was what occurred in reality:
it was in a green forest glade
it was warm spring weather,

the buds were sprouting, the brook was running strong,
the sounds of the distant village reached our ears --
I held you tight, I held you long,
and now will never again let you go!

Oh the spring-green glade
is alive in me for all time!
That is where reality became a dream
and the dream became reality!

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FIRST STEPS OF A WORLD CAREER

Johannes Brahms

4 Serious Songs, Op.121

Denn es gehet dem Menschen wie dem Vieh

Denn es gehet dem Menschen wie dem Vieh;
wie dies stirbt, so stirbt er auch;
und haben alle einerlei Odem;
und der Mensch hat nichts mehr denn das Vieh:
denn es ist alles eitel.

Es fährt alles an einen Ort;
es ist alles von Staub gemacht, und wird wieder zu Staub.
Wer weiß, ob der Geist des Menschen aufwärts fahre,
und der Odem des Viehes unterwärts unter die Erde fahre?

Darum sahe ich, daß nichts bessers ist,
denn daß der Mensch fröhlich sei in seiner Arbeit,
denn das ist sein Teil.
Denn wer will ihn dahin bringen, daß er sehe,
was nach ihm geschehen wird?

Text: Ecclesiastes

Ich wandte mich

Ich wandte mich und sahe an alle,
die Unrecht leiden unter der Sonne;
Und siehe, da waren Tränen derer,
Die Unrecht litten und hatten keinen Tröster,
Und die ihnen Unrecht taten, waren zu mächtig,
Daß sie keinen Tröster haben konnten.

Da lobte ich die Toten, die schon gestorben waren
Mehr als die Lebendigen, die noch das Leben hatten;
Und der noch nicht ist, ist besser, als alle beide,
Und des Bösen nicht inne wird, das unter der Sonne geschieht.

Text: Ecclesiastes

O Tod, wie bitter bist du

O Tod, wie bitter bist du,
Wenn an dich gedenket ein Mensch,
Der gute Tage und genug hat
Und ohne Sorge lebet;
Und dem es wohl geht in allen Dingen
Und noch wohl essen mag!

O Tod, wie wohl tust du dem Dürftigen,
Der da schwach und alt ist,
Der in allen Sorgen steckt,
Und nichts Bessers zu hoffen,
Noch zu erwarten hat!

Text: Ecclesiastes

Wenn ich mit Menschen

Wenn ich mit Menschen - und mit Engelzungen redete,
und hätte der Liebe nicht,
so wär ich ein tönend Erz, oder eine klingende Schelle.

Und wenn ich weissagen könnte und wüßte alle Geheimnisse
und alle Erkenntnis,
und hätte allen Glauben,
also, daß ich Berge versetzte, und hätte der Liebe nicht,
so wäre ich nichts.
Und wenn ich alle meine Habe den Armen gäbe,
und ließe meinen Leib brennen
und hätte der Liebe nicht,
so wäre mir's nichts nütze.

[I thought to myself:] 'As it goes with Man, so it goes with
animals, as one dies, so the other as well;
and they all breathe the same air;
therefore Man has nothing over the animals:
it's vain to think otherwise.

[We] all end up in the same place;
[we] are all made from dust, and will return to dust.
Who knows whether the human spirit may ascend,
while animal spirits merely descend into the earth?"

Therefore, I understood that nothing could be better
than for a Man to be satisfied with his work,
because that is his lot in life.
For who could prepare him
to see what the future has in store for him?

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I returned, and saw all
all the injustice under the sun;
and I saw the tears of those
who were oppressed, and they had no comforter,
and those oppressors had so much power;
they could have no comfort.

So I praised the dead who had already died
more than [I praised] the living who are still alive.
And he who is neither [of these], is better than both [of these],
who has not seen the evil that, under the sun, is done.

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O Death, how bitter are you,
when a man thinks about you,
who has good days and plenty
and lives worry-free
and who is fortunate in all things,
and even eats well!

O Death, how well you care for the poor,
[he] who is weak and old,
and beset by all sorrows,
and has nothing better to hope for
nor even to expect!

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If I could speak with the tongues of men – and of angels,
and had not love,
so would I become like sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal.

And if I could prophecy, and could know all secrets
and all knowledge;
and I had complete faith,
so that I could move mountains; and had not love,
I would be nothing.
And if I gave all my possessions to the poor,
and gave my body to be burned,
and had not love,
it would not benefit me.

Wir sehen jetzt durch einen Spiegel in einem dunklen Wort,
dann aber von Angesicht zu Angesichte.
Jetzt erkenne ich's stückweise;
dann aber werde ich's erkennen,
gleichwie ich erkannt bin.

