

La Serenata

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CD face: *La Serenata* by Ambroise Thomas

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Patrick O'Connor, 2007

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Recorded at the church of St Clement with St Barnabas and St Matthew,
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David Harper

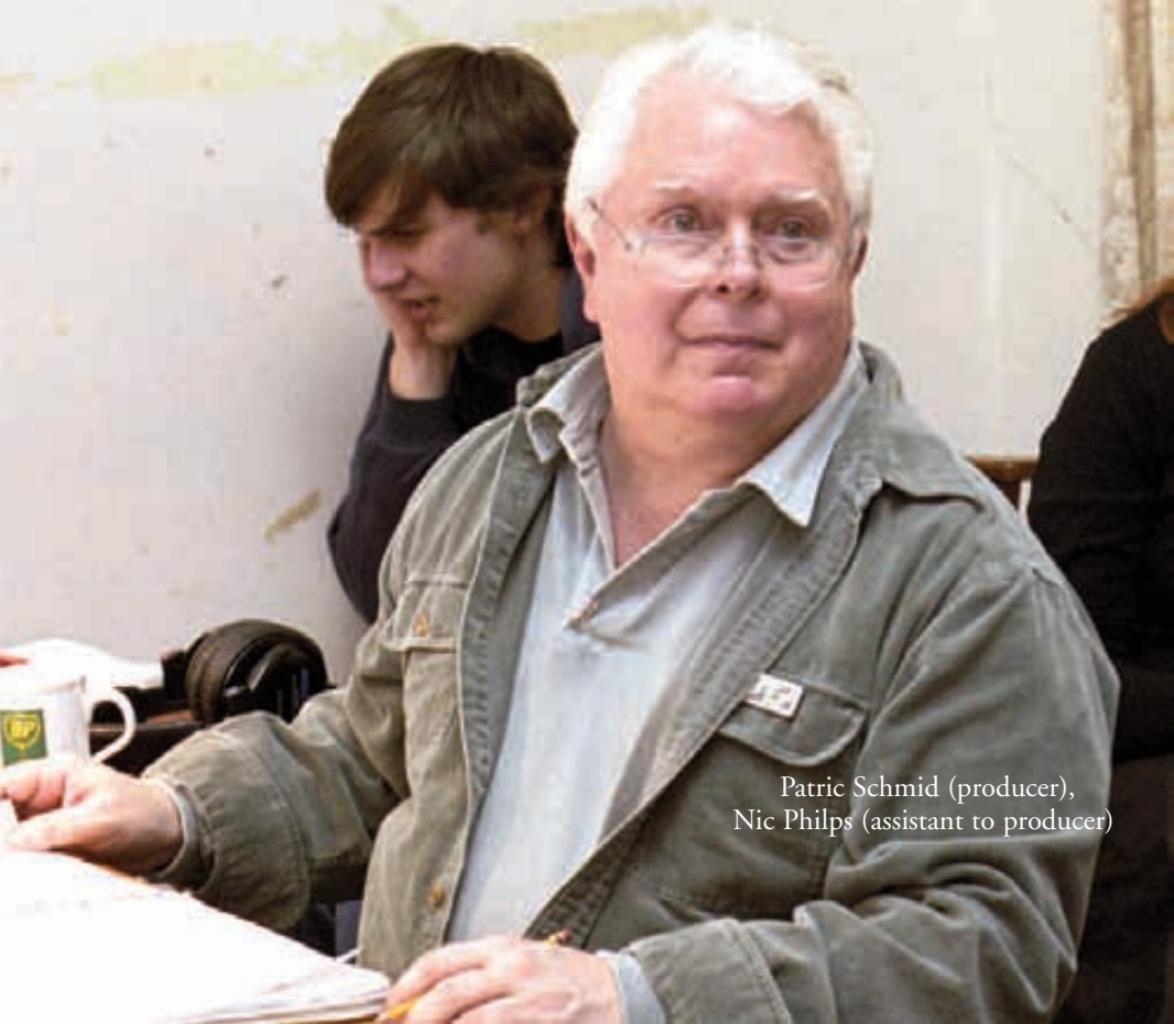


LA SERENATA

Bruce Ford, Diana Montague, Barry Banks, Majella Cullagh
Elizabeth Vidal, Mark Stone, Sine Bundgaard, Paul Austin Kelly
Roland Wood, Susie Beer (cello), Richard Simpson (oboe)
David Harper – piano

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Patric Schmid (producer),
Nic Philps (assistant to producer)

LA SERENATA

THE 19TH CENTURY, as well as seeing a mass of innovations, new inventions, discovery and construction, was also a time of unprecedented political strife. Wars, revolutions, insurrections and their cruel aftermath tore Europe apart, and later America. With the growth of huge cities, disease threatened all strata of society. Tuberculosis, syphilis and typhoid were constant threats. The child mortality rate rose annually, and with the growth of empires and the gradual introduction of speedier travel, tropical diseases such as malaria and leprosy added to the catalogue of fear and insecurity. Small wonder, then, that in their leisure hours people sought escape in romantic literature, painting and music. If they were not swooning over love-lorn poetry, then they turned to the dance as a means of escape. Printing presses all over Europe and North America churned out the latest romances and ballads, while at the height of its popularity, the waltz encouraged as many as 8,000 people an evening to attend Vienna's largest dance-hall.

Every composer of note, even Beethoven and Wagner, took advantage of this popular field at one time or another. A sentimental song, perhaps dedicated to a well-known singer, or an arrangement of an aria or an overture from the latest opera, was always likely to catch on. No sooner had a theatre piece been given its premiere than the arrangers stepped in and soon there would be waltzes, quadrilles and *galops* based on the favourite melodies from each act.

All the composers featured on this CD were engaged in different spheres of endeavour, from opera to musical theatre to church music. Each of them, though, understood the need for music that would reach out and touch people's hearts. Ambroise Thomas, whose serenade gives the disc its title, found his greatest success in the opera house with his settings of classics by Goethe (*Mignon*) and Shakespeare (*Hamlet*), but he did not let that deter him from composing miniature gems. In a similar vein, Donizetti, Pacini, Offenbach and Campana were all ready to adapt their styles to fit the prevailing fashion.

Music-making at home, whether in the grandest salon, or merely a parlour, fuelled every lover's passion. A thousand scenes from drama and fiction depict the sighing young man leaning over the shoulder of his beloved, as she plays and sings at the keyboard, while he turns the pages in silent adoration. The song might also be used as a secret sign between the performer and listener. This communication through music is used as a theme by Marcel Proust in *Un Amour de Swann* as he describes the vacillating emotions of the hero and Odette de Crécy. On the piano in her house Odette keeps the music that becomes the theme of their affair, not just Vinteuil's sonata, but 'Valse des roses' and 'Pauvre fou' – the latter already named in her will, to be played at her funeral.

This heavy-breathing atmosphere had already led to numerous parodies, and in the 1890s Oscar Wilde was able to give Lady Bracknell and her nephew Algernon in *The Importance of Being Earnest* some of their best lines, as Aunt

Augusta outlines her plans for her soirée on the following Saturday. Algernon explains his idea for the music to be provided: ‘You see if one plays good music, people don’t listen, and if one plays bad music people don’t talk’. Lady Bracknell doesn’t seem concerned about the quality, but more the content: ‘French songs I cannot possibly allow. People always seem to think they are improper, and either look shocked, which is vulgar, or laugh, which is worse.’

The subject matter chosen by composers throughout the Victorian age was so wide-ranging that almost any situation might be illustrated by a song. The music libraries of great houses, and the piano stools of thousands of modest dwellings, kept hidden a huge, and largely forgotten, legacy of song. So long as we can detach ourselves from the modern suspicion of sentimentality, these small masterpieces of love, yearning and long parting are ready to delight us again.

