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Concert recording 2018-04-22b

Lisa Kulczak

Ann Rye

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Graduate Recital I
Lisa Kulczak, *mezzo-soprano*
Dr. Ann Rye, *piano*

April 22, 2018 | 3:30 pm
Stella Boyle Smith Concert Hall

Program

01 "Erbarme dich, mein Gott" Johann Sebastian Bach (1685-1750)
from *St. Matthew Passion, BWV 244* - 01
Elizabeth Lyon-Ballay, *violin*
Dr. Ann Rye, *piano*

02 "Nehmt meinen Dank", K. 383 Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart (1756-1791)

Dr. Ann Rye, *piano*

03 Beau Soir Claude Debussy (1862-1918)
Nuits d'Etoiles transcribed by Ellen Heinicke Foster (b. 1966)

Devanee Williams, *harp*

04 from *Wesendonck Lieder, Op. 91* Richard Wagner (1813-1883)

I. Der Engel
II. Im Treibhaus
III. Träume

Dr. Ann Rye, *piano*

— Intermission —

- 05 Non t'accostar all' urna Franz Peter Schubert (1797-1828)
Non t'accostare all' urna Guiseppe Verdi (1813-1901)

Dr. Ann Rye, *piano*

- 06 from *Jewish Folk Poetry*, Op. 79. Dmitri Shostakovich (1906-1975)

- I. Плач об умершем младенце
VI. Брошенный отец
VIII. Зима

Cheri Headrick, *soprano*
Lisa Kulczak, *alto*
Judd Burns, *tenor*
Dr. Ann Rye, *piano*

- 07 "O tut das weh! Bedřich Smetana (1824-1884)
....Mein Liebesträum, wie war er schön"
from *The Bartered Bride*

Dr. Ann Rye, *piano*

Lisa is a student of Dr. Moon-Sook Park.

This recital is given in partial fulfillment of the Master of Music in Voice Performance.

We hope you enjoy tonight's performance.

For more information on the Department of Music and other events, please visit our calendar of events online at <http://music.uark.edu>

Ushering and stage management for this concert provided by Sigma Alpha Iota and Phi Mu Alpha.

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Notes and Translations

Johann Sebastian Bach is widely regarded as one of the most significant composers of all time, having written works in all the genres of his age except for opera. Born into a family of musicians, Bach's musical training began at an early age—first with his father and later, with his elder brother. At age fifteen, he joined a cloister school where he familiarized himself with the compositional styles of other composers through the customary practice of copying and arranging their works. An accomplished violinist, organist and composer, Bach held a number of court and church positions before his appointment as Kapellmeister at Thomaskirche in Leipzig in 1723.¹ It was a position he would retain until his death and marked a period during which he was most productive in writing cantatas and other church music. On average, Bach composed a cantata a week during this time, in addition to special music for the major festival services of the church year. Many of these works have been lost, and only two hundred of his cantatas remain today.²

Although Bach was not well-known outside the circle of Leipzig during his lifetime, today he ranks as one of the foremost composers of church music, due in large part to his masterful settings of the Gospel Passions. The St. Matthew Passion, composed in 1728-1729, is comprised of sixty-eight musical numbers, divided into two parts. It recounts the story of Jesus' capture and crucifixion, as set forth in chapters twenty-six and twenty-seven of the Gospel of St. Matthew. The action is narrated in solo tenor recitatives and choruses, with chorales, duets and arias interspersed. Christian Friedrich Henrici, a Leipzig poet with whom Bach frequently collaborated, provided the text for many of the added recitatives and arias.³ First performed on Good Friday in 1729, it is unclear whether it was performed again during Bach's life. However, Felix Mendelssohn discovered the score in a Berlin library and staged a performance in 1829; it has been considered a masterpiece of sacred music since then. The alto aria *Erbarme dich, mein Gott* serves as a reflection on the events which have just transpired in the narrative—chiefly, Peter's threefold denial that he was with Jesus at Gethsemane.

