

One of the few well-known female Italian composers of the 17th century, **Barbara Strozzi** was one of the most prolific composers of secular chamber music, as well as a talented singer and instrumentalist. Strozzi's music was extensively published during her lifetime, a process in which she took an active role, and her cantatas and arias are notable for their sensitivity to text and frequent use of modal, rather than tonic, harmony, as well as their virtuosic melismas which Strozzi herself was known to perform. Both "Moralità Amorosa" and "Amor non si fugge" come from Strozzi's Opus 3, *Cantate, ariete a una, due, e tre voci*, published in 1654.

Moralità Amorosa

Sorge il mio sol con mattutini albori,
E intento a coltivar beltà divine
Con profumi odorosi incensa il crine
Per aditar altrui come s'adori.

Poscia con sottilissimi candori
Sparge del aureo capo ogni confine,
Che di polve di Cipri argente e brine
Fanno officio di smalto in su quegli ori.

Mentre così in bella man s'impiega,
E fra ceneri e fumi il crine involve,
In catene di foco il cor mi lega.

Che meraviglia è poi se si dissolve
La bellezza in brev'ora, e chi mi nega
Che fugace non sia, s'è fumo e polve.

Love's Moral

My love rises with the early dawn,
and intent on cultivating divine beauty,
with fragrant scents perfumes her hair
to show the world how adornment is done.

Then with finest whiteners
she sprinkles her golden hair all over,
with Cypress powder of silver and frost
giving the effect of enamel overlaid upon the gold.

As her beautiful hands are thus employed,
and her hair is infused with ashes and smoke,
my heart is bound in chains of fire.

So it's hardly a marvel that
beauty dissolves quickly, and who can deny
that it must be fleeting, since it's smoke and dust.

Francesca Caccini of Florence was the highest paid composer at the Court of Tuscany under three Grand Dukes: Ferdinando I, Cosimo II, and Ferdinando II. A multi-instrumentalist and singer, Caccini performed publicly and enjoyed great success as a voice teacher throughout her life, but she was most valued for her composing. Her major compositions include five operas, or "ballettos," only one of which survives. "Maria, Dolce Maria" is a sacred madrigal from her only other surviving collection *Il Primo Libro*, and contains two impressive melismas on the words "canto" (sing) and "alma" (soul), expressing the joy and serenity Caccini seems to associate with Mary.

Maria, dolce Maria

Maria dolce Maria, come soave tanto,
ch'e pronunciar t'in paradisi core,
Nome sacro e Santo,
ch'el cor m'infiammi di celeste amore,
Maria mai semp'r'io canto,
ne può la lingua mia più felice parola,
trarmi dal sen già mai che dir,
che dir Maria,
nome ch'ogni dolor temprà'e consola,
voce tranquilla ch'ogni affano acqueta,
ch'ogni cor fa sereno, ogn'alma lieta.

Maria, Sweet Maria

Maria, sweet Maria, whose name is so lovely,
that to utter it takes your heart to Paradise,
Sacred and holy name,
you inflame my heart with celestial love.
'Mary,' I ever sing,
neither can my tongue deliver from my breast
any happier word
than when I say, 'Mary.'
Name which tempers and consoles every sorrow,
calm voice which assuages every disquiet,
which composes every heart, which gladdens every
soul.

Amor non si fugge

Cara Filli, quella tu sei ch'adoro,
Per te sola, per te languisco e moro.

Ben vid'io ch'un guardo adessa
Ch'allettando il seno adugge,
Ma pur ardo e'l cor si strugge,
Che non fugge d'amor chi seco tresca.

Cara Filli, quella tu sei ch'adoro,
Per te sola, per te languisco e moro.

S'è il languir colpo d'amore,
Fuggirò s'amor m'assale.
Ma 'l fuggir, ohimè, che vale?
Non si scioglie dal pie' laccio del core.

Cara Filli, quella tu sei ch'adoro,
Per te sola, per te languisco e moro.

You Can't Run From Love

Dear Phyllis, it's you that I adore;
for you alone, for you I languish and die.

I can clearly see that a glance allures,
and an enticed heart is bewitched,
yet I burn and my heart is being destroyed:
you don't run away from love if you're being
reckless.

Dear Phyllis, it's you that I adore;
for you alone, for you I languish and die.