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LA SERENATA

LE XIXe siècle, qui a vu naître d'innombrables innovations, inventions, découvertes et constructions, a également connu de nombreux conflits politiques sans précédent. L'Europe et, plus tard, l'Amérique ont été déchirées par de nombreuses guerres, révoltes et insurrections ; elles en ont subi ensuite les cruelles répercussions. Avec le prodigieux essor des villes, la maladie touche toutes les strates de la société. La tuberculose, la syphilis et la typhoïde représentent une menace constante. La mortalité infantile augmente d'année en année et, suite à l'expansion coloniale et la rapidité accrue des transports, les maladies tropicales comme le paludisme et la lèpre contribuent au climat de peur et d'insécurité. D'où l'engouement pour la littérature romantique, la peinture et la musique en guise de distraction. Lorsqu'on ne se pâme pas sur la poésie amoureuse, on cherche une échappatoire dans la danse. Partout en Europe et en Amérique du Nord, les dernières romances et ballades font la fortune des imprimeurs et, la valse ayant atteint des sommets de popularité, la plus grande salle de bal de Vienne accueille jusqu'à huit mille danseurs chaque soir.

Tous les grands compositeurs, y compris Beethoven et Wagner, tirent parti de cette mode, à un moment ou à un autre. Une chanson sentimentale, dédiée le cas échéant à quelque interprète célèbre, ou l'arrangement d'un air ou de l'ouverture du dernier opéra, risquent fort d'avoir la faveur du public. Dès la création d'une œuvre musicale dramatique, on se précipite pour transposer les airs à succès de chacun des actes en autant de valses, quadrilles et galops.

Les compositeurs représentés sur ce CD viennent tous d'horizons différents – de l'opéra, au théâtre musical et à la musique sacrée. Chacun d'entre eux a pourtant compris la nécessité de composer des pages capables de toucher le cœur du plus grand nombre. Ainsi, Ambroise Thomas, qui doit son succès à des opéras inspirés de Goethe (*Mignon*) et de Shakespeare (*Hamlet*), est tout prêt, par ailleurs, à composer de petites merveilles comme la sérénade qui donne son titre à ce disque. De même, Donizetti, Pacini, Offenbach et Campana n'hésitent pas à adapter leur style à la mode du moment.

Du plus grand au plus modeste salon, la pratique musicale amateur nourrit la passion de tous les amoureux. Le théâtre comme le roman rejouent mille fois la scène du jeune homme penché sur l'épaule de sa bien-aimée et en train de tourner les pages, dans un silence admirateur, pendant qu'elle chante au piano. Les paroles peuvent servir de messages secrets entre la personne qui joue et celle qui l'écoute. La communication par la musique est un thème cher à Marcel Proust dans *Un Amour de Swann*, où est évoquée la passion du héros pour Odette de Crécy. Odette conserve sur son piano les partitions qui accompagnent leur histoire d'amour, non seulement la sonate de Vinteuil, mais la « Valse des roses » et « Pauvre fou » – qui, selon ses dernières volontés, devra être jouée à ses funérailles.

Cette atmosphère lourde de sensualité a fait l'objet de nombreuses parodies. Dans les années 1890, elle a inspiré, par exemple, à Oscar Wilde quelques-unes des meilleures répliques de *L'Importance d'être constant*. Durant les préparatifs de la soirée que va donner Lady Bracknell le samedi suivant, son neveu

Algernon lui explique que si la musique est bonne, personne n'écouterait et si elle est mauvaise, tout le monde se taira. « Tante Augusta » se préoccupe plus des paroles que de la musique. La chanson française, selon elle, est à exclure car les gens semblent toujours y trouver des inconveniences – soit qu'ils trahissent leur vulgarité en prenant l'air choqué, soit qu'ils pouffent de rire, ce qui n'est pas mieux.

Les thèmes choisis par les compositeurs de la seconde moitié du XIXe siècle sont d'une extrême diversité : tout ou presque est prétexte à chanson. La bibliothèque musicale des grands de ce monde comme le grenier de milliers de foyers modestes recèlent un immense patrimoine d'airs largement tombés dans l'oubli. Il suffit de faire abstraction de la sensibilité moderne – réfractaire au sentimentalisme – pour pouvoir de nouveau apprécier tout le charme de ces petits chefs-d'œuvre chantant l'amour, le désir et la douleur de la séparation.

Patrick O'Connor, 2007
Traduction : Mireille Ribière

LA SERENATA

IM 19. JAHRHUNDERT wurde nicht nur eine Fülle von Innovationen, Erfindungen, Entdeckungen getätigt und regste Bautätigkeit entfaltet, es war auch eine Zeit politischen Aufruhrs von bislang ungekanntem Ausmaß. Kriege, Revolutionen, Aufstände und all ihre grausamen Folgen zerrissen zunächst Europa und dann auch Amerika. Durch das Anwachsen der Städte zu Metropolen wurden Krankheiten zu einer Bedrohung für alle Gesellschaftsschichten. Tuberkulose, Syphilis und Typhus stellten eine ständige Gefahr dar, mit jedem Jahr stieg die Kindersterblichkeit, und durch die Herausbildung der Kolonialreiche und der damit einhergehenden schnelleren Reisemöglichkeiten steigerten Tropenkrankheiten wie Malaria und Lepra die allgemeine Angst und Verunsicherung noch. So überrascht es nicht, dass die Menschen sich in ihrer Freizeit in die romantische Literatur, Malerei und Musik flüchteten. Wenn sie sich nicht in liebeskranker Lyrik ergingen, zerstreuten sie sich mit Tanzen. In ganz Europa und Nordamerika brachten Druckereien am laufenden Band die neuesten romances und Balladen heraus, am Höhepunkt der Walzer-Popularität strömten Abend für Abend sage und schreibe achttausend Menschen in den größten Wiener Tanzsaal.

Jeder Komponist, der auf sich hielt – auch Beethoven und Wagner –, tummelte sich bisweilen auf diesem Übungsfeld. Ein sentimentales Lied, das vielleicht einer bekannten Sängerin gewidmet war, oder das Arrangement einer Arie oder Ouvertüre aus der neuesten Oper fand fast immer Anklang. Kaum hatte ein Bühnenwerk Premiere gefeiert, griffen die Arrangeure zum Stift, um

Walzer, Quadrillen und *galops*, die auf die Lieblingsmelodien in jedem Akt beruhten, unters Volk zu bringen.

Alle hier vertretenen Komponisten waren in unterschiedlichen Bereichen tätig, von der Oper über das Musiktheater bis hin zu geistlicher Musik. Doch sie alle verstanden auch das Verlangen nach einer Musik, die das Herz der Menschen ansprach. Ambroise Thomas, dessen Serenade beim Titel dieses Albums Pate stand, feierte seine größten Erfolge im Opernhaus mit Vertonungen klassischer Werke von Goethe (*Mignon*, nach *Wilhelm Meisters Lehrjahre*) und Shakespeare (*Hamlet*), aber das hinderte ihn nicht daran, auch im Miniaturformat zu zaubern. Ähnlich waren sich Donizetti, Pacini, Offenbach und Campana nicht zu schade, ihren Stil dem Zeitgeschmack anzupassen.

Heimisches Musizieren, ob im weitläufigen Salon oder im kleinen Wohnzimmer, beflügelte die Leidenschaft eines jeden Liebenden. Tausende literarischer Szenen schildern den jungen Mann, der sich seufzend über die Schulter der Angebeteten beugt und in stiller Bewunderung die Noten umblättert, während sie spielt und singt. Das Lied mag auch als Geheimzeichen zwischen Interpret und Zuhörer verstanden werden. Kommunikation durch Musik themisierte Marcel Proust in *Un Amour de Swann*, wo er die schwankenden Gefühle des Helden und Odette de Crécy beschreibt. Auf Odettes Klavier stehen die Noten der Musik, die zum Thema ihrer Liebe wird, nicht nur Vinteuils Sonate, sondern auch „Valse des roses“ und „Pauvre fou“, wobei letzteres bei ihrer Beerdigung gespielt werden soll, wie sie in ihrem Testament verfügte.