Erbarme dich, mein Gott

Erbarme dich, mein Gott,
um meiner Zähren willen!
Schaue hier, Herz und Auge
weint vor dir bitterlich.
Erbarme dich, mein Gott

Have mercy, my God

Have mercy, my God,
for my tears sake!
See here, heart and eye
weep for you bitterly.
Have mercy, my God.⁴

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1. Kurt Pahlen, *The World of the Oratorio* (Portland: Amadeus Press, 1990), 22.
 2. Donald Jay Grout and Claud V. Palisca, *A History of Western Music*, 6th ed. (New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 1980), 429.
 3. Grout, 433.
 4. Bard Suverkrop, "Erbarme dich, mein Gott", IPA and Translation, IPA Source, LLC, 2007. <https://www.ipasource.com/catalog/product/view/id/69/category/118/>.

Born in 1756 in Salzburg, **Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart** was already a musical prodigy by the age of six. Such was his talent that his father, a virtuoso violinist in his own right, gave up his own performing ambitions, instead devoting himself to his son's musical education. Equally talented on clavier, violin and organ, Mozart was soon concertizing for nobility across Europe. His performances frequently included sight-reading concertos and improvising variations, fugues and fantasias (in addition to playing prepared recitals). He was already composing his own works as well—minuets by age six, a symphony at nine years, and an oratorio and opera within the subsequent two years. His travels afforded him exposure to every kind of music being written or performed throughout the whole of western Europe, and Mozart was quick to absorb everything he heard. The result was a synthesis of national styles, mixed with Mozart's own unique gift for composing. The catalog of his works numbers more than six hundred, and he composed in every major musical genre of his time—operas, symphonies, sonatas, concertos, string quartets, art songs, concert arias and more.⁵ In many cases, Mozart set the standards by which the genre was defined.

Mozart composed some fifty concert arias, many of which were meant to be inserted into operas written either by himself or another composer. *Nehmt meinen Dank*, composed in 1782, was written for soprano Aloysia Lange (Mozart's future sister-in-law). Set to leave Vienna, she wanted to convey a parting "thank-you" to her faithful public. The aria, with text by an anonymous source, is a simple ballad of two verses. Originally scored for flute, oboe, bassoon and strings, its simplicity and considerable charm are typical of Mozart's composing genius.⁶

Nehmt meinen Dank

Nehmt meinen Dank, ihr holden Gönner!
 So feurig, als mein Herz ihn spricht,
 euch laut zu sagen, können Männer,
 Ich nur ein Weib, vermag es nicht.
 Doch glaubt, ich werd' in meinem Leben
 niemals vergessen eure Huld;
 Bleib' ich, so wäre mein Bestreben,
 sie zu verdienen, doch Geduld!

Von Anbeginn war stetes Wandern
 der Musen und der Künstler Los;
 mir geht es so wie allen Andern,
 fort aus des Vaterlandes Schoss
 seh' ich mich von dem Schicksal leiten.
 Doch glaubt es mir, in jedem Reich,
 wohin ich geh', zu allen Zeiten
 bleibt immerdar mein Herz bei Euch.

Take my Thanks

Take my thanks, dear patrons!
 As passionately as my heart would speak
 to you, aloud a man can say;
 I, only a woman, am not able.
 But believe me, never in my life
 will I forget your kindness;
 If I were to remain, I would endeavor
 to earn it, but patience!

Since the beginning wandering has been
 the lot of the Muses and the artist;
 it is the same with me as with all the others,
 forth from the bosom of my homeland
 I see myself being led by fate.
 But believe me, in every place,
 where I go, at all times
 my heart will remain forever with you.⁷

5. Grout, 502-503.

6. Neal Zaslaw, ed., *The Compleat Mozart: A Guide to the Musical Works of Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart* (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 1990), 79.

7. Bard Suverkrop, "Nehmt meinen Dank", IPA and Translation, IPA Source, LLC, 2009. <https://www.ipasource.com/nehmt-meinen-dank.html>.

Composer **Claude Debussy** is often thought of as the French counterpart to Hugo Wolf, as the song styles of both reflect a “complete synthesis of poetry and music, with poetry *as poetry* the paramount determinant of the musical texture”.⁸ Debussy was active in the literary and artistic circles of the day, and most often chose to set poetry of his contemporaries, particularly Verlaine and Mallarmé. Later in his career, he turned to French literature of the past for inspiration. Debussy was meticulous about marking his scores, noting every accent, dynamic and tempo. In the same way, he was intentional about which keys he used for which songs, always paying close attention to tonal color. Although he only wrote a total of eighty-seven songs, Debussy’s particular skill in capturing the essence of the poetry and transforming it into musical expression sets him apart in the history of French *mélodie*.

