

this little body
this shape I'm poured into
how everything shakes it

through my paper skin
it all pours in
the pain
and the light of the world

braced against the cold
flowering under the sun
hopeful, bewildered

I walk in the woods
listening to the song of
the not yet burnt trees

I cannot control
cannot comprehend,
can only
let pass
this world

O WESTERN WIND

Isaiah Bell

[piano]

O Western Wind, when wilt thou blow
That the small rain down can rain?
Christ, that my love were in my arms
And I in my bed again.

— ❧ —

when my heart is sore
I leave the windows open
so wind may blow through
worn out with myself
I sit at the street corner
letting the breeze blow
I wait for the Sun
Phoebus,
god of Light, of Life
Poetry, Music...

**THE FAIRY QUEEN:
SONG OF PHOEBUS**

Purcell

[harpsichord]

When a cruel long winter has frozen the earth
And nature imprisoned seeks in vain to be free,
I dart forth my beams to give all things a birth,
Making spring for the plants, ev'ry flower, and each tree.
'Tis I who give life, warmth, and vigour to all;
Ev'n love who rules all things in Earth, Air, and Sea
Would languish and fade, and to nothing would fall.
The world to its Chaos would return but for me.

— ❧ —

but, as fingers burn
taken out of snowy gloves
inside a warm house

so my heart shudders,
its iciness touched by the sun
its old hurts thawing

when this snow all melts
the tears that fell into it
and froze
will melt too

snow - Schnee - where will you go
when you become a stream?
you know my longing
let my tears lead you
past the place where I was loved;
you will feel them burn

**WINTERREISE:
WASSERFLUT**

Schubert

[piano]

Manche Trän aus meinen Augen
Ist gefallen in den Schnee;
Seine kalten Flocken saugen
Durstig ein das heiße Weh.

Wenn die Gräser sprossen wollen,
Weht daher ein lauer Wind,
Und das Eis zerspringt in Schollen,
Und der weiche Schnee zerrinnt.
Schnee, du weißt von meinem Sehnen:
Sag, wohin doch geht dein Lauf?
Folge nach nur meinen Tränen,
Nimmt dich bald das Bächlein auf.

Many a tear from my eye
Has fallen into the snow;
Its cold flakes thirstily suck in
The hot pain.

When the grass is about to sprout
A warm wind blows this way,
And the ice splits into chunks
And the soft snow melts away.
Snow, you know of my longing;
Tell me, where does your path lead?
Just follow my tears,
The little brook with soon take you in.

Wirst mit ihm die Stadt durchziehen,
Muntre Straßen ein und aus -
Fühlst du meine Tränen glühen,
Da ist meiner Liebsten Haus.

With it you will flow through the town,
In and out of lively streets -
When you feel my tears burning,
There is my beloved's house.

— ❧ —

alone, far from home
I make my heart soft
in order
to worship
the moon

moon goddess Phoebe,
God of Night,
sister of the sun,
you know my longing

just as you breathe love
to all elements, tell my love
of my throbbing sighs

say that no distance
can heal my grief, that my hope
is all there, with him

VAGA LUNA

Bellini

[piano]

Vaga luna, che inargenti
queste rive e questi fiori
ed ispiri agli elementi
il linguaggio dell'amor;
testimonio or sei tu sola
del mio fervido desir,
ed a lei che m'innamora
conta i palpiti e i sospir.

Dille pur che lontananza
il mio duol non può lenir,
che se nutro una speranza,
ella è sol nell'avvenir.
Dille pur che giorno e sera
conto l'ore del dolor,
che una speme lusinghiera
mi conforta nell'amor.

Lovely moon, you who shed silver light
On these shores and on these flowers
And breathe the language
Of love to the elements,
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 too 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.

— ❧ —

when my heart is soft,
when it opens, I am like
the young girl who sings

“go, lovely swallow
fly all over these islands
find my Alexis

Speak love in his ear;
tell him I am staying strong
and waiting for him.”

and I’m like the boy
who, when told “with this message
your love gives you her heart”

hears the good news
full of joy, and answers:
“wait for me, wait for me”

AH TOI, BELLE HIRONDELLE

Traditional

[a capella]

Ah toi belle hirondelle qui vole ici
As-tu vu dans ces îles mon Alexis ?
Va-t’en lui parler à l’oreille de mes amours
Je resterai sage et fidèle pour son retour

L’oiseau qu’est tout aimable prit sa volée
Dans son léger plumage sans est allé
Ne pleure pas amant fidèle écoute-moi
J’ai des compliments de ta belle qui sont pour toi

L’amant plein de surprise l’entend parler
Reçoit bonne nouvelle, l’a salué
Elle t’a donné son cœur en gage et ses amours
Elle restera sage et fidèle pour ton retour

Je te salue la belle salut à toi
Ton petit cœur en gage donne le moi
Je suis parti pour un voyage dans les longs cours
Je te donnerai de mes nouvelles à mon retour

Lovely swallow who flies all around here,
Have you seen my Alexis among these islands?
Go speak in his ear of my love:
I will stay prudent and faithful until he returns.