Derart schwülstige Szenarien wurden vielfach parodiert, und in den neunziger Jahren des 19. Jahrhunderts konnte Oscar Wilde seiner Lady Bracknell und ihrem Neffen Algernon in *Bunbury* einige ihrer schönsten Zeilen in den Mund legen, als „Tante Augusta“ ihre Pläne für die Soiree am kommenden Samstag erläuterte. Algernon legt ihr seine Gedanken für die musikalische Umrahmung dar: „Nun ja, wenn man gute Musik spielt, hört niemand zu, und wenn man schlechte Musik spielt, unterhält sich niemand mehr.“ Lady Bracknell ist weniger ob der Qualität besorgt als vielmehr wegen des Inhalts: „Französische Lieder kann ich um keinen Preis billigen. Die Leute halten sie immer für unschicklich und setzen entweder eine schockierte Miene auf, was vulgär ist, oder sie lachen, was noch schlimmer ist.“

Die Themen, denen sich Komponisten das viktorianische Zeitalter hindurch widmeten, waren derart vielfältig, dass sich praktisch jede Situation durch ein Lied veranschaulichen ließ. Die Musikbibliotheken großer Häuser und die Klavierhocker schlichter Wohnzimmer bargen eine Schatztruhe nahezu vergessener Lieder. Solange wir uns über den modernen Verdacht der Sentimentalität erheben, können wir uns gestatten, wieder dem Reiz dieser kleinen Meisterwerke über Liebe, Sehnsucht und den langen Abschied zu erliegen.

Patrick O'Connor, 2007
Übersetzt von Ursula Wulfekamp

LA SERENATA

OLTRE AD ESSERE caratterizzato da numerose innovazioni, invenzioni, scoperte e costruzioni, l'Ottocento fu anche un'epoca di lotte politiche senza precedenti. Guerre, rivoluzioni, insurrezioni e le loro crudeli conseguenze lacerarono l'Europa e in seguito l'America. Con lo sviluppo delle grandi città le malattie minacciarono ogni strato sociale. Tubercolosi, sifilide e tifo erano minacce costanti. Il tasso di mortalità infantile saliva ogni anno e, con la crescita degli imperi e l'introduzione graduale di mezzi di trasporto più rapidi, malattie tropicali come la malaria e la lebbra si aggiunsero alle altre paure e incertezze. Non sorprende, quindi, che nelle ore libere si cercasse in genere l'evasione nella letteratura, nella pittura e nella musica romantiche. Chi non si lasciava conquistare dalla poesia del mal d'amore si rivolgeva alla danza come mezzo di evasione. Le case editrici di tutta Europa e del Nordamerica sfornavano le ultime *romanze* e ballate, mentre il valzer, ormai al culmine della popolarità, riusciva a richiamare anche ottomila persone ogni sera nella più grande sala da ballo di Vienna.

Questo genere popolare fu sfruttato, in momenti diversi, da tutti i compositori di rilievo, persino Beethoven e Wagner. Una canzone sentimentale, magari dedicata a una cantante famosa, o l'arrangiamento di un'aria o di una ouverture dell'opera più recente, ebbero sempre buona possibilità di prender piede. Subito dopo la prima di un melodramma, entravano in scena gli arrangiatori per confezionare in quattro e quattr'otto valzer, quadriglie e *galop* basati sulle melodie preferite dei vari atti.

Tutti i compositori presenti in questo CD furono impegnati in campi diversi, dal melodramma alla musica religiosa. Ciascuno, però, colse l'esigenza di una musica che riuscisse a toccare il cuore della gente. Ambroise Thomas, compositore della serenata da cui prende il titolo il disco, riscosse i maggiori successi nei teatri lirici con opere ispirate ai classici di Goethe (*Mignon*) e Shakespeare (*Amleto*), il che non gli impedì comunque di comporre anche alcune gemme in miniatura. Analogamente Donizetti, Pacini, Offenbach e Campana furono tutti pronti ad adattare il proprio stile per rispondere alla moda prevalente.

La passione di ogni innamorato era alimentata dalla musica, che si faceva in casa, nei saloni più sontuosi o nei piccoli salotti. In moltissime scene dei drammi teatrali o dei romanzi un giovane spasimante si china alle spalle dell'amata che canta accompagnandosi al pianoforte, mentre lui gira le pagine in silenziosa adorazione. La canzone poteva anche essere usata come segnale segreto d'intesa tra l'interprete e l'ascoltatore. Questo tipo di comunicazione è un espediente a cui fa ricorso Marcel Proust in *Un Amour de Swann*, descrivendo l'altalena di emozioni che uniscono il protagonista e Odette de Crécy. Odette tiene sul pianoforte di casa sua la musica che sarà il tema della loro relazione, non solo la sonata di Vinteuil, ma "Valse des roses" e "Pauvre fou". Nel testamento poi chiederà che quest'ultimo brano venga eseguito al proprio funerale.

Quest'atmosfera appassionata aveva già dato il via a numerose parodie. Negli anni novanta dell'Ottocento, Oscar Wilde l'avrebbe presa di mira, assegnando a Lady Bracknell e a suo nipote Algernon ne *L'importanza di chiamarsi Ernesto*, alcune delle loro battute più divertenti. Mentre zia Augusta illustra i suoi piani per la serata che intende organizzare il sabato successivo, Algernon le consiglia quale musica eseguire: “La buona musica non viene ascoltata, ma la brutta musica uccide la conversazione”. Lady Bracknell non sembra preoccuparsi della qualità ma piuttosto del contenuto. “Non posso ammettere le canzoni francesi. Tutti le considerano indecenti, pare, per cui assumono un atteggiamento scandalizzato, e questo è volgare, oppure si mettono a ridere, e questo è ancora peggio”.

L'argomento scelto dai compositori dell'epoca vittoriana fu talmente articolato che era possibile illustrare quasi tutte le situazioni con una canzone. Nelle biblioteche musicali delle grandi dimore e nei vani interni degli sgabelli dei pianoforti in migliaia di modeste abitazioni si conservava un'eredità enorme e largamente dimenticata di canzoni. Se oggi riusciamo a non considerarli eccessi di sentimentalismo, questi piccoli capolavori d'amore, desiderio e lunghe separazioni riusciranno ancora una volta a intrattenerci.

Patrick O'Connor, 2007
Traduzione: Emanuela Guastella

[1] Ambroise Thomas, ‘Le Soir’

Words by Michel Carré

Bruce Ford

AMBROISE THOMAS (1811–1896) had the greatest success of his long career with his opera *Mignon*, first given at the Opéra-Comique in 1866. The libretto, adapted from Goethe’s *Wilhelm Meister*, was by Michel Carré, in collaboration with Jules Barbier. The two writers followed it up with libretti for Thomas’s final operas, *Hamlet* (1868) and *Françoise de Rimini* (1882). This song, to a poem by Carré was composed in 1869, just after their work on the Shakespeare adaptation. Carré (1822–1872) set out to be a painter, but was deflected towards literature, publishing his first volume of poetry, *Les folles rimes et poèmes*, when he was just 20. Carré wrote plays, including one about the young Martin Luther and, with Barbier, one about E.T.A. Hoffmann, which after Carré’s death Barbier adapted as the libretto for Offenbach’s *Les Contes d’Hoffmann*. In this romantic little song, Thomas can perhaps be heard to weave a reference in the introduction to the great love duet from *Hamlet*, ‘Doute de la lumière’.

La terre embrasée
Attend la rosée
Qui tombe des cieux.
La chaleur s’apaise,
On respire à l’aise,
L’oiseau chante mieux.

The scorched earth
is waiting for the dew
to fall from heaven.
The heat is allayed,
one breathes easily,
the birds sing more melodiously.