“Beau Soir”, performed here transcribed for voice and harp, was written for voice and piano in 1877. It is an example of Debussy’s early impressionistic style—a style with which he would become most closely identified later. Although he did not achieve full mastery of those techniques until twenty years after he composed this *mélodie*, there is ample evidence of his trademark blending of text and musical material in the quiet scene painted with the setting sun and the warm evening breeze.

“Nuits d’Etoile”, also performed here with harp, was written when Debussy was only eighteen years old, and was the budding composer’s first composition to be published. Using text of the 19th century French poet and writer Théodore de Banville, it illustrates how nature and literature inspired a young Debussy. De Banville’s original poem has four verses, but Debussy elected to omit one of them when writing the song.

Beau Soir

Lorsque au soleil couchant les rivières sont roses,
Et qu’un tiède frisson court sur les champs de blé,

Un conseil d’être heureux semble sortir des choses

Et monter vers le cœur troublé;

Un conseil de goûter le charme d’être au monde,

Cependant qu’on est jeune et que le soir est beau,
Car nous nous en allons comme s’en va cette onde:
Elle à la mer, -- nous au tombeau.

Nuit d’étoiles

Nuit d’étoiles, sous tes voiles,
sous ta brise et tes parfums,
Triste lyre qui soupire,
je rêve aux amours défunts.

Beautiful Evening

When rivers are pink in the setting sun,
And a slight shiver runs through fields of
wheat

A suggestion to be happy seems to rise up
from all things

And ascends toward the troubled heart;

A suggestion to taste the charms of the
world

While one is young and the evening is fair,
For we are on our way just as this wave is:
It is going to the sea, and we, to the grave!⁹

Night of Stars

Night of stars, beneath your veils,
beneath your breeze and your fragrances,
sad lyre that sighs,
I dream of lovers who have passed.

8. Carol Kimball, *Song: A Guide to Art Song Style and Literature* (Milwaukee: Hal Leonard Corporation, 2006), 190.

9. Translation copyright © by Emily Ezust from the LiederNet Archive.
<http://www.lieder.net/>.

La sereine mélancolie vient éclore
au fond de mon coeur,
Et j'entends l'âme de ma mie
Tressaillir dans le bois rêveur.

Dans les ombres de la feuillée,
Quand tout bas je soupire seul,
Tu reviens, pauvre âme éveillée,
Toute blanche dans ton linceuil.

Je revois à notre fontaine
tes regards bleus comme les cieux;
Cette rose, c'est ton haleine,
Et ces étoiles sont tes yeux.

The serene melancholy
now blooms in the depths of my heart,
and I hear the soul of my love
tremble in the dreaming woods.

In the shadow of the leaves,
when alone, I sigh softly,
you return poor soul awakened,
all pale in your shroud.

I see again at our fountain
your gaze blue as the heavens ;
this rose, it is your breath,
and these stars are your eyes.¹⁰

Richard Wagner had little interest in writing songs—he found it difficult to adapt his musical style and concept of *Gesamtkunstwerk* into such a small form as song. As a result, the total output of his songs is minimal and, apart from the *Wesendonck Lieder*, infrequently performed. Most of his other songs were composed during a stay in Paris in 1839-40, during which Wagner attempted to gain recognition as a composer from the French. However, Schubert was extremely popular at the time, and Wagner met with little success. Not to be deterred, he re-purposed material from many of these songs for use in his operas.¹¹ However, despite Wagner's ambivalence toward song as an art form, his beliefs regarding the relationship between music and drama and between music and text, spelled out in his book *Opera and Drama*, had a profound effect on many composers of his time. These included Hugo Wolf and Gustav Mahler, both of whom would go on to make great contributions to Lieder.