If languishing is the fault of love,
I'll flee if love assails me.
But alas, what good is running away?
The feet are not released from the chains of the heart

Dear Phyllis, it's you that I adore;
for you alone, for you I languish and die.

Lili Boulanger, sister of composer and conductor Nadia Boulanger, was the first woman to win the prestigious Prix de Rome (at just age 19), and is often described as one of the most gifted composers of the 20th century. Upon her death, Boulanger left behind much choral music, an incomplete opera, and *Clairières dans le ciel*, a cycle of thirteen settings of Francis Jammes poems. The cycle's avant-garde style is distant from the salon style many of her contemporaries favored, but beautifully evokes the poems' nostalgia and profound sense of yearning. The full cycle is approximately 35 minutes long and was dedicated to Gabriel Fauré, fellow composer and friend of Boulanger's.

Elle est gravement gaie

Elle est gravement gaie. Par moments son regard
se levait comme pour surprendre ma pensée.
Elle était douce alors comme quand il est tard
le velours jaune et bleu d'une
allée de pensées.

She is solemnly cheerful

She is solemnly cheerful. At times she looked up,
as if to see what I was thinking.
She was soft as the yellow and blue velvet
Of a land of pansies late at night

Un poète disait

Un poète disait que lorsqu'il était jeune,
il fleurissait des vers comme un rosier des
roses.
Lorsque je pense à elle, il me semble que jase
une fontaine intarissable dans mon cœur.
Comme sur le lys Dieu pose un parfum d'église,
comme il met du corail aux joues de la cerise,
je veux poser sur elle, avec dévotion,
la couleur d'un parfum, qui n'aura pas de nom.

A Poet Said

A poet said that when he was young
Poems budded out of him like roses on a rose bush

When I think of her, it feels like
There is an inexhaustible spring in my heart.
As God gives the lily the odor of church
and tints the cherry's cheeks,
I want to give her with devotion
the color of a perfume that shall have no name

Alma Schindler Mahler showed musical talent from a young age, and her gifts were, to some extent, encouraged by her family who allowed her to study piano and composition with the famous Alexander Zemlinsky. Her musical pursuits were put on hold in 1902 when she married Gustav Mahler, who, for most of their marriage, discouraged her from composing. During her lifetime, she composed three sets of songs, and “Der Erkennende” comes the latest of the three sets, *Fünf Gesänge* (1924).

Der Erkennende

Menschen lieben uns, und unbeglückt
Stehn sie auf vom Tisch, um uns zu weinen.
Doch wir sitzen übers Tuch gebückt
Und sind kalt und können sie verneinen.

Was uns liebt, wie stoßen wir es fort,
Und uns Kalte kann kein Gram erweichen.
Was wir lieben, das entrafßt ein Ort
Es wird hart und nicht mehr zu erreichen.

Und das Wort, das waltet, heißt: Allein,
Wenn wir machtlos zu einander brennen.
Eines weiß ich: nie und nichts wird mein.
Mein Besitz allein, das zu erkennen.

The Recognizer

People love us, and, discontent,
Rise from the table to weep for us.
But we sit bent over the cloth
And are cold and can deny them.

What we love, we reject,
And no sorrow can temper our coldness.
What we love is snatched away –
It becomes hard and can no longer be reached.

And the word that rules all is: Alone,
When we, powerless, burn ourselves to ashes.
One thing I know: never shall anything be mine.
My only possession is to recognize that fact.

Despite her short life and the discouragement she received from members of her family, **Fanny Mendelssohn Hensel** was one of the most prolific composers of German lieder. As a child, she, and her brother Felix Mendelssohn, studied composition with Carl Friederich Zelter, a proponent of the austere and conservative North German School of composition. Hensel’s later works, including *Fünf Lieder*, depart from Zelter’s teachings and display great attention to poetic detail and harmonic ingenuity; “Vorwurf” and “Im Herbst” in particular are notable for their avoidance of tonic harmony.

Though the poems in *Fünf Lieder* are joined by their shared motifs of nature, loss, and change, there is little evidence to suggest that Hensel intended these five songs to be published as a set. The songs range from the spring of 1841 to May of 1847 (Bergeslust having been finished on May 13th, 1847, the day before Hensel’s death), but *Fünf Lieder* was published years after Fanny and Felix’s death, and the compiler of the songs remains a mystery.