Bruce Ford

Le feuillage sombre
Couvre de son ombre
Les amants heureux.
Et plus d'une étoile,
À travers son voile,
Parle aux amoureux.
Plus d'une étoile, *etc.*

The dark boughs
shelter happy lovers
beneath their shade.
And more than one star
whispers through its veil
to the sweethearts.
More than one star, *etc.*

[2] Giovanni Pacini, ‘Quando lo miro’

Majella Cullagh

PACINI, ALONG with Mercadante (see track 9), represents for many people one of the ‘missing links’ in the history of 19th-century Italian opera between Rossini and Verdi. Born in Catania in 1796, Pacini studied in Naples and Venice, completing his first (unproduced) opera at the age of just 16. Immensely prolific, he composed more than 80 works for the stage. Some of these were on subjects that other composers set with greater success (*Il corsaro*, *La vestale*, *Ivanhoe*, *Il Cid*, *Giovanna d'Arco*), and by the time of his death in 1867, Pacini’s operas had faded from the repertory. Although Tullio Serafin made some attempts to revive Pacini’s works, conducting a production of *Saffo* at La Scala in 1912, with Eugenia Burzio in the title-role, it was not until a century after the composer’s death that people began to take serious interest in his music again. This *arietta*, published in Naples in 1825, is very operatic in mood, and must have been intended for a singer of some distinction.



Majella Cullagh

Quando lo miro io non saprei
staccar da lui gli occhi e 'l desir,
e nel deliro de' sensi miei
dirgli vorrei: Per te sospiro.
Ma dentro l'alma voce mi grida:
S'ami tua calma, fuggi l'infido,

che in bella salma cor fier s'annida.
Quando lo miro, *ecc.*

Whenever I see him I cannot tear
my eyes away nor stifle my desire,
and in my senses' delirium
I would tell him: I yearn for you.
But within me another voice cries out:
If you value your peace of mind, flee the
deceiver,
for in this fine body lurks a cruel heart.
Whenever I see him, *etc.*

[3] Ambroise Thomas, Nocturne, 'Ange et Mortel'

Words by Marc Constantin
Bruce Ford, Diana Montague

THE CHARMING conceit of this duet, in which the angel and the mortal contemplate an eternity of happiness, is typical of so much literature and poetry of the Victorian age; the obsession with redemption, and the yearning for a heavenly peace are recurrent themes of the period. Thomas composed this song around the time that he was working on his opera *La Cour de Célimène*, first given at the Opéra-Comique in 1855.

Ange

La nuit a parsemé son manteau
d'étoiles.
Viens au milieu des fleurs
pour choisir les plus belles
Qui plairont à tes yeux.

Angel

Night has sprinkled stardust on its
mantle.
Come amongst the flowers
and choose the prettiest ones,
those that delight your eyes.

Mortel

Mon bon ange avec toi dans la douce
vallée
Ensemble nous irons sous la voûte étoilée
En nous parlant des ciels.

Ange, Mortel

Partons : voici le soir, la campagne
est fleurie ;
Allons, allons rêver tous deux dans une
autre patrie.
Le bonheur ici-bas est un mot ignoré
Et l'amour un songe doré.
Voici le soir. Partons, partons.

Ange

Tu seras pour toujours au-dessus des
nuages.
À tes pieds tu verras se former les orages
Dans une immensité.

Mortel

Les nuages seront un peu d'ombre qui
passe
et la terre un point noir qui se perd dans
l'espace
Ou dans l'éternité.

Mortal

My good angel, let's go to the sweet valley;
together we'll walk beneath the starry
vault
while speaking of the skies.

Angel, Mortal

Let us depart: night falls, the meadows
are in bloom.
Come, let's imagine ourselves in another
land.
Joy is a word unknown on earth,
and love a gilded dream.
Evening is here. Let us depart.

Angel

You will be evermore above the clouds.
At your feet you'll see storms gathering
in the immensity of space.

Mortal

Clouds will be a passing shadow,
and Earth a black dot vanishing in space
or in eternity.



Diana Montague

Ange, Mortel

Partons. Voici le soir, la campagne est
fleurie, etc.

Angel, Mortal

Come. Night falls, the meadows are in
bloom, etc.

[4] **Fabio Campana**, Canzone, ‘**Prends patience**’

Words by F. Rizzelli. French translation by D. Tagliafico
Diana Montague

BORN IN Livorno in 1819, Campana had several operas performed in Italy while he was still in his twenties, among them *Giulio d'Este* (1841), *Vannina d'Ornano* (1842) and *Luisa di Francia* (1844). The main part of his career, however, was spent in London, where he became an influential teacher, and published dozens of songs in Italian and French. In this song, the lover seems a little doubtful about the sincerity of the affection with which she is being wooed. Maybe, after all, it's better to wait a little while before committing oneself?

Ami, j'aime à t'entendre
À chaque instant du jour,
D'un air si doux, si tendre,
Me conter ton amour.
Moi-même, je confesse
Que mon cœur est à toi,
Et que t'aimer sans cesse
Serait le ciel pour moi !

Friend, I love to hear you
each moment of the day
telling me about your love
in such sweet and tender tones.
For myself, I must confess
that my heart is yours alone,
and that to love you evermore
would be paradise for me!

Mais que le mariage
Se fasse dès demain ?
Que sans tarder j'engage
Et mon cœur et ma main ?
Non ! Tu crois à ma constance,
Je crois à tes serments,
Un peu de patience,
Chaque chose en son temps !
Dans un ciel sans nuage
Peut-on toujours prévoir,
Dès le matin, l'orage
Qui doit gronder le soir ?
De l'amour si légère
Est la flamme, qu'au vent,
Comme un feu de bruyère,
Elle s'éteint souvent.

Pour être sûrs qu'on s'aime,
Là, vraiment, sans danger,
Il faut un an, et même
C'est beaucoup abréger !
Mais... Pour nous, huit jours, je pense,
Seront bien suffisants ;
Un peu de patience,
Chaque chose en son temps!
Prends patience ! Prends patience !

But should our marriage
take place tomorrow?
Should I without hesitation
pledge my heart and my hand?
No! You believe in my constancy,
I believe your promises:
have a little patience,
everything in good time!
From a cloudless sky
can we always predict,
in the morning, the storm
that will break in the evening?
Love's flame is so vulnerable
that a breath of wind,
as in a heathland fire,
often blows it out.

To be sure of one's love,
really sure, no room for error,
one needs a year, and even that
is being rather hasty!
But... For us, a week, I think,
will be quite sufficient:
have a little patience,
everything in good time!
Be patient! Be patient!

[5] **Angelo Mariani**, Serenata, ‘Splende nel ciel’

Words by Giovanni Pennacchi

Majella Cullagh, Mark Stone, Bruce Ford

ANGELO MARIANI (1821–1873) was a protégé of Rossini, who encouraged him in his ambitions as a composer. It was as a conductor, however, that Mariani most excelled. He was the first to conduct an opera by Wagner in Italy (*Lohengrin* in Bologna, 1871) and was a close associate of both Verdi and Mercadante. Mariani’s playing of the violin solo in the famous trio from Verdi’s *I Lombardi* at a performance in Milan in 1846 helped to establish his reputation as a leading concert master, directing the orchestra while taking the lead violin part. This elaborate trio is perhaps inspired by that same moment in Verdi’s opera.

Tenore

Splende in ciel la luna,
tiepido spira il vento:
s’increspa la laguna
di tremolo splendor.
La terra, il firmamento
è un estasi d’amor.
Angiol diletto della mia vita,
salga al tuo letto la mia canzon:
bianco vestita vien, deh! vieni al balcon!

Tenor

Radiant is the moon above,
warm and soft the breeze:
ripples upon the lagoon
shimmer with sparkling light.
Earth and firmament
are one in amorous ecstasy.
My angel, joy of my life,
may my song rise to your bed.
Come, white-clad, oh, come to the
balcony!

Bass

Vieni, una sol stella
manca e l'aspetta il cielo.
Vieni, che tu sei quella,
o donna del mio cor.
Chiusa nel bianco velo
sei l'astro dell'amor.
Fa cor, ti affaccia,
scendi in giardino:
fra le mie braccia
di che tremar?
Vieni, deh! vieni, vieni!
Vieni, il mattino non può tardar.