The *Wesendonck Lieder* (composed in 1857-58 and originally titled *Fünf Gedichte für eine Frauenstimme*) are singular for several reasons. First, they are the result of a love affair between Wagner and the author of the poems, Mathilde Wesendonck. Mathilde and her husband were devoted supporters of Wagner, helping him and his wife during a period of exile in Switzerland by renting them a small house near their home. Wagner and Mathilde fell in love during the Wagners' stay, which prompted him to stop work on *Tristan und Isolde* long enough to compose five songs to poems written by Mathilde. In fact, this marked only the second time Wagner had utilized texts not penned by him. Moreover, he designated two of the *Wesendonck* songs as studies for *Tristan und Isolde*: "Träume" and "Im Treibhaus" anticipate the opera both harmonically and melodically. The two-note motive in the accompaniment to "Träume" can be heard in the Act II love duet of the opera, and "Im Treibhaus" contains passages that appear in the Prelude to Act III.¹² Originally meant for voice and piano, Wagner scored "Träume" for orchestra as a birthday present for Mathilde; the remaining songs were orchestrated by Felix Mottl around 1880.

10. Bard Suverkrop, "Nuit d'étoiles", IPA and Translation, IPA Source, LLC, 2015.
<https://www.ipasource.com/nuit-d-etoiles-11923.html>.

11. Kimball, 98.

12. Kimball, 99.

I. Der Engel

In der Kindheit frühen Tagen
hört ich oft von Engeln sagen,
die des Himmels hehre Wonne
tauschten mit der Erdensonne.

Daß, wo bang ein Herz in Sorgen
schmachtet vor der Welt verborgen;
daß, wo still es will verbluten
und vergeh'n in Tränenfluten;

Daß, wo brünstig sein Gebet
einzig um Erlösung fleht,
da der Engel niederschwebt
und es sanft gen Himmel hebt.

Ja, es stieg auch mir ein Engel nieder,
und auf leuchtendem Gefieder
führt er, ferne jedem Schmerz,
meinen Geist nun himmelwärts!

I. The Angel

In childhood's early days
I often heard them speak of angels
who would exchange heaven's sublime bliss
for the earth's sun.

So that, when an anxious heart in need
is full of longing, hidden from the world;
so that, when it wishes silently to bleed
and melt away in a trickle of tears;

So that, when its prayer ardently
pleads only for release,
then the angel floats down
and gently lifts it to heaven.

Yes, an angel has come down to me,
and on glittering wings
it leads, far away from every pain,
My soul now heavenward!¹³

III. Im Treibhaus

Hochgewölbte Blätterkronen,
Baldachine von Smaragd,
Kinder ihr aus fernen Zonen,
saget mir, warum ihr klagt?

Schweigend neiget ihr die Zweige,
malet Zeichen in die Luft,
und der Leiden stummer Zeuge,
steiget aufwärts, süßer Duft.

Weit in sehndem Verlangen
breitet ihr die Arme aus,
und umschlinget wahnbefangen
öder Leere nicht'gen Graus.

Wohl, ich weiß es, arme Pflanze;
Ein Geschicke teilen wir,
ob umstrahlt von Licht und Glanze,
unsre Heimat ist nicht hier!

III. In the Hothouse

High-vaulted crowns of leaves,
Canopies of emerald,
You children of distant zones,
Tell me, why do you lament?

Silently you bend your branches,
Draw signs in the air,
And the mute witness to your anguish -
A sweet fragrance - rises.

In desirous longing, wide
You open your arms,
And embrace through insane predilection
The desolate, empty, horrible void.

I know well, poor plants,
A fate that we share,
Though we bathe in light and radiance,
Our homeland is not here!

13. Translation copyright © by Emily Ezust, from the LiederNet Archive.
<http://www.lieder.net/>

Und wie froh die Sonne scheidet
von des Tages leerem Schein,
hüllet der, der wahrhaft leidet,
sich in Schweigens Dunkel ein.

Stille wird's, ein säuselnd Weben
füllet bang den dunklen Raum:
schwere Tropfen seh' ich schweben
an der Blätter grünem Saum.

V. Träume

Sag', welch wunderbare Träume
halten meinen Sinn umfängen,
daß sie nicht wie leere Schäume
sind in ödes Nichts vergangen?

Träume, die in jeder Stunde,
jedem Tage schöner blüh'n,
und mit ihrer Himmelskunde
selig durchs Gemüte ziehn!

Träume, die wie hehre Strahlen
in die Seele sich versenken,
dort ein ewig Bild zu malen:
Allvergessen, Eingedenken!