Nun aber bleibet Glaube, Hoffnung, Liebe, diese drei;
aber die Liebe ist die größte unter ihnen.

Text: Corinthians

We see now through as though in a darkened mirror,
but then face to face.
Now I know in part;
but then I shall know,
just as also I am known.

Now abide faith, hope, love, these three;
but the greatest of these is love.

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SONG ACCOMPANISTS AND FRIENDS

Franz Schubert

An mein Klavier, D.342

Sanftes Klavier,
Welche Entzückungen schaffest du mir,
Sanftes Klavier!
Wenn sich die Schönen
Tändelnd verwöhnen,
Weih' ich mich dir,
Liebes Klavier!

Sing' ich dazu,
Goldener Flügel, welch' himmlische Ruh'
Lispelst mir du!
Tränen der Freude
Netzen die Saite!
Silberner Klang
Trägt den Gesang.

Sanftes Klavier!
Welche Entzückungen schaffest du mir,
Goldnes Klavier!
Wenn mich im Leben
Sorgen umschweben,
Töne du mir,
Trautes Klavier!

Text by Christian Schubart

Gentle piano,
What delights you create for me,
Gentle piano!
While beauties
Spoil themselves with dalliances,
I devote myself to you,
Beloved piano!

If I sing along,
Golden instrument, what heavenly peace
You whisper to me!
Tears of joy
Moisten the strings!
A silver sound
Carries the song.

Gentle piano,
What delights you create for me,
Golden piano!
When in my life
Cares hover around me,
Resound for me,
Devoted piano!

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Samuel Barber (1910–81)

A green lowland of pianos, Op.45 No.2

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

Text by Harsymowicz/Mitosz

Benjamin Britten (1913–76)
Proverb 3 from Songs and proverbs of William Blake for
baritone & piano, Op.74

The bird a nest, the spider a web, man friendship.

LOSS OF HIS FIRST WIFE, IRMEL, 1963

Carl Loewe (1796–1869)

Loewe Süßes Begräbnis, Op.62 (first cycle) No.4

Schäferin, ach, wie haben
Sie dich so süß begraben!

Alle Lüfte haben gestönet,
Maienglocken zu Grab dir getönet.

Glühwurm wollte die Fackel tragen,
Stern ihm selbst es tät versagen.

Nacht ging schwarz in Trauerflören,
Und all ihre Schatten gingen in Chören
Die Tränen wird dir das Morgenrot weinen,
Und den Segen die Sonn' aufs Grab dir scheinen.

Schäferin, ach, wie haben
Sie dich so süß begraben!

Text by Friedrich Rückert

Shepherdess, ah, how sweetly
Have they laid you to rest!

All the winds have moaned,
The Lilies-of-the-Valley tolled their bells at your grave,

The glow-worm wanted to carry a torch,
The stars themselves refused the task.

Night came in black, in mourning,
And all its shadows came in chorus.
Dawn will weep tears for you,
And the Sun will shine to bless your grave.

Shepherdess, ah, how sweetly
Have they laid you to rest!

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DEATH OF MOTHER, THEODORA, 1966

Hanns Eisler (1898–1962)

Mutterns Hände

Hast uns Stulln jeschnitten
un Kaffe jekocht
un de Töpfe rübajeschohm -
un jewischt un jenäht
un jemacht un jedreht...
alles mit deine Hände.

Hast de Milch zujedeckt,
uns bobongs zujesteckt
un Zeitungen ausjetragen -
hast die Hemden jezählt
und Kartoffeln jeschält...
alles mit deine Hände.

Hast uns manches Mal
bei großem Schkandal
auch'n Katzenkopp jegeben.
Hast uns hochgebracht.
Wir wahn Sticker acht,
sechse sind noch am Leben...
Alles mit deine Hände.

Heiß warn se un kalt.
Nu sind se alt.
Nu bist du bald am Ende.
Da stehn wir nu hier,
und denn komm wir bei dir
und streicheln deine Hände.

Text by Kurt Tucholsky

Cut us bread and butter
And brewed us coffee
And pushed us the pots -
And wiped and sewed
And made and turned...
All with your hands.

Covered the milk,
slipped us sweets
and delivered papers -
counted the shirts
and peeled potatoes...
All with your hands.

Sometimes, too,
When we caused a stink,
Gave us a clip.
Brought us up.
We were eight kids,
Six are still living...
All with your hands.

