

Antonín Dvořák (1841-1904) / *Ciganské melodie (Gypsy Songs) Op. 55 № 4*, published 1880 / text: folk-song

When my old mother taught me to sing, Strangely she often had tears in her eyes. And now I also weep, when I teach gipsy children to play and sing!

Samuel Sinchak (Sinčák) / *Rodný Kraj (Birth Place)*, published 1942 / text: Michael Sinchak (Sinčák) [Samuel's father]

Homeland – you're far away – far beyond the ocean wide, In vain I search for paradise, Since I have sailed away from home;
But I hear echoes in my heart, as a tender mother's voice: "Come home, sonny, to Slovakia, Enjoy freedom, love and rejoice."

Рахманинов (Rachmaninoff) (1873-1943) / *Сирень (Siren' / Lilacs)*, Op. 21 № 5 / text: Ekaterina Beketova (1771-1827)

At daybreak, over the dewy grass, I'll breathe the crisp dawn; and in the fragrant shade of the lilacs, I'll seek my happiness...
I found only one happiness in life, the one that lives in the lilacs; in the green fragrant boughs my poor happiness blossoms...

Рахманинов (Rachmaninoff) (1873-1943) / *Сон (Son / A Dream)*, Op. 8 № 5 (1893)

Text (original German): Heinrich Heine (1797-1856), **Russian translation: Aleksey Nikolayevich Pleshcheyev** (1825-1893)

And I had my native land, It was so beautiful! Pines were swaying there over me... But it was a dream!
Family, friends, all were living there. From every corner Words of love resounded... Alas! It was a dream!

Poulenc (1899-1963) / *Osiem pieśni polskich (Eight Polish Songs) / № 2: Odjazd (Departure)* / text: Witwicki (1801-1847)

Let me go, the horse is waiting. Mother, father, friends, goodbye. I hear the sound of the trumpet and the drum. Give me your blessing!

Poulenc (1899-1963) / *Osiem pieśni polskich (Eight Polish Songs) / № 4: Ostatni Mazur (The Last Mazurka)* / text: folk-song

This tune was created at the time of the general Józef Chłopicki (1771-1854) and was revived during WWI, becoming a favourite among lancers.
"May I have another mazurka, before dawn?" pleaded the young lancer and led the girl to the dance. He whispered sweet words, but a soldier heart is unfaithful. Shots were heard, the horse is ready, hurray! No use crying, save your tears - the trumpet calls, let's finish this dance, my last mazurka.

Joseph Canteloube (1879-1957) / *Pastourelle*, from *Chants D'auvergne*, book 2 № 1 / text: Folk-song (in Occitan language)

The pastourelle is a typically Old French lyric form concerning the romance of a shepherdess.

"Oh, come across the river to me! We shall talk seriously and then talk about love!" "But I cannot get across! I have no boat, nor bridge; nor even a shepherd to love me faithfully!" "You would have a boat if you were to be kind to me! You'd have a bridge and a shepherd, too, to love you faithfully!"

Vincenzo Bellini (1801-1835) / *Vaga luna, che inargenti (Lovely moon, you who shed silver light)* / text: Anonymous

Lovely moon, you who shed silver light on these shores and on these flowers, and breathe the language of love,
You are now the sole witness of my ardent longing, and can recount my throbs and sighs, to her who fills me with love.
Tell her that distance cannot assuage my grief, that if I cherish a hope, it is only for the future.
Tell her that, day and night, I count the hours of sorrow, that a flattering hope comforts me in my love.



Donizetti (1797-1848) / *Amor marinaro (Sailor's love), Neapolitan song* / text: Anonymous

I'd like to build a house surrounded by the sea, plastered with peacock feathers, tralla la le la...
With stairs of gold and silver, and balconies of precious stones, tralla la le la...
When my Nennella shows herself everyone says "look, the sun is rising", tralla la le la...

Britten (1913-1976) / *Gort na Saileán (Down By The Salley Gardens)* / text: folk-song, reconstructed by Yeats (1865-1939)

* "Salley" is an anglicisation of the Irish *saileach*, meaning willow.

Ridout (1918-1984) / *She's Like the Swallow, Folk Songs of Eastern Canada, № 2 (1967)* / text/music: folk-song

Folk Songs of Eastern Canada includes 4 songs and was commissioned by the CBC expressly for Lois Marshall. "She's Like the Swallow" is a distinctive Newfoundland variant of a large family of songs about unhappy love. The text in this arrangement includes only 4 verses, and leaves much to the imagination.



Samuel Osborne Barber II (1910-1981) / *Hermit Songs*, Op. 29 (1953)

№ 2: Church Bell at Night (12th century) / English: Howard Mumford Jones (1892-1980)

№ 7: Promiscuity (9th century) / English: Kenneth Hurlstone Jackson (1909-1991)

Hermit Songs is a cycle of ten songs for voice and piano; settings of anonymous Irish texts of the 8th to 13th centuries written by monks and scholars, often on the margins of manuscripts they were copying or illuminating — perhaps not always meant to be seen by their Father superiors. They are small poems, thoughts or observations, some very short, and speak in straightforward, droll, and often surprisingly modern terms of the simple life these men led, close to nature, to animals and to God.