Träume, wie wenn Frühlingssonne
aus dem Schnee die Blüten küßt,
daß zu nie geahnter Wonne
sie der neue Tag begrüßt,
daß sie wachsen, daß sie blühen,
träumend spenden ihren Duft,
sanft an deiner Brust verglühn,
und dann sinken in die Gruft.

And how gladly the sun departs
From the empty gleam of the day,
He veils himself, he who suffers truly,
In the darkness of silence.

It becomes quiet, a whispered stirring
Fills uneasily the dark room:
Heavy drops I see hovering
On the green edge of the leaves.¹⁴

V. Dreams

Tell me, what kind of wondrous dreams
are embracing my senses,
that have not, like sea-foam,
Vanished into desolate Nothingness?

Dreams, that with each passing hour,
each passing day, bloom fairer,
and with their heavenly tidings
roam blissfully through my heart!

Dreams which, like holy rays of light
sink into the soul,
there to paint an eternal image:
forgiving all, thinking of only One.

Dreams which, when the Spring sun
kisses the blossoms from the snow,
so that into unsuspected bliss
they greet the new day,
so that they grow, so that they bloom,
and dreaming, bestow their fragrance,
gently glow and fade on your breast,
and then sink into the grave.¹⁵

14. Bard Suverkrop, "Im Treibhaus", IPA and Translation, IPA Source, LLC, 2008.
<https://www.ipasource.com/catalogsearch/result/?q=im+treibhaus&order=relevance&dir=desc>.

15. Bard Suverkrop, "Träume", IPA and Translation, IPA Source, LLC, 2008.
<https://www.ipasource.com/traume-8154.html>.

Franz Peter Schubert is widely regarded as the founder of the Lied (German art song), despite the fact that Beethoven's *An die ferne Geliebte* was the first compilation of songs set in numerical order. He composed over six hundred songs, setting texts by more than ninety different poets. Compositionally, he employed every formal structure: strophic, strophic variation, through-composed and declamatory. He is also credited with the first of the great German song cycles, *Die schöne Müllerin* and *Winterreise*. With Schubert, for the first time the piano is an active supporter of the voice, often setting the stage for the narrative of the song through tone painting and imitation of nature or inanimate objects and their sounds. Schubert's treatment of the piano hearkens ahead to the High Romantic Lied and its composers, where the piano would become an equal partner to the voice.

Giuseppe Verdi is primarily known for his operas, yet his first published work was a set of six songs, written in 1838. Numbering less than twenty-five in total, Verdi's style is more reminiscent of Bellini or Donizetti. However, even here his keen dramatic sense is evident. The discerning listener can also hear traces of melodies that appear later in his operatic work.¹⁶

It is interesting, then, that both composers set a version of "Non t'accostar all'urna", a poem by the Italian poet, librettist and writer, Jacopo Vittorelli. Schubert's setting is from a collection of *Vier Canzonen*, translated from German into Italian, while Verdi's setting is from a set of *Sei Romanze*. Listening to both versions, one after the other, should underscore the differences in how each composer chose to treat the subject of unrequited love and death.

Non t'accostar all'urna

Non t'accostar all'urna
che l'ossa (il cener)* mie rinserra.
Questa pietosa terra
è sacra al mio dolor.
(Odio gli affanni tuoi)*
Ricuso i tuoi giacinti;
non voglio i pianti tuoi
che giovano agli estinti
due lagrime (lacrime)* o due fior?

Empia! dovevi allora
porgermi un fil d'aita,
quando tra'èa la vita
in grembo dei (nell'ansia e nei)* sospir.

A che d'inutil pianto
assordi la foresta?

Do not approach the Urn

Do not approach the urn
that encloses my bones.
This holy ground
is sacred to my sorrow.
(I hate your anguish)
I refuse your hyacinths;
I do not want your tears;
What use are they to the dead,
two tears or two flowers?

Wicked one! You should then
have offered me a thread of help,
when my life was pulled
into the womb of (into anxiety and)*
sighing.

For what with useless crying?
Why do you deafen the forest?

16. Kimball, 432.

Rispetta un ombra mesta,
e lasciala dormir.