The friendly bird takes flight
Making his way on weightless feathers.
“Don’t weep, faithful lover, but listen to me.
I have messages from your sweetheart for you.”

The lover, full of surprise, listen to the words
And receives the good news that greeted him:
“She has given you her heart in pledge, and all her love;
She will stay prudent and faithful until your return.”

“I send my greetings back to you, my beauty.
Promise me your little heart.
I’ve left on a long, arduous voyage
I will give you all my news upon my return.”

— ❧ —

Waiting, I walk in the woods
and loosen the net
that catches worries

without it, my brain
soaks down into my body
to empty my skull

that it may collect
nutrients
from falling leaves
and croaks of ravens

ALMIRA:
LIEBLICHE WÄLDER
Handel
[harpichord]

Liebliche Wälder, schattige Felder,
kühlet des Herzens unnennbare Qual.
Güldener Kronen fast göttlicher Stral
will mich umblitzen;
Kann ich mich schützen
unter der Baume unendliche Zahl?

Beloved forest, shady fields,
Cool my heart's unbearable pain!
Near-divine rays of golden crowns
will flash around me -
Can I protect myself
beneath the numberless trees?

— ୱୱ —

not having counted
my faults, the woods have no need
to forgive them

A SUMMER DAY
Constant Lambert
(*poem by Li Po*)
[piano]

Naked I lie in the green forest of summer
Too lazy to wave my white feathered fan
I hang my cap on a crag and bare my head to the wind
That comes blowing through the pine trees.

— ୱୱ —

**SONGS IN TIME OF WAR:
THOUGHTS WHILE TRAVELLING AT NIGHT**

Alec Roth

(poem by Tu Fu)

[piano]

Light breeze on the fine grass
I stand alone at the mast
Stars lean on the vast wild plain
Moon bobs in the Great River's spate.
Letters have brought no fame.
Office? Too old to obtain.
Drifting, what am I like?
A gull between earth and sky.

— ❧ —

and look, here's the sun
rising out of the sea,
back to life
more brilliant

LA RESURREZIONE:

ECCO IL SOL

Handel

[harpichord]

Ecco il sol, ch' esce dal mare
e più chiaro che non suole
smalta i prati, i colli indora

Ma chi sa che di quel Sole,
ch'oggi in vita ha da tornare
questo sol non sia l'aurora.

Here is the sun that rises from the sea
and shining with unwonted brightness
enamels the fields, and gilds the hills.

But who knows if this sun,
who today returns to life,
may be the dawn of that Sun.

— ❧ —

this world, which contains
everything
sometimes shows as sun,
sometimes as smoke

here we are today
in the middle of its end
or so it seems to me

as my eyes water
with the burnt-up particles
of our living world

what merciless god
eats up this earth, turning woods
to hot, thirsty stone?

Where are the shade trees?
I moan for the lovely flowers
now burnt to ash

LA CALISTO: PIANTE OMBROSE

Cavalli

[harpsichord]

Piante ombrose, dono sono i vostri onori?
Vaghi fiori, dalla fiamma inceneriti,
Colli e liti, di smeraldi già coperti,
or deserti del suo verde:
Io vi sospiro.
Dove giro, calda, il piede, e sitibonda,
Trovo l'onda rifuggita entro la fonte
Né la fronte bagnar posso, o'l labro ardente.
Inclemente, sì, sì! Chi tuona arde la terra?
Non più, Giove, non più, ah, no, non più guerra!

Shady plants, where are your glories?
Lovely flowers, incinerated by the flame
Hills and banks, so recently covered in emeralds,
Now stripped bare of beautiful greenery:
I sigh for you.
I wherever I turn my foot, hot and thirsty,
I find that the water has fled back into the spring,
that I cannot bathe my forehead or my burning lips.
Merciless! Does the god of thunder burn the earth?
No more, Jove - no more, ah, no more war

[two interpolated lines a capella]

J'ai cueilli la belle rose
J'ai cueilli la belle rose

— ❧ —

THE LAST ROSE OF SUMMER

Traditional tune, arr. Britten

(poem by Thomas Moore)

[piano]

'Tis the last rose of Summer,
Left blooming alone;
All her lovely companions
Are faded and gone;
No flower of her kindred,
No rose-bud is nigh,
To reflect back her blushes
Or give sigh for sigh!