Nach Süden

Von allen Zweigen schwingen
Sich wandernde Vögel empor,
Weit durch die Lüfte klingen
Hört man den Reisechor,
Nach Süden, nach Süden
In den ewigen Blumenflor

Ihr Vöglein singt munter hernieder,
Wir singen lustig hinaus,
Wenn der Lenz kommt
Kehren wir wieder,
Wieder in Nest und Haus,
Von Süden! Jetzt aber hinaus!

To The South

Migrating birds from every branch
Rise up into the air,
Resounding far through the skies
The traveling chorus can be heard,
To the south, to the south
Into the eternal blossoming

Little birds, you sing merrily from on high
We sing out merrily too,
When spring comes,
We shall return,
Return to nest and home
From the south! But now, let’s away!

Vorwurf

Du klagst, daß bange Wehmut dich beschleicht,
weil sich der Wald entlaubt,
und über deinem Haupt dahin
der Wanderzug der Vögel streicht.
O klage nicht, bist selber wandelhaft,
Denkst du der Liebesglut?
Wie nun so traurig ruht in deiner Brust
die müde Leidenschaft!

Abendbild

Friedlicher Abend senkt sich aufs Gefilde;
Sanft entschlummert Natur, um ihre Züge.
Schwebt der Dämmerung zarte Verhüllung, und sie
Lächelt die Holde
Lächelt, ein schlummernd Kind in Vaters
Armen
Der voll Liebe zu ihr sich neigt, sein göttlich
Auges weilt auf ihr, und es weht sein Odem
Über ihr Antlitz

Im Herbste

Auf des Gartens Mauerzinne,
bebt noch eine einz'ge Ranke,
also bebt in meinem Sinne,
schmerzlich nur noch ein Gedanke.
Kaum vermag ich ihn zu fassen,
aber dennoch von mir lassen,
will er, ach, zu keiner Frist.
Und so denk ich ihn und trage
alle Nächte, alle Tage,
mit mir fort die [dumpfe]¹ Klage,
daß du mir verloren bist

Bergeslust

O Lust vom Berg zu schauen
Weit über Wald und Strom,
Hoch über sich den blauen,
Den klaren Himmelsdom.

Vom Berge Vögel fliegen,
Und Wolken so geschwind,
Gedanken überfliegen
Die Vögel und den Wind.

Reproach

You lament that an anxious despondency comes over
you,
when the leaves of the forest fall
and over your head
the train of migrating birds spreads.
O lament not - you yourself are prone to wander.
Think of the ardor of your love,
and how in your breast now dwells only
mournful, exhausted passion!

Peaceful Evening

Peaceful evening sinks down upon the land;
Gently Nature begins to slumber.
Around her floats the tender cover of dusk,
And the lovely one smiles,
Smiles like a slumbering child in its father's arms,

As he, full of love, bends down to her.
His divine eyes linger upon her, and his breath wafts
Across her face

In the Autumn

On the top of the garden wall
There quivers a single last vine,
Just as in my mind there quivers
Painfully a single thought.
I can hardly catch it,
But it will not leave me alone,
Alas, not even for one second.
And so I contemplate it, and endure
All the nights and days,
And with me always is the hollow lament,
That you are lost to me.

Mountain Rapture

Ah, the joy of gazing from the mountain
Far over wood and stream,
With the blue, pellucid vault of heaven
Arching overhead.

Little birds and clouds
Fly swiftly from the mountain,
Thoughts skim past
The birds and the wind.

Die Wolken zieh'n hernieder,
Das Vöglein senkt sich gleich,
Gedanken geh'n und Lieder
Bis in das Himmelreich.
Fort bis ins Himmelreich.

Reflets

Sous l'eau du songe qui s'élève
Mon âme a peur, mon âme a peur.
Et la lune luit dans mon coeur
Plongé dans les sources du rêve!

Sous l'ennui morne des roseaux.
Seul le reflets profonds des choses,
Des lys, des palmes et des roses
Pleurent encore au fond des eaux.

Les fleurs s'effeuillent une à une
Sur le reflet du firmament.
Pour descendre, éternellement
Sous l'eau du songe et dans la lune.