*set by Verdi

Respect a ghost, sad,
and let it sleep.¹⁷

Russian composer **Dmitri Shostakovich** entered the St. Petersburg Conservatory just after the revolution ended. A brilliant pianist, he had earned money during the difficult war years by accompanying for the cinema. As a composer, he gained fame early on with the premier of his *First Symphony*, but he would know both tremendous successes and terrific failures, depending on the whims of the Communist Party. Publicly, Shostakovich supported the Party, composing music that appealed to the masses and appeared to support the Soviet doctrine. Because of this, his music is often criticized as Soviet propaganda. Privately, he wrote what he termed "serious music 'for the desk drawer'".¹⁸

In the 1940s, Shostakovich found performances of his works banned. The song cycle, *Jewish Folk Poetry*, was one such example. Written in 1948 for soprano, alto, tenor and piano, the work was only ever performed in small, private settings with groups of friends in attendance, due to the extreme anti-Semitism of the time. The work was well-received, but it was never performed publicly until 1955. Soprano Nina Dorliak, mezzo-soprano Zara Dolukhanova, and tenor Alexei Maslenikov, were accompanied by Shostakovich himself for the performance. The texts are taken from a collection of Jewish folk songs, compiled by I. Dobrushin and A. Yuditsky. Shostakovich said he was drawn to Jewish folk songs because of the seemingly jolly melodies used to set such tragic themes.

I. Плач об умершем младенце

Солнце и дождик,
Сиянье и мгла.
Туман опустился,
Померкла луна.

Кого родила она?
Мальчика, мальчика.
А как назвали?
Мойшелэ, Мойшелэ.
А в чём качали Мойшелэ?
В люльке.
А чем кормили?
Хлебом да луком.
А где схоронили?

I. Lament for a Dead Child

Sun and rain,
Light and darkness.
The fog went down,
The moon is dark.

To whom have you given birth?
To a boy, to a boy.
How he was named?
Moyshele, Moyshele.
In what did you rock him?
In the cradle.
With what did we feed him?
Bread and onions.
Where did we bury him?

17. Bard Suverkrop, "Non t'accostar all'urna", IPA and Translation, IPA Source, LLC, 2008. <https://www.ipasource.com/catalog/product/view/id/7517/category/1155/>.

18. Martha Elliot, *Singing in Style: A Guide to Vocal Performance Practices* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2006), 263.

В могиле.
Ой, мальчик в могиле, в могиле!
Мойшелэ, в могиле, ой
Ой, мальчик в могиле, в могиле!
Мойшелэ, в могиле, ой!

VI. Брошенный отец

Эле-старьевщик, надел халат.
К приставу дочка ушла, говорят

Цирелэ, дочка, вернись к отцу,
Дам тебе платьев нарядных к венцу.

Цирелэ, дочка,
Серьги и кольца куплю тебе сам.
Цирелэ, дочка,
И на придачу красавчика дам.

Цирелэ, дочка!

Не надо мне нарядов,
Не надо мне колец,
Лишь с господином приставом
Пойду я под венец.

Господин пристав,
Прошу вас,
скорее Гоните в шею Старого еврея

Цирелэ, дочка! Вернись к отцу!

Цирелэ, дочка! Вернись к отцу!

Вернись ко отцу, вернись к отцу...
Цирелэ, дочка!

In the grave.
Oy! the boy is in a grave
Moyshele is in the grave, oy!
Oy! the boy is in the grave!
Moyshele is in the grave, oy!

VI. An Abandoned Father

Ele, the tatter, put on his robe.
To the chief of police his daughter
went, they say.

Tsirele, my daughter! Come back to
your father,
I will give you dresses fancy for your
wedding.

Tsirele, my daughter!
Earrings and rings I will buy for you.
Tsirele, my daughter!
And in addition, a handsome young
man.

Tsirele, my daughter!

I don't need any fancy dresses,
I don't need any rings.
Only Mr. Chief of Police
Will I marry!

Mr. Chief of Police
I am asking you
Quickly get rid of this old Jew.

Tsirele, my daughter! Come back to
me....

Tsirele, my daughter! Come back to
me....

Come back to me! Come back to me!
Tsirele, my daughter!

VIII. Зима

Лежит моя Шейндл в кровати,
И с нею ребёнок больной.
Ни щепки в нетопленной хате,

А ветер гудит за стеной.