They were hot and cold.
Now they're old.
Now, you're near the end.
So now we are here
And we come to you
And stroke your hands.

Translation © Tom Wilkinson

MARITAL LIFE (RUTH LEUWERIK, 1965–67;
KRISTINA PUGELL, 1968–75; JULIA VARADY, 1977–2012)
Franz Grothe (1908–82)

Franz Schubert

Liebhaber in allen Gestalten, D.558

Ich wollt, ich wär ein Fisch,
So hurtig und frisch;
Und kämst du zu angeln,
Ich würde nicht mangeln.
Ich wollt, ich wär ein Fisch,
So hurtig und frisch.

Ich wollt' ich wär' treu,
Mein Liebchen stets neu;
Ich wollt' mich verheißen,
Wollt' nimmer verreisen.
Ich wollt' ich wär' treu,
Mein Liebchen stets neu.

Doch bin ich wie ich bin,
Und nimm mich nur hin!
Willst bess're besitzen,
So laß dir sie schnitzen.
Ich bin nun wie ich bin;
So nimm mich nur hin!

Text by Johann Wolfgang von Goethe

I wish I were a fish,
so quick and fresh;
and if you came to fish,
I would not stay away.
I wish I were a fish,
so quick and fresh;

I wish I were faithful,
and my sweetheart always new;
I would promise myself
never to go away.
I wish I were true,
and my sweetheart always new.

But I am just as I am;
and take me for that!
If you want something better,
then let them carve it out of you.
For I am just as I am;
and take me for that.

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Clara Schumann (1819–96)

Liebst du um Schönheit, Op.12 No.2

Liebst du um Schönheit,
O nicht mich liebe!
Liebe die Sonne,
Sie trägt ein goldnes Haar.

Liebst du um Jugend,
O nicht mich liebe!
Liebe den Frühling,
Der jung ist jedes Jahr.

Liebst du um Schätze,
O nicht mich liebe!
Liebe die Meerfrau,
Sie hat viel Perlen klar.
Liebst du um Liebe,
O ja, mich liebe!
Liebe mich immer,
Dich lieb' ich immerdar.

Text by Friedrich Rückert

If you love for beauty,
Oh do not love me!
Love the sun,
It has gold hair!

If you love for youth,
Oh do not love me!
Love the spring-time
That is young each year!

If you love for wealth,
Oh do not love me!
Love the mermaid,
Who has many limpid pearls!
If you love for love,
Oh yes, love me!
Love me forever;
I will love you forevermore!

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EPILOGUE

Carl Maria von Weber (1786–1826)

Meine Lieder, meine Sanger, Op.15, No.1

Meine Lieder, meine Sange
Sind dem Augenblick geweiht,
Ihre Tone, ihre Klange
Schwinden mit der flucht'gen Zeit.

Groe Sanger sind geschieden
Die kein Mund jetzt mehr erwahnt;
O wie toricht, wenn hienieden
ich den Nachruhm mir ersehnt'.

Tonen meine kleinen Lieder,
Die ein fuhlend Herz erschuf
Nur in einem Herzen wieder,
Dann erfullt ist ihr Beruf.

Ewig mogen sie verhallen,
Wenn die Leier mit entsinkt,
Und zu dunklen Grabeshallen
Mit der Todesengel winkt.

Text by Wilhelm von Lowenstein-Wertheim

Franz Schubert

Litanei auf das Fest aller Seelen

Ruhn in Frieden alle Seelen,
Die vollbracht ein banges Qualen,
Die vollendet sussen Traum,
Lebenssatt, geboren kaum,
Aus der Welt hinuber schieden:
Alle Seelen ruhn in Frieden!

Text by Jacobi

Franz Schubert

An die Musik, D.547

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 entruckt!

Oft hat ein Seufzer, deiner Harf entflossen,
Ein susser, heiliger Akkord von dir
Den Himmel bessrer Zeiten mir erschlossen,
Du holde Kunst, ich danke dir dafur!

Text by Schober

My songs, my chants
Are dedicated to the moment,
Their tones, their sounds
Dwindling with fleeting time.

Great singers have departed
Which no mouth now mentions;
Oh how foolish, if here
I longed for fame.

My little songs sound,
That a feeling heart created
Only in one heart repeat,
Then their job is fulfilled.

May they fade away forever,
When the lyre sinks,
And I sink into the dark tomb
With the angel of death beckoning.

Translation: Anon

All souls rest in peace
who have had done with an anxious torment,
who have had done with a sweet dream,
who, sated with life, hardly born,
have departed from this world:
all souls rest in peace!

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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.

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