

Johannes Brahms (1833-97) · Clara Schumann (1819-96)
Robert Schumann (1810-56) · Sally Beamish (b.1956)

Roderick Williams *baritone* · Andrew West *piano*

Johannes Brahms

- | | | |
|---|-------------------------------|------|
| 1 | An die Nachtigall, Op.46 No.4 | 3:18 |
| 2 | Mädchenlied, Op.107 No.5 | 1:31 |
| 3 | Das Mädchen, Op.95 No.1 | 2:22 |

Clara Schumann

- | | | |
|---|------------------------------------|------|
| 4 | Liebst du um Schönheit, Op.12 No.2 | 2:06 |
|---|------------------------------------|------|

Johannes Brahms

- | | | |
|---|----------------------------------|------|
| 5 | Das Mädchen spricht, Op.107 No.3 | 1:25 |
| 6 | Salamander, Op.107 No.2 | 1:01 |
| 7 | Nachtigall, Op.97 No.1 | 2:20 |

Sally Beamish: Four Songs from Hafez

- | | | |
|----|-------------|------|
| 8 | Nightingale | 3:33 |
| 9 | Peacock | 4:22 |
| 10 | Fish | 2:48 |
| 11 | Hoopoe | 5:10 |

Johannes Brahms

- | | | |
|----|------------------------------------|------|
| 12 | Vergebliches Ständchen, Op.84 No.4 | 1:45 |
| 13 | Sapphische Ode, Op.94 No.4 | 2:35 |
| 14 | Von ewiger Liebe, Op.43 No.1 | 0:55 |

Robert Schumann

- | | | |
|-------------------------------|--|---------|
| Frauenliebe und -leben, Op.42 | | [20:46] |
| 15 | Seit ich ihn gesehen | 2:13 |
| 16 | Er, der Herrlichste von allen | 3:15 |
| 17 | Ich kann's nicht fassen, nicht glauben | 1:50 |
| 18 | Du Ring an meinem Finger | 2:30 |
| 19 | Helft mir, ihr Schwestern | 1:50 |
| 20 | Süßer Freund | 3:52 |
| 21 | An meinem Herzen, an meiner Brust | 1:21 |
| 22 | Nun hast du mir den ersten Schmerz getan | 3:55 |

Total duration: 59:21

Recorded at St Mary's Church, Pyrton on September 30-October 1, 2020

Recording Producer: Siva Oke

Front Cover: Jila Peacock

Design: Andrew Giles

Recording Engineer: Oscar Torres

German Language Coach: Gerhard Gall

Booklet Editor: Michael Quinn

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Lieder by Brahms & Schumann

Four Songs from Hafez by Sally Beamish

Roderick Williams
baritone

Andrew West
piano



Many years ago, I submitted a programme for a Lieder competition and had one of my song choices refused because, I was told, it was “a woman’s song”. I felt foolish and ignorant for not having understood this in the text myself. The song was Brahms’ *Sapphische Ode*, which had been suggested to me by one of my first singing teachers, and it was only more recently when I returned to this gorgeous song that I thought to question the decision and opinion/attitude of the competition panel. However much I pondered the text, I couldn’t understand why it should be considered gender-specific. That led me then to question why it has become generally accepted that some repertoire is suitable only for male singers, some only for female. Who decides the parameters?

It occurred to me that, in my visits to music conservatoires (at least until only very recently), this peculiar binary division of art-song has continued to play out. Much of the song repertoire I hold in highest regard – the cycles of Schubert and Schumann, of Vaughan Williams, Finzi, Butterworth and so on – is only brought to me by tenors, baritones and basses (with the occasional countertenor risking raised eyebrows by programming into the 19th century). Certainly, women have not been short of ‘their own’ material to sing (much of it written by male poets and composers, extolling the virtues of “my lady”, and no one bats an eyelid). But, it would seem, *Winterreise*, *Müllerin*, *Dichterliebe*, *Songs of Travel* and so much more is off limits for women. Why is this?

While I can do my best through words alone to encourage singers of any gender to feel comfortable programming freely, something practical I can do to set the ball rolling is to reach across a perceived binary gender divide myself and programme repertoire that has truly been considered female (well, since the 20th century, at least).

I could argue that such a gesture is easier for me as a male singer, because, by choosing to perform Schumann’s *Frauenliebe und -leben*, I am continuing an experiment in transgender empathy first begun by Adelbert von Chamisso and Robert Schumann. Much has been written about the merits or otherwise of this art-work and the spotlight is now very much focused on the gender politics of this poetry and its music. It seems to

me only logical that a performer such as myself could, perhaps with a hint of irony, add to the ranks of the ‘pretenders’, poet and composer, by trying to portray the thoughts and emotions of a young woman through an act of empathetic imagination. Whether we have been successful in our impersonation is for you to decide.