+

Tenore

Angiol d'amor!
Vieni, vieni al balcon.
Ah! vieni, deh! vieni, *ecc.*

Soprano

Ah!
Volan di ramo in ramo
due teneri usignoli,
e ripetendo: t'amo,
si baciano tra lor.

E noi sarem qui soli,
e parlerem d'amore.

Bass

Come, one single star
is missing and the sky awaits it.
Come, for you are that star,
O woman of my heart!
Enveloped in gauzy white
you are the star of love.
Take heart, appear,
come down to the garden:
in my arms
what have you to fear?
Come, oh, come, come!
Come, morning is not far off.

+

Tenor

Angel of love!
Come, come to the balcony!
Ah! Come, *etc.*

Soprano

Ah!
From branch to branch
flit two loving nightingales,
and repeating the words: I love you,
exchange kisses with each other

And we shall be alone here
and shall speak of love.

Mark Stone, Majella Cullagh, David Harper, Bruce Ford



Gli accenti, i baci molli,
il pianto, l'aure fugaci
non san ridir:
notte col manto ci dee coprir, *ecc.*

+

Tenore e Basso

Angiol diletto della mia vita,
vieni, vieni al balcon.
Angiol diletto della mia vita,
salga al tuo letto la mia canzon, *ecc.*

Ah! vien, ah! vien.

Our words, our tender kisses
our plaints the passing breezes
will not criticise:
night's mantle will conceal us, *etc.*

+

Tenor and Bass

My angel, joy of my life,
come to the balcony.
My angel, joy of my life,
may my song rise to your bed, *etc.*

Ah! Come, oh come!

[6] Fabio Campana, 'Pour toi'

Words by F. Rizzelli. French translation by D. Tagliafico
Bruce Ford

CAMPANA'S MOST successful opera was *Esmerelda*, based on Victor Hugo's *Notre Dame de Paris*. It was first given in St Petersburg, and later in London, when the title-role was sung by Adelina Patti. Campana often dedicated his songs to well-known singers, it doing no harm to have a great name displayed on the cover of the sheet-music. The translation of 'Per te' has rendered the text appropriate for a male or female singer; in the original it is quite clear that the singer is a man, who would sacrifice anything for his 'fanciulla cara'.

Pour toi, l'aurore est plus vermeille,
Plus pur le lac, plus doux le vent,
Plus fraîche la rose s'éveille,
L'oiseau redit son plus beau chant.
Pour toi, la source a son murmure,
La mousse fleurit sous tes pas.
Ah ! Pour toi, se pare la nature,
Et seule tu ne le vois pas, *etc.*

Pour toi, je donnerais mon rêve
De gloire, mon rêve enchanté,
Mon nom que la fortune élève,
Que sais-je encore ? Ma liberté !
Pour toi, seul bonheur que j'envie,
Seul bien que j'espère ici-bas,
Ah ! Pour toi, je donnerais ma vie,
Et seule tu ne le sais pas, *etc.*

For you the dawn is ruddier,
clearer the lake, balmier the wind,
fresher the awakening rose,
the birds sing their prettiest songs.
For you, the spring is babbling,
the moss blooms where you tread.
Ah ! For you, nature dons all her finery,
and you alone cannot see it, *etc.*

For you I would sacrifice my dream
of glory, my enchanted dream,
the title, mine by accident of birth,
and what besides? My freedom!
For you, the only happiness I seek,
the only blessing hoped for here below,
ah, for you I'd sacrifice my life,
and you alone do not know it, *etc.*



Jacques Offenbach
(1819–1880)

[7] Jacques Offenbach, ‘Si j’étais petit oiseau’

Words by Jousselin

Elizabeth Vidal, Susie Beer (cello)

IN PARIS in 1849, Jacques Offenbach (1819–1880) was just on the threshold of his career as a composer. For ten years, he had enjoyed an increasing reputation as a cellist and conductor. Born in Cologne, Offenbach moved to study in Paris when he was 14, and his whole working life would be centred on the French capital, where Rossini dubbed him the ‘Mozart of the Champs-Elysées’. Between 1847 and 1854, he had just four of his one-act comic operas performed, but after 1855, when he launched his own company, the Bouffes-Parisiens, he quickly became *the* Parisian composer; his music came to symbolise the hectic, pleasure-seeking mood of the Second Empire. Offenbach performed this song at a concert in April 1849, accompanying the singer, Mlle Dobré, on the cello. Reviewing this event, the critic of the journal *Le Corsaire* commented: ‘It’s wizardry. It’s not just an ordinary cello; you seem to hear all the instruments at once, as if it were the violin, the flute, the harp. I wouldn’t be surprised if he had made a little pact with Monsieur le diable.’ ‘Si j’étais petit oiseau’, charming in itself, is perhaps a gentle parody of all the bird songs and arias with which early 19th-century prima donnas liked to demonstrate their coloratura techniques.

Ah, si j’étais petit oiseau
Ayant la voix de Philomèle,
Pour voir son visage si beau
J’irais voltiger auprès d’elle.

Ah, were I a little bird
with the voice of the nightingale,
to gaze upon her lovely face
I would go and flutter around her.

A close-up photograph of a young woman with voluminous, curly blonde hair. She is wearing a black corduroy vest over a white collared shirt and a bright red, crumpled necktie. She is smiling warmly at the camera. Her right hand is raised towards the bottom left of the frame, holding a green pen between her fingers. The background is blurred, suggesting an indoor setting.

Elizabeth Vidal

Susie Beer



Ah, si j'étais petit oiseau, *etc.*

Si j'avais le corsage noir
Et les ailes de l'hirondelle,
J'irais dans son joli boudoir,
J'irais me reposer près d'elle.

Je donnerais ma liberté
Pour être sa soeur, son amie,
Je mettrais ma félicité
À lui sacrifier ma vie.

Ah, si j'étais petit oiseau, *etc.*

Et pour égayer chaque jour
Le silence de sa retraite,
Je lui dirais avec amour
Ma plus gentille chansonnette.

J'aurais ma part de son bonheur,
Sa tristesse serait la mienne,
En écoutant battre son cœur
Ma voix appellerait la sienne.

Ah, si j'étais petit oiseau, *etc.*

Ah, were I a little bird, *etc.*

Had I the black costume
and the wings of a swallow,
I would enter her pretty boudoir,
I would rest at her side.

I would sacrifice my freedom
to be her sister, her friend,
I would count it happiness
to devote my life to her.

Ah, were I a little bird, *etc.*

And to enliven every day
the silence of her retreat,
I would lovingly recite
the sweetest of my songs.

I would share her happiness,
her sorrow would be mine,
while listening to her heartbeat
my voice would summon hers.

Ah, were I a little bird, *etc.*

[8] **Fabio Campana**, Duettino, ‘**Près de la mer**’

French translation by D. Tagliafico

Diana Montague, Mark Stone

ALTHOUGH Campana was based in London for over 30 years (dying there in February 1882), his only stage work composed for a London theatre was *Almina* (libretto by A. de Lauzières), first given at Her Majesty’s in April 1860, with Marietta Piccolimini and Antonio Giuglini. The fashion for French and Italian songs suitable for amateur singers to perform at home continued throughout the late 19th century. Campana published several collections, among them *Rimembranze di Parigi*, *Ricordo di Milano* and *Mazzetto di fiori*. It is easy to understand the popularity of such duets as this, when two singers could find a quiet understanding – and who knows what it might lead to?

Baryton

Qu’elle est douce la brise qui passe
Par les bois d’orangers tout en fleurs !
Qu’elle est belle la mer dans l’espace,
Reflétant les célestes splendeurs!

Baritone

How sweet the breeze that blows
through the orange groves in full bloom!
How beautiful the open sea
reflecting the splendours of the firmament!