Felix Mendelssohn (1809-1847) / Venezianisches Gondellied (Venetian Gondola Song) /

Original English text: Thomas Moore (1779-1852) / German: Ferdinand Freiligrath (1810-1876)

Mendelssohn has a few Venetian Gondola Songs from his *Songs Without Words* and one *with* words. They are all written in 6/8 meter, to match the rhythm of the Gondolier rowing. He chose a structure of ABA, repeating the beginning of the first verse. This repetition and the long fermata (pause) on the word *wartend* (waiting) give the impression that Ninetta did not come and will never come, and her lover will have to stand and wait for her forever.

When through the Piazzetta night breathes her cool air, then, dearest Ninetta, I'll come to thee there.

Beneath thy mask shrouded, I'll know thee afar, as Love knows, though clouded, his own Evening Star.

In garb, then, resembling some gay gondolier, I'll whisper thee, trembling, "Our bark, love, is near:

Now, now, while there hover those clouds o'er the moon, 'twill waft thee safe over yon silent Lagoon."

Johannes Brahms (1833-1897) / WoO. 33 / № 6: Da unten im Tale (Down in the Valley There) / text: Swabian folk-song

Swabians have in former times been the target of many jokes where they are depicted as excessively stingy, overly serious, prudish, or as simpletons. Brahms set this text four times, for solo voice (twice), female choir and mixed choir.

Down in the valley there the water flows so sadly, and I can't tell you that I love you so.

You always speak of love, you always speak of fidelity, but a bit of falsehood is always there too.

And if I tell you ten times, that I love and like you, and you do not want to understand, then I will have to move on.

For the time that you have loved me, I thank you kindly, and I wish that somewhere else things may go better for you.

Johannes Brahms (1833-1897) / WoO. 33 / № 33: Och Mod'r (Oh, Mother, I want Something) / text: folk-song (Kölnisch)

This text was set by Brahms twice. It includes 4 verses that repeat themselves except for the mother's guess.

Oh, Mother I would like to have Something! "What would you like, my dear child?" Something, something!

"Would you like a puppet?" No, mother, no! You are not a good mother, You can't guess that thing! Dingderlingdingding!

..."Would you like a ring?"... No! ..."Would you like a nice dress?"... No!

..."Would you like a man?" Yes, Mother, yes! You are a good mother, you guessed what your child wants so much, Dingderlingdingding!

Marc Lavry (1903-1967) / Shir Ahava (שיר אהבה) – A Love Song (Hebrew), Op. 231 / text: Ben Gavriel

Lavry was born in Riga (Latvia), later moved to Berlin where he served as a conductor of the Berlin Symphonic Orchestra. The rise of Nazism caused him to return to Latvia and eventually emigrate to Israel (1935). He never forced new styles on his writing, he was simply observing the new language, landscape and culture. Then began a process that the middle-eastern scales, shepherds folk songs and flute melodies – all naturally integrated and created his very distinct style.

Your heart – is like perfume floating over great waters, and mirrored in their deep – stars of the desert in a summer's night.

Like smell of good perfumes his love came to me, On the wings of the wind in the spring – the desert,

His love flew to the heights of stars in the heavens, There our souls were united, in the old ages, before they were born.



Heitor Villa-Lobos (1887-1959) / Bachianas Brasileiras № 5 (1938/45), Aria (Cantilena)

Text: © Ruth Valladares Corrêa (Portuguese) / English: © Mirna Rubim (mirnarubim@hotmail.com)

The Bachianas Brasileiras represent a fusion between Brazilian folk and popular music and the style of Johann Sebastian Bach (hence **Bachianas**). Most of the movements in each suite have two titles: one "Bachian" (Prelúdio, Fuga, etc.), the other Brazilian (Embolada, O Canto da Nossa Terra, etc.). № 5 is probably Villa-Lobos's single most popular work.

Evening, a rosy, slow and transparent cloud over the space dreamy and beautiful, the Moon sweetly appears in the horizon, decorating the afternoon like a nice damsel who rushes and dreamy adorns herself with an anxious soul to become beautiful. shout all Nature to the Sky and to the Earth!

All birds become silent to the Moon's complains and the Sea reflects its great splendour. Softly, the shining Moon just awakes the cruel missing that laughs and cries. Evening, a rosy, slow and transparent cloud over the space dreamy and beautiful...

Manuel de Falla (1876-1946) / Nana (Lullaby) from *Siete Canciones Populares Españolas*, № 5 (1914) / text: folk-song

The melancholic melody suggests that the song is sung on the child's deathbed and the sleep is an eternal one.

Go to sleep child, sleep my soul, little star of the morning. Lulla-lullaby, sleep little star of the morning.

Enrique Granados (1867-1916) / El majo discreto (The Discreet Guy) / text: Fernando Periquet (1873-1940)

Majo (masc.) or maja (fem.) were Spanish lower class, especially in Madrid, who distinguished themselves by their elaborate outfits and sense of style in dress and manners. Dandy would be a close English equivalent. They flourished from the late 18th to early 19th century. Majos were a favourite subject of the painter Goya and many composers wrote about the life of the majos/majas. The term later became more general, meaning "pretty" or "nice looking" (synonymous with bonito). This meaning survives in modern Spanish.

They say my man is ugly, it is possible, since love is a desire that blinds – everyone knows that a lover can't see...

But if my lover is not a man that his beauty stands out and amazes, at least he is loyal, discreet and keeps a secret.

What is the secret that he kept? It would be indiscreet to tell. It takes some work to know secrets of a man with a woman.

He was born in Lavapiés. Eh! Eh! He is a majo (a REAL man), a majo is he.