I thought it might be interesting to complement Schumann and Chamisso’s work with other examples of art-song in which male poets and composers have sought to illustrate what they imagine goes through the hearts and minds of young women. The subject would appear to have fascinated Johannes Brahms as we offer here only a selection of the many Girls’ Songs he set. It would appear that there are many more of them than there are Boys’ Songs. Some are poignant, some are witty, many could be considered, at best, patronising; how many, I ask you, are successfully, truthfully ‘female’? And while we ponder that question, we have included a single Lied written by a 19th-century woman, although the poem is by a man, presumably writing with a woman’s voice. How is this song different in its impact from the rest of the Brahms group that frames it? Does Clara Schumann invite us to experience womanhood more authentically because she is a female composer? Was that ever her intention?

As we raise further questions about what relevance the gender of the composer has in the execution of a song, we take great pleasure in programming some contemporary songs by Sally Beamish. Except, of course, that I would ask how important is it to our appreciation of this music that Sally is female? I feel strongly that women composers have been under-represented and often completely ignored in the story of Western art music and redressing that balance is an important mission. Having said that, I am delighted that Sally has set some powerfully sensual and erotic poetry by Hafez. Is her setting of male love poetry any less authentic because of her gender?

I seek to ask these questions of you, listener, and provide you with no answers other than the performances that Andrew and I give here. We continue to explore the full range of human experience through song repertoire and sincerely hope that future

musicians will feel emboldened to programme those songs – irrespective of the gender of their begetters – they have always loved and revered; the most wonderful and perfect examples of human communication, however it expresses itself, available to all.

Roderick Williams © 2021



Brahms's choice of texts for his songs betrays his own essentially melancholy nature and often reflects the impossibility of sustaining successful emotional relationships with the women in his life, such as Clara Schumann and Agathe von Siebold. Although he felt passionately about them, he feared too close a union and eventually shied away from both. An extraordinary number of poems that he chose for Lieder composition have loneliness as their subject or deal with isolation, introspection, lamentation, rejection and nostalgia – themes which prompted Nietzsche, in an unkind and unfair phrase, to describe Brahms's music as "Die Melancholie des Unvermögens" ('the melancholy of inability').

The nightingale's song in **An die Nachtigall** reminds the poet of the love that he once enjoyed. The syncopated accompaniment evokes his own anguished longing, and when at "Fluch, Nachtigall" he bids the nightingale to fly away, the quivering triplet arpeggios uncannily illustrate the unfolding of the bird's wings. Schubert's setting, composed when he was 18, is a far more urgent outpouring than Brahms's quintessentially Romantic and melancholy song. **Mädchenlied**, to a text by Paul Heyse, tells how all the girls of the village sit spinning something for their trousseau. But no man, the singer laments, will ever care for her. Again, we have the typical Brahms theme of the isolated loner. The accompaniment imitates the spinning wheel and, in the ritornello, the girl's falling tears. In the final verse Brahms interrupts the flowing vocal line to give poignant expression to her grief.

Das Mädchen is a version of the chorus on the same text which Brahms had published shortly before in his Op.95 Sieben Lieder in 1884. Minor predominates in the first half

of the song, as the girl imagines being kissed by an old man; as she washes her face with bitter wormwood to deter him from kissing her, witty chromatic dissonances can be heard in the accompaniment. In the second half of the song, however, in which she imagines a young man's kiss, all is well again, as we turn to the major and a lively *animato grazioso* accompaniment.

Throughout their marriage, Robert Schumann encouraged Clara to compose Lieder, and although she initially claimed that she had no talent, she eventually succeeded in composing some 30 songs, the best of which have now become a regular part of the repertoire. The three Rückert songs that she composed in June 1841 delighted her husband, who confided to the *Marriage Journal*:

"How my dear Clara has delighted me and given me so much. Namely: three songs dedicated to me, songs in which she has rhapsodized like a little girl – and yet she is a much clearer musician than she was before. We have a lovely idea: to combine them with some songs of mine and then to have them published. The result will be a most warm and passionate volume".

The collective work bore the title *Zwölf Gedichte aus Rückert's 'Liebesfrühling'* and Clara's contributions appeared as Nos.2, 4 and 11 (they were also published as her own Op.12). 'Er ist gekommen' seems to describe in prescient fashion how Robert rescued her from her father's tyranny; the autobiographical 'Warum willst du and're fragen?' is every bit as fine as the setting by Tchaikovsky; while **Liebst du um Schönheit** is more than a match for Mahler's celebrated setting. In the first three verses the woman beseeches her suitor not to love her for her beauty, her youth or her wealth. The final verse tells us, however, that if he truly loves her for her own sake, then she will accept him. The music, marked *bewegter*, gradually grows more impassioned, the dynamic turns *forte*, there are telling *marcati* on "Liebst du um", and the song ends in an ecstatic *melisma* on "immer" – "for evermore". No wonder Robert was delighted!

Despite its title, Brahms's **Das Mädchen spricht** was first performed by a tenor, Gustav Walter, on 11 February 1887, and since the song had not yet been published (it was

composed in the summer of the preceding year), he sang it from manuscript. Brahms in this famous setting follows Otto Gruppe's poem in the minutest detail. The first four bars introduce the twittering swallows; the girl then enters, not to sing (that is left to the darting swallow in the accompaniment) but to speak, as the title of the song dictates. Brahms achieves this illusion by inserting crotchet rests between each of the girl's short phrases. The rests, which proliferate at the end of the first verse, "or have you"... "only recently"... "entrusted yourself", express a whole world of bashfulness, curiosity and confusion. The somewhat arch text is transformed by Brahms into a moving expression of a young girl's nascent feelings about love and desire.