Mezzo-soprano

Qu’elle est douce, *etc.*

Mezzo-soprano

How sweet, *etc.*

Mezzo-soprano, Baryton

Qu’elle est belle la mer, *etc.*

Mezzo-soprano, Baritone

How beautiful, *etc.*



Mark Stone

Mais plus douce que la brise pure,
Mais plus belle qu'un rêve des cieux, ah !
Est ta voix qui dans l'ombre murmure,
Est la flamme qui brille en tes yeux !
Bien plus douce que la brise pure,
Bien plus belle, *etc.*

But sweeter than the fresh, cool breeze,
lovelier than a dream of paradise, ah!
is your voice murmuring in the dark,
the flame that sparkles in your eyes!
Much sweeter than the fresh, cool breeze,
much lovelier, *etc.*

[9] Saverio Mercadante, ‘Ecco quel fiero istante’

Words by Pietro Metastasio

Sine Bundgaard, Bruce Ford, Diana Montague, Roland Wood

IN HIS own time, Saverio Mercadante (1795–1870) was one of the few Italian composers to come near to rivalling the popularity and influence of Donizetti. But, like his near contemporary Pacini, by the time Mercadante died in 1870, his operas were fast fading from the repertory. Like Pacini, Mercadante chose several subjects that were used to greater effect by others – *La vestale*, *Il conte di Essex*, *I briganti*, *Medea* and *Maria Stuarda*. But opera was not his only sphere. He also composed a quantity of sacred music, cantatas, choruses and motets, as well as 20 concertos, and a large body of orchestral music. There are dozens of songs and works for several voices, such as this setting of Metastasio's *La partenza*, one of the poet's works hailing the beauty of a classical heroine who bears the name of the goddess of victory – Nice. This verse, written by Metastasio in Vienna in 1746, was set by several other composers, including Beethoven and Rossini.

A black and white engraving of the Italian composer Saverio Mercadante. He is shown from the chest up, wearing a dark, high-collared coat over a white cravat and a light-colored waistcoat. His dark, wavy hair is styled in a powdered fashion. He has a gentle expression and is looking slightly to his right.

Saverio Mercadante
(1795–1870)

Diana Montague, Sine Bundgaard, Roland Wood



Ecco quel fiero istante:
Nice, mia Nice, addio.
Come vivrò, ben mio,
così lontan da te?

Ecco quel fiero istante, *ecc.*
Io vivrò sempre in pene,
io non avrò più bene...
E tu, chi sà se mai ti sovverai di me, *ecc.*

This is the dreaded moment:
Nice, my Nice, farewell.
How shall I survive, my love,
so far away from you?

This is the dreaded moment, *etc.*
I shall suffer constantly,
shall never again feel joy...
And you, who knows if you will ever
think of me, *etc.*

[10] **Ambroise Thomas**, Romanza, ‘**La serenata**’
Elizabeth Vidal

THOMAS SEEMS to have had a penchant for quite outré subjects for his early operas. Among them is one from 1850 called *Le songe d'un nuit d'été* (The Midsummer Night’s Dream), which has little or nothing to do with Shakespeare’s play, although the Bard appears as a character. The plot concerns more adventures of Sir John Falstaff, with Queen Elizabeth I also making an appearance. This languid serenade, though, seems much more in the mood of *A Midsummer Night’s Dream*, with its talk of men and beasts asleep, and love in a wooded valley. Thomas also composed another ‘Serenade’, with words by Alexandre Dumas *fil.* That, however, is a much more passionate verse, full of remorse and jealousy.

Tu d’amarmi un dì giurasti,
adorato mio tesoro,

You swore one day you loved me,
dear treasure I adore,

e dar anco un bel ristoro
in mercede a questo cor.

Se il tuo labbro lusinghiero
non mentiva in quel momento,
perchè tardi a far contento
il più tenero amator?

Tutto tace a noi d'intorno, ...
dormon gli uomini e le fere,
l'ore amiche del piacer
ah, son queste, amato bene!
Ah!

Vieni dunque al bosco in fondo
alla valle, alla lacuna
finchè amica la fortuna
veglierà sul nostro amor.

Giura dunque, o mio tesoro,
giura ancor che tu mi ami,
apri il cuor, dimmi che brami,
svela i dolci tuoi sospir.

Quanto è mio, quanto mi piace,
tutto è tuo, te l'offro in dono.
Ah, se offrir potessi un trono,
farei pago il tuo desir.

and to bring sweet solace
to my heart as its reward.

If your seductive lips
were not lying at the time,
why do you hesitate to make
this most tender of lovers happy?

All is silence around us,...
men and beasts are asleep,
the hours favourable for love,
ah, they are these, my darling!
Ah!

So come to the wood in the valley,
to the hollow among the rocks,
where perhaps fortune will be kind
and guard our lovemaking.

So swear, my darling,
swear once more you love me,
open your heart, tell me you want me,
reveal your tender longings.

All that I have, all that I love,
is yours, I offer it freely.
Ah, had I a throne to offer
I would make your dreams come true.



Giovanni Pacini
(1796–1867)

Ma se è ver che basti il cuore,
noi sarem insiem felici appien;
ah! non saetta, non baleno
turberanno il nostro amor.
No!

D'ogni indebito timore
l'aspra idea da te discaccia.

Stendi, o cara, a me le braccia,
ch'io morir ti voglio in sen.

Vieni, cara, vieni, o cara!

But if it is true that my heart will suffice,
we shall be wholly happy;
no lightning flash nor thunderclap
will perturb our love.
No!

All your fears are groundless:
dismiss such harsh thoughts from your
mind.

Open your arms to me, my love,
for I would die on your breast.

Come, dearest, come, my darling!

[11] **Giovanni Pacini**, Ballata, '**Il soldato**'
Words by Cavre. De Ferrariis
Mark Stone

NO MUSICAL soirée was complete without a song on some military theme. Throughout the 19th century, the joys and woes of the soldier's life were celebrated or lamented, from Méhul's 'Le Chant du départ' (with words by André Chénier) to Leslie Stuart's 'The Soldiers of the Queen'. In this merry ballad, dedicated to 'Sig. Avvocato G. Sardone', Pacini adds a slightly sardonic touch; this fellow seems to think quite highly of himself, and of the effect he believes he will have on the ladies.

Pel mondo cammino:
son vecchio soldato;
non cangio il mio fato
con quello d'un re.
I balli i teatri le danze le feste
son languide e meste
se prive di me.

Al suon della tromba
che infonde valor,
ritorna il coraggio, rinasce l'ardor.
S'ascolta un tamburo
le usate facende
ciascuno sospende,
si ferma in cammin.

Di su dal balcone
s'affaccia la bella,
lisciando le anelle del lucido crin.
È 'l suon della tromba
che infonde valor.
È un fido secreto, messaggio d'amor
che infonde valor.
Il suon della tromba infonde valor.

I roam the world.
I'm an old soldier;
I wouldn't swap my destiny
with that of a king.
Balls, theatres, dances and parties
are lacklustre and melancholy
if I'm not there.

At the sound of the trumpet,
which inspires men with valour,
courage returns, zeal is reborn.
On hearing the drum,
everyone leaves
their everyday tasks
and downs tools.

Up on her balcony
the beauty appears,
smoothing her glossy ringlets.
It's the sound of the trumpet
that inspires men with valour.
It's a dark secret, a message of love
that inspires men with valour.
The sound of the trumpet inspires men
with valour.

[12] **Gaetano Donizetti**, Duettino, ‘T’intendo sì mio cor con tanto’

Words by Pietro Metastasio

Diana Montague, Sine Bundgaard

PIETRO METASTASIO (1698–1782) was the most influential opera librettist of his time – virtually every important composer of the 18th century set his dramas, for instance both Gluck and Mozart (and at least two dozen others) used *La Clemenza di Tito*. Long after his death, the lure of Metastasio’s verse remained compelling, even for a composer as modern in his outlook and ambitions as Gaetano Donizetti (1797–1848). Although the majority of Donizetti’s vocal works aimed at the salon performer are solos, he also composed more than two dozen duets, and a few pieces for mixed voice. This verse is used in two of Metastasio’s libretti: the opera *Siface re di Numidia*, and the cantata *Amor timido*. By the time Donizetti chose it, many other composers had set it, among them Hasse, Galuppi and Beethoven (Opus 82 No 2). Donizetti treats it very much as if it were an operatic duet; one can somehow imagine it as a vehicle for Pasta and Grisi, taking a light-hearted moment away from the woes of *Anna Bolena* or *Norma*.