The clouds drift down,
The little bird plummets,
Thoughts and songs go winging on
Till they reach the kingdom of heaven.
Till they reach the kingdom of heaven.

Reflections

Beneath the water of the dream that rises,
My soul is afraid, my soul is afraid.
And the moon shines into my heart
That is bathed in the dream's source!

Beneath the sad tedium of the reeds,
Only the deep reflection of things,
Of lilies, palms and roses,
Still weep on the water's bed.

One by one the flowers shed their leaves
Upon the firmament's reflection
To descend, eternally,
Beneath the dream's water and into the moon.

Hannah Gruedemann '20 is a vocalist, writer, and composer from southern California, and has recently returned from her year abroad as part of the prestigious Chandler Fellowship. Hannah and I spent many hours together in rehearsals for Chamber Choir, Concert Choir, and *A Little Night Music* in our brief time together at Williams, and I am thrilled to be performing her latest work *When the Water Comes*.

Hannah's Chandler project focused on, among many things, the intersection of climate change, theatre, music, and art; her words beautifully capture the uncertainty of our present moment and the anxieties that come with young adulthood. *When the Water Comes* poses difficult questions to the audience, but also challenges us to choose hope in the face of what only seems to be an insurmountable set of circumstances.

When the Water Comes

When the water comes
When the shores fade
Slowly swallowed by the mess we've made.
Oh, my generation,
They say we've been cursed.
It's our birthright burden to undo their worst.
This world is a fortress, this world is a fountain
A tomb and a cradle, a mouse and a mountain,
And when the water comes, when the depths appear,
Will the end finally be near?

I am from here. I am of Earth.
Earth is a fortress, Earth is a fountain
A tomb and a cradle, a mouse and a mountain,
And when the water comes, when the depths appear,
The new age becomes clear.

The Past in the Future

The sun, it sets as summer gets away from us.
The cosmos growing distant knowing that we'll miss it,
But wisdom says there is a time for everything.
A time for Earth to rot and freeze and then a time for spring.

Somewhere in the past and somewhere in the future
We danced on greener shores
Trees towered towards the stars

Can I do what I should?
Can I be what I wanted?
The vanishing future has left our age haunted.
Promises are drying up, powers that be don't care.
I'm looking for a light through the smoked choked air.

Somewhere in the past and somewhere in the future,
We dream of greener shores,
Trees topple away from the stars.

Calling from above,
Calling us to go.
But if we can reach other worlds,
Why can't we heal ours?

Ending

I think the thing that frightens me
Is feeling that we don't have
The time to do imperfectly
All that must be done.
But there's so many miracles
Each growing beneath our sun.

If we have to live differently,
That's still living.
If the future is a different shape,
That is still a future.

The world is always ending,
And yet it hasn't ended.
The world is always ending,
And yet...

What are you willing to sacrifice?
Are you willing?
Are you willing to sacrifice?

One of the most famous female American composers, **Amy Beach** was a child prodigy, the first woman to have a symphony performed by a major American Orchestra, and the first American composer to achieve success without the benefits of a European musical education. Beach performed as a pianist with the Boston Symphony at just eighteen, and throughout her career composed a wide range of music, including opera, string quartets, symphonies, solo piano, sacred and secular choral, and solo voice. *Three Shakespeare Songs* is a collection of songs sung by characters in Shakespeare's plays that Amy Beach has set to her own music.

O Mistress Mine from *Twelfth Night*

O mistress mine, where are you roaming?
O stay and hear, your true love's coming
That can sing both high and low.

Trip no further, pretty sweetening;
Journeys end in lovers' meeting
Ev'ry wise man's son doth know

What is love? 'Tis not hereafter;
Present mirth hath present laughter;
What's to come is still unsure:

In delay there lies no plenty;
Then come kiss me, sweet and twenty;
Youth's a stuff will not endure.

Take, O Take Those Lips Away from *Measure for Measure*

Take, o take those lips away
That so sweetly were forsworn.
And those eyes: the break of day
Lights that do mislead the Morn;
But my kisses bring again,
Seals of love, but sealed in vain.

Fairy Lullaby from *Midsummer Night's Dream*

Philomel, with melody
Sing in our sweet lullaby;
Never harm,
nor spell, nor charm
Come our lovely lady nigh;
So, good night, with lullaby.

- Program notes written by Carolyn Mielke

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