I'll not leave thee, thou lone one,
To pine on the stem;
Since the lovely are sleeping,
Go sleep thou with them.
Thus kindly I scatter
Thy leaves o'er the bed
Where thy mates of the garden
Lie scentless and dead.

So soon may I follow,
When friendships decay,
And from Love's shining circle
The gems drop away!
When true hearts lie withered,
And fond ones are flown,
Oh! who would inhabit
This bleak world alone?

[one interpolated line a capella]

J'ai cueilli la belle rose

— ❧ —

I plucked the white rose
and took it home, but there was
no one there

just a nightingale
who sang in his own language
"Hurry - it's your time"

J'AI CUEILLI LA BELLE ROSE

Traditional

[a capella]

J'ai cueilli la belle rose
Qui pendait au rosier blanc
Je l'ai porté chez mon père
Entre Paris et Rouen
Je n'ai trouvé pas personne
Que le rossignol chantant
Que me dit dans son langage:
"Hâte-toi, car il est temps."

I picked the lovely rose
That hung from the white rose-bush
I brought it to my father's house
Between Paris and Rouen
I didn't find anyone there
Except the nightingale in song
Who said to me, in his language,
"Hurry; it's time."

life is a dream;
we slip into the world and float
til we can no more

we love, our hearts pound,
but hardly have hearts joined
before life and love

are swept away, like foam
so what is it? what is life?
life is a dream

DAS LEBEN IST EIN TRAUM

Haydn

[piano]

Das Leben ist ein Traum!
Wir schlüpfen in die Welt und schweben
Mit jungem Zahn
Und frischem Gaum
Auf ihrem Wahn
Und ihrem Schaum,
Bis wir nicht mehr an Erde kleben:
Und dann, was ist's, was ist das Leben?
Das Leben ist ein Traum!
Das Leben ist ein Traum:

Wir lieben, uns're Herzen schlagen,
Und Herz an Herz
Gefüget kaum,
Ist Lieb' und Scherz
Ein leerer Schaum,
Ist hingeschwunden, weggetragen!
Was ist das Leben? hör ich fragen:
Das Leben ist ein Traum.

Life is a dream!
We slip into the world and float,
with young teeth
and fresh palate,
on its illusions
and froth
til we can cling to earth no more.
So then, what is it? What is this life?
Life is a dream.
Life is a dream!

We love, our hearts pound,
and heart has hardly
joined with heart
before love and hearts
are as empty foam
that disappears and is carried away.
"What is life?" I hear you ask.
Life is a dream

— ❧ —

whose song is this?
who has left home
for the hard winter of the wide world?

who hangs like a gull
between earth and sky
with a heart that longs
for spring?

whose song is this?
a young man carried by the wind
singing all the while

LA PLAINTÉ DU COUREUR-DES-BOIS Traditional, arr. Healy Willan

[piano]

Le six de mai, l'année dernier',
La-haut je me suis engagé
Pour y faire un long voyage,
Aller aux pays hauts,
Au coeur d'une terre sauvage.
Ah! que l'hiver est long,

Que ce temps est ennuyant!
Nuit et jour mon coeur soupire,
De voir venir le doux printemps,
Le beau et doux printemps,
Car c'est lui qui console
Les malheureux amants
Avec leurs amours folles.

Quand le printemps est arrive,
Les vents d'avril soufflent dans nos voiles
Pour revenir dans mon pays.
Au coin de Saint-Sulpice,
J'irai saluer m'amie,
Qui est la plus jolie.

Qui en a fait la chanson?
C'est un jeune garçon,
S'en allant a la voile,
La chantant tout au long.

Elle est bien veritable.
Adieu, la terre sauvage,
Adieu, les pays hauts,
Adieu, les grand's miseres!

On the sixth of May, last year,
I set off on a long voyage
To travel to the pays hauts
Deep into a savage landscape.
Ah, how long winter is

And how dull is this time
My heart sighs night and day
To see the coming of the spring
The lovely and sweet spring -
For it's spring that consoles
Unlucky lovers,
with their maddening loves.

When the spring has arrived,
April winds will blow on our sails
To take us back to my homeland.
At the corner of Saint-Sulpice,
I'll greet my girlfriend,
Who is the most beautiful.

Whose song is this?
It's a young man
Taken to the sea
Singing all the while.

And it's all true.
Goodbye, wild landscape
Goodbye, foreign lands
Goodbye, all my misery.

— ❧ —