T’intendo sì mio cor:
con tanto palpitar
so che ti vuoi lagnar
che amante sei.
Ma taci il tuo dolor,
ma soffri il tuo martir:
tacilo e non tradir,

My heart, I understand you:
with such palpitations
you tell me that you’re suffering
the pangs of love.
But keep silent about your pain,
and put up with your torment:
be silent and do not betray,



Sine Bundgaard and Diana Montague



ah! non tradir gli affetti miei, *ecc.*
O cor, o cor t'intendo,
t'intendo sì mio cor, *ecc.*

ah, do not betray my feelings, *etc.*
O heart, I understand you,
My heart, I understand you, *etc.*

[13] **Antoine-Elie Elwart**, Romance, ‘**Le Chalumeau**’
Elizabeth Vidal, Richard Simpson (oboe)

ALTHOUGH he composed several operas, as well as symphonies and chamber music, Antoine-Elie Elwart (1808–1877) was best known for his sacred works, such as *Noé, ou le déluge universel* (1845), *Ruth et Booz* (1850) and *Les Noçes de Cana* (1853). A prolific musical journalist and theorist, he also wrote the biography of the tenor Gilbert Duprez (*Duprez, sa vie artistique*, Paris, 1838). Elwart studied at the Conservatoire, to which he later returned as professor of harmony.

Au loin dans la campagne
J'entends le chalumeau :
Une voix l'accompagne
Et chante sous l'ormeau ;
Sa douce mélodie
Nous invite aux amours.
Mais loin de mon ami
Pour moi plus de beaux jours !

L'oiseau sous le feuillage
Célèbre son bonheur,

From the distant countryside
comes the sound of a shepherd's pipe:
a voice accompanies it
in song beneath the elm;
its gentle melody
invites us to make love.
But with my sweetheart far away,
for me good times are over!

The bird amid the foliage
celebrates his joy,



Richard Simpson

Le papillon volage
Sourit à chaque fleur,
La rose épanouie
Nous invite aux amours.
Mais loin de mon ami
Pour moi plus de beaux jours !

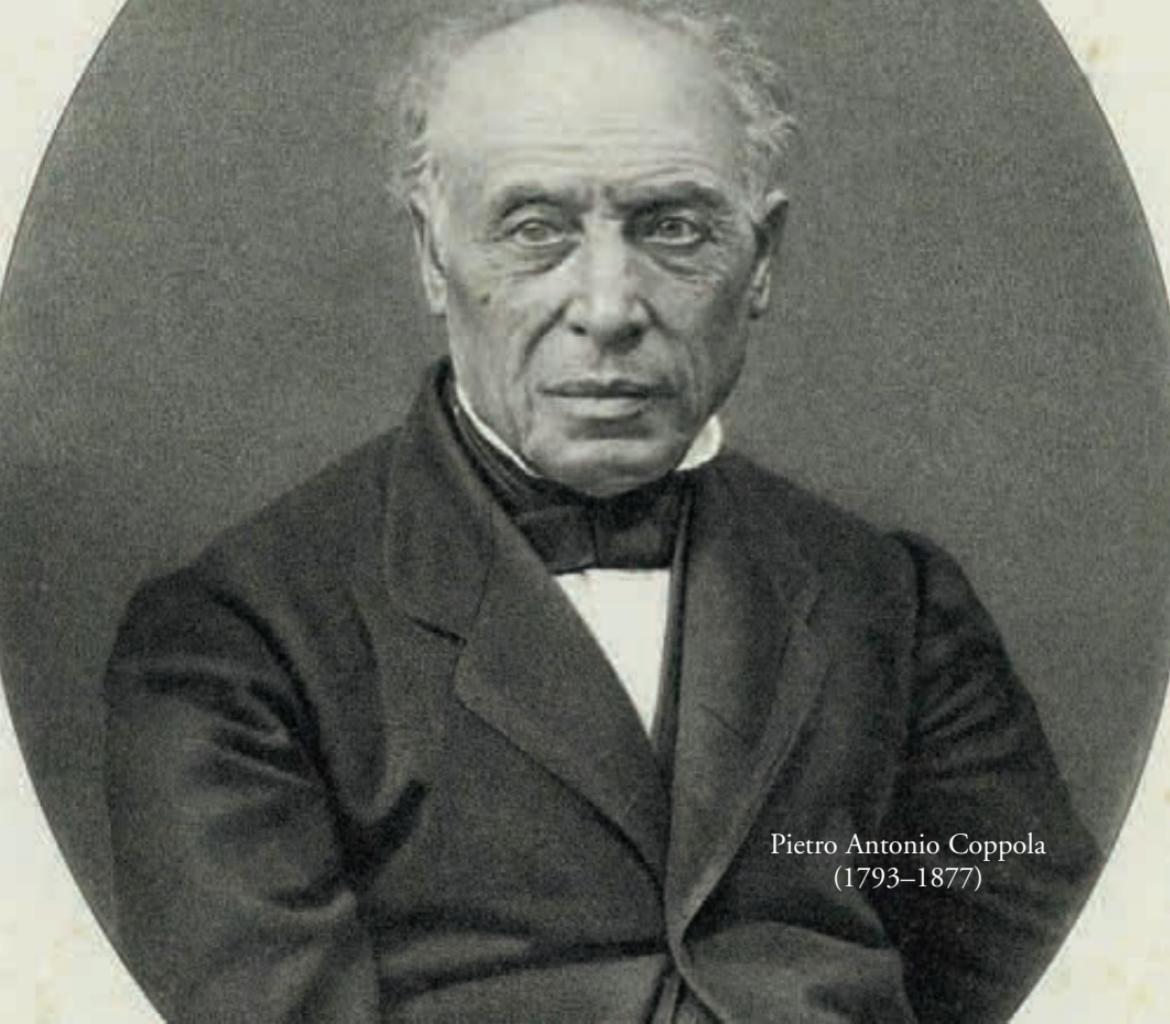
Dans une paix profonde
Murmurent les ruisseaux,
Les habitants de l'onde
Agitent les roseaux,
L'air pur de la prairie
Nous invite aux amours.
Mais loin de mon ami
Pour moi plus de beaux jours !
Ah !

the fickle butterfly
smiles at every flower,
the rose in bloom
invites us to make love.
But with my sweetheart far away,
for me good times are over!

In profound tranquillity
the brooks are babbling,
the water-dwelling creatures
make the rushes quiver,
the pure air of the meadow
invites us to make love.
But with my sweetheart far away,
for me good times are over!
Ah!

[14] **Pietro Antonio Coppola, ‘Vieni diletta, che giunta’**
Barry Banks

SON OF an opera composer, Pietro Antonio Coppola (1793–1877) had a long and adventurous career. His father had been concert master at the theatre in Catania, Sicily, a post to which Coppola succeeded, before being appointed to the Teatro San Carlo in Naples. There, his most successful opera was given in 1835, a setting of *Nina, la pazza per amore*, the same story that had been used by Paisiello. Coppola later took up a post in Lisbon, at the São Carlos, staying at the opera house for two long sojourns. He was one of the composers



Pietro Antonio Coppola
(1793–1877)

who contributed to the cantata performed at La Scala in 1837 in memory of Maria Malibran (the others being Donizetti, Mercadante, Pacini and Vaccai).