Вернулись и стужа, и ветер,

Нет силы терпеть и молчать.
Кричите же, плачьте же, дети,
Зима воротилась опять.

VIII. Winter

My Sheyndl is lying in bed,
And next to her is our sickly child.
There is not even a piece of
kindling in our cold house.
And the wind is howling outside.

The wind and the cold have now
returned,
I can't bear it or be silent.
Scream then, cry, my children!
The winter has returned again....¹⁹

Bedřich Smetana is considered one of the principal Czech composers of the nineteenth century and one of the first truly important Bohemian nationalistic composers. He is credited with opening a piano school in Prague and establishing the Czech national school of music. He also played a leading role in the establishment of the Prague National Opera House. He studied piano at an early age and for a time was employed as a piano teacher to the family of the Count von Thun. Smetana wrote his first symphonic poem in 1856, the same year he was appointed conductor of the Philharmonic Society of Gothenburg in Sweden. His first opera was produced in 1866, but it was his second opera, *The Bartered Bride*, that established his reputation as a distinctly Czech composer. Subsequent operas met with less success. Declining health led to his resignation as conductor of the Prague Opera, but he continued to compose a number of symphonic poems, string quartets and piano solos.

The Bartered Bride is a comic opera in three acts, based on a libretto by Karel Sabina. It was first performed in 1866 in a two-act format with spoken dialog, but was revised and extended in subsequent years. The final version, premiered in 1870, gained popularity quickly and became a worldwide success. Smetana's use of traditional Bohemian dance forms and hints of folksong contributed greatly to its success. Set in a country village, with "real" characters, it tells the story of how true love prevails in the end over the efforts of meddling parents and a scheming marriage broker. In the recitative "O tut das weh!...." and subsequent aria, "Mein Liebestraum, wie war er schön", Mařenka laments over being bartered away in marriage by her beloved, Jeník, and recalls a happier time when they first met and fell in love.

O tut das weh!...

O, tut das weh, ja, das tut weh!
Mein Herz ist voller Trauer!
Nein, nein ich kann's noch nicht glauben,
hat er's auch unterschrieben!

Oh, what pain!...

Oh, what pain, yes what pain!
My heart is full of sorrow
No, no, I cannot imagine
he also signed it!

19. Russian translations by Anton Belov. www.RussianArtSong.com.

Wer weiß denn, wie es dazu kam?
Erst will ich ihn noch fragen.
Wer hilft mir denn in meiner Qual,
daß ich weiß, was hier Wahrheit ist, was nicht!

Mein Liebestraum, wie war er schön

Mein Liebestraum, wie war er schön.
Wie träumte ich in gerne
Hell leuchtete die Sonne uns,
und alle lieben Sternen.

Wie herrlich war die Liebeszeit,
als wir uns beide fanden.
Da kamm ein jäher Sturm ins Land,
und alle Träume schwanden!
Nein, nein unmöglich solcher Trug!
Nein, nein, nein, nein nein !
gar zu grausam wäre der Betrug!
Wär solche Falschheit möglich,
die Erde selber müßte mit mir weinen
in stillen Schmerz
Ja weinen, weinen in stillen Schmerz

Mein Liebestraum, wie schön er war!
Hell leuchtete die Sonne uns,
und alle lieben Sterne.
O holder Traum!
Wie warst du schön!

Who knows how this happened?
First I intend to ask him.
Who will help me in my torment?
How will I know what is truth here, what not!

My dream of love, how beautiful it was

My dream of love, how beautiful it was.
How I liked to dream!
How brightly the sun shone on us,
and all the dear stars.

How wonderful was the time of love,
when we both discovered each other.
Then came a sudden storm
and all dreams vanished!
No, such deceit is not possible!
No, no, no, no, no....
Too cruel would be the deception!
Were such falseness possible,
The earth itself would have to cry with me
in silent pain.
Yes, cry in silent pain.

My dream of love, how beautiful it was.
How brightly the sun shone on us,
and all the dear stars.
Oh sweet dream!
How beautiful you were!²⁰

8. Carol Kimball, *Song: A Guide to Art Song Style and Literature* (Bryn Mawr: Har
Leopard Corporation, 2005), 200.

9. Translation copyright © by Song Equus from the Linderoth Archive.

20. Translation by Lisa Kulczak.