Nel silenzio della notte
io ti sogno in bianco velo,
come un angelo del Cielo
ti presenti innanzi a me,
mentre io col core ardente
più ti sguardo e m'innamoro,
con quel labbro seducente
mi cominci a dir così:
Vieni diletta, che giunta è l'ora,
vieni, vieni a passeggiar, *ecc.*

Io ti cerco, sciagurata,
come tortora smarrita
nella valle della vita.
Io non provo che dolor.
Cambieranno, ti rispondo,
tutti i giorni e tutte l'ore,
la speranza e il primo amore
come, o Dio, cangiar si può.
Vieni diletta, che giunta è l'ora,
vieni, vieni a passeggiar, *ecc.*

In the silence of the night
I dream of you robed in white;
like an angel of heaven
you appear before me,
while I, with heart aflame,
love you more the more I see you;
with those seductive lips
you speak to me.
Come, sweetheart, for the hour has struck,
come, come and walk with me, *etc.*

I look for you, unhappy woman,
like a dove that has lost its way
in the valley of life.
I feel nothing but sorrow.
They will change, I answer,
every day and every hour,
hope and first love.
How, O God, can one change?
Come, sweetheart, for the hour has
struck,
come, come and walk with me, *etc.*

Barry Banks



[15] Angelo Mariani (?), 'Il giglio'

Majella Cullagh

THE LATE Patric Schmid amassed a huge library of printed music, as well as manuscripts. This unique collection has been the source for all of Opera Rara's recordings and performances. There is a mystery about this song; the manuscript was one Patric had acquired long ago, during his early research into 19th-century Italian opera and song. The image of the lily was especially popular with romantic poets, and consequently there are many songs with this title. The rather smudged signature on the manuscript looks like Mariani, so it may be that this is another of the songs that the great conductor and patriot found time to compose. (Among his other songs is a Turkish national anthem.) But whoever wrote the song has certainly been listening quite closely to Mendelssohn's 'On Wings of Song' and perhaps also to Beethoven's 'Moonlight' Sonata.

D'un caro affetto all'aura
cresciuto, o nobil fiore,
puro siccome l'alito
soave dell'amore.
Su te vegliò l'assidua man
della fida sposa,
e tua virtude ascosa
di speme in lei parlò.
Su te vegliò, *ecc.*

In an aura of gentle affection
you grew, O noble flower,
as pure as the gentle
breath of love.
Tended by the careful hand
of a devoted wife,
your discreet virtue
spoke of her steadfastness.
Tended, *etc.*

Sin ne' deserti candido
schiudi olezzante il seno,
t'imperlo d'una lacrima
che piove il ciel sereno.
Lieve ti baci un zeffiro
che al tuo favor s'inclina,
carreggi la divina
luce che ti scaldò.
Careggi la divina, *ecc.*

Even in deserts your snow-white breast
you bare, exuding fragrance;
I adorn you with a pearly tear
rained from a cloudless sky.
May a zephyr softly kiss you,
as it stoops towards you,
may the light divine
caress you as it warms.
May the light divine, *etc.*

[16] Amédée de Beauplan, 'La Galopomanie'

Majella Cullagh (soprano I), Elizabeth Vidal (soprano II),
Diana Montague (mezzo-soprano), Paul Austin Kelly (tenor I),
Bruce Ford (tenor II), Mark Stone (baritone)

AMÉDÉE DE BEAUPLAN (Rousseau) (1790–1853) grew up in Paris in the years of the Terror – his father perished at the hands of the revolutionaries, and two of his aunts had been ladies-in-waiting to Marie-Antoinette. Beauplan flourished during the Restoration, achieving fame as a composer of *romances* and *chansonettes*. These include 'Le Bonheur de se revoir', 'L'ingénue', 'Le Pardon' and above all 'Dormez, mes chères amours', the melody of which is still famous, as it was used by Tchaikovsky for Monsieur Triquet's couplets in *Eugene Onegin*. The comic song performed here, satirising the fashion for dancing and the gatherings at popular venues such as the Bal Mabille, is one of several on the same theme that Beauplan produced – among the others are 'La Demoiselle au bal' and 'La leçon de valse du petit François'.



Paul Austin Kelly

Soprano I & II

C'est le galop, le galop
Qui fait le bonheur de ma vie ;
Par un galop, aussitôt
De dix ans je suis rajeunie.
Qu'il est piquant ! Qu'il a d'attrait !
Nuit et jour je galoperais ;
Dans la Chine au galop j'irais.
Cher ami, cher époux,
Laissez-moi galoper
Ou je fais un éclat, ou je vais m'échapper.

Ténor I

On dit que mon embonpoint
Au galop ne convient point,
Mais je suis, quand je veux,
Une plume adorable.
Mes cavalières ont horreur
De l'effrayante maigreur.
Moi, je sais leur donner
Un aplomb favorable.

Basse

C'est le galop, le galop
Qui fait le bonheur de ma vie, *etc.*

Soprano I & II

The galopade, the galopade
is the dance that makes me happy;
from the start the galopade
takes ten years off my age.
How exciting it is! How charming!
Night and day I would dance the galopade;
I would galop all the way to China.
Dear friend, dear husband,
let me dance the galopade
or I will make a scene, or run away.

Tenor I

Some say that my portliness
does not suit the galopade,
but I can, when I want,
be an adorable feather.
My partners are repelled
by a scary lack of flesh.
For my part, I can give them
just the balance they require.

Bass

The galopade, the galopade
is what makes me happy, *etc.*

Mezzo-soprano, Soprano II

De la danse, nobles soutiens,
Pour le galop, je vous préviens
Que je garde tous mes moyens.
Cher ami, cher époux,
Laissez-moi galoper
Ou je fais un éclat, ou je vais m'échapper.

Mezzo-soprano, Soprano II

Noble dancing partners,
when dancing the galop, I warn you,
I am at my very best.
Dear friend, dear husband,
let me dance the galopade
or I will make a scene, or run away.

Soprano II & Mezzo-soprano

Pour visiter les salons
Lorsqu'on passe à reculons,
On brave des périls dont je fais mes délices.
Les galopeurs maladroits
Se heurtent bien quelquefois;
J'en porte avec fierté les nobles cicatrices.

Soprano II & Mezzo-soprano

Dancing from room to room,
sometimes in reverse,
one encounters dangers that delight me.
Clumsy galopers
can bump into each other:
I proudly bear the scars of such encounters.

Ténor I & II, Baryton

Car le galop, le galop
Fait seul le bonheur de ma vie.
Par un galop, aussitôt
De dix ans je suis rajeuni.
Changer de danseuse tout à coup,
Me réjouit encor beaucoup !
Cette inconstance est de bon goût.
Cher ami, laissez-moi galoper,
Ou je fais un éclat, ou je vais m'échapper.

Tenor I & II, Baritone

For the galopade, the galopade
is my one and only joy in life.
From the start, the galopade
makes me feel ten years younger.
The sudden change of partner
makes me happier still!
This infidelity is in good taste.
Dear friend, let me dance the galopade,
or I will make a scene, or run away.



Majella Cullagh, Elizabeth Vidal, Diana Montague
Bruce Ford, Paul Austin Kelly, Mark Stone

Soprano I & II, Mezzo-soprano

On commence, espoir flatteur !
Je vais renaître au bonheur
Pourtant je cherche en vain,
de moi l'effroi s'empare !
Où donc est mon galopeur ?
C'est vous qui lui faites peur !
Ah! qu'un mari jaloux est un monstre
barbare !

Tous

Quand le galop, le galop
Ferait le bonheur de ma vie,
Chacun s'éloigne aussitôt
En voyant votre jalousie.
Quand le galop, le galop
Ferait le bonheur de ma vie,
Laissez-moi, chers amis, galoper,
Ou je fais un éclat, ou je vais m'échapper.

Soprano I & II, Mezzo-soprano

We are starting now, I fondly hope!
I am about to feel happy again.
But I look around in vain,
and am seized with horror!
Where is my galoper?
You have frightened him off!
Ah! A jealous husband is a barbarous
monster!

All

Although the galopade, the galopade
would make me happy,
everybody runs away from me
when they see you're jealous.
Since the galopade, the galopade
is the joy of my life,
let me, dear friends, dance the galopade
or I will make a scene, or run away.



David Harper