Elisabet von Herzogenberg, normally Brahms's most perceptive critic, expressed her dislike of **Salamander** in a letter to Brahms, dated 28 October 1888, in which she laments: "Are all the good poems really so used up that you must fall back on such skimmed milk and on [Carl] Lemcke's 'cold devils'?"

Lemcke's poem, which she so loathed, describes how "a bad girl" seized a salamander and hurled it into the fire, where it flourished as never before. This symbolic imperviousness to physical passion clearly delighted Brahms who indicated on the score that the song should be performed "mit Laune" – with humour. The salamander was a lizard-like creature described by Pliny in *Historia Naturalis* as a monster that, due to its own bodily coolness, could live in fire.

Nachtigall, to a poem by Christian Reinhold, echoes the theme of *An die Nachtigall*: the nightingale's singing awakens memories of lost love and happiness. This wistful masterpiece was praised by Elisabet von Herzogenberg, who, almost as soon as she had received the manuscript, wrote enthusiastically to the composer on 22 May 1885, praising the beautiful melody which "has the bittersweet quality of the real nightingale's song: they seem to revel in augmented and diminished intervals, passionate creatures that they are!"

Brahms found **Vergebliches Ständchen** in the *Deutsche Volkslieder* collection, edited in 1840 by Kretschmer and Zuccalmaglio, and it is one of his finest and wittiest songs which he professed, in a letter to the eminent critic Eduard Hanslick, to prize above all others. Singer and accompanist are instructed to perform "lebhaft und gut gelaunt" ("with animation and good humour"), and Gerald Moore in *Singer and Accompanist* (Methuen, 1953) is surely right to interpret the *sforzando*, three bars from the end, as the sound of the window being slammed by the young girl in her lover's face.

Sapphische Ode, whose title refers to the Greek lyric poetess who flourished around 600 B.C. and used a form of verse which is now named after her, was composed in the summer of 1884. The first three lines of a Sapphic stanza are characterized by a dactyl (long-short-short) that is placed in the middle of a series of trochees (long-short); the fourth line is shorter, comprising a dactyl that is usually followed by a single trochee or spondee (long-long). This design inspired Brahms to write a gently throbbing, syncopated accompaniment that perfectly captures the quiet longing of Hans Schmidt's poem; and when at the close Brahms quotes from Schubert's *Am Meer*, it is not to portray the grief of that song, but rather the solace which the shedding of tears provides.

Von ewiger Liebe dates from 1864, when the composer had just turned 30. The tune was taken from Brahms's own choral *Brautgesang*. The dark B minor bass melody sets the mood and is taken up by the voice; the theme is then developed, and the phrases of the vocal line are echoed by the piano. There is no word-painting, merely an evocation of atmosphere within a single broad architectural design. After the frenzied expression of an imagined departure, minor shifts to major as the girl professes eternal love. The music passes from *pp* to an intense *mf* on the dominant, and after an interlude the final stanza begins. Its opening phrase is new and develops into one of the most magnificent cadenzas in song literature, with 6/8 time pitted against 3/4, and the word "ewig" ("eternal") exultantly repeated. Brahms's biographer Max Kalbeck records how the composer had confided to Hermann Deiters, a long-standing friend, how Clara had

reacted to hearing the song: “Then Brahms described how, when he had played the song to Frau Schumann, she had sat there in silence and how, when he looked at her, he had seen that her face was bathed in tears”. [Kalbeck II, 300]

Adelbert von Chamisso’s **Frauenliebe und -leben** poems, to which he gave pride of place in his *Collected Works*, were started in 1829 and completed in January 1830. A decade earlier, aged almost 40, Chamisso had married a girl of 18 who was his social inferior, Antonie Piaste, the foster-daughter of his friend Julius Eduard Hitzig. The nine poems of the cycle (Schumann, unlike Loewe, did not set the final poem in which the woman, now a grandmother, looks back on her life) describe the young woman’s feelings towards an older man of higher birth. We learn more about her character as the cycle progresses.

The opening **Seit ich ihn gesehen** describes her obsessive love for the man she has just met. Schumann’s marking is *largetto* – faster, therefore, than *largo*, and urgent enough to convey the strength of her feelings and the blindness of her love. **Er, der Herrlichste von allen** is not the exultant love song that we hear all too often in recitals. The marking is *innig, lebhaft* (fervently/tenderly and lively) and the pianist is often instructed to play *piano*. There is not yet any indication that her love is requited or even that the man has noticed her. “Kämmerlein” (“little room”) from the previous song and “niedre Magd” (“lowly maid”) from *Er, der Herrlichste von allen* suggest that she might be a servant in the house of the man she loves. There is no reason for her to be happy; indeed, she confesses with touching ingenuousness that when the man chooses a bride, she will bless his choice. The song ends with a reprise of the opening melody and words, but composed at a lower pitch to depict the hopelessness of her love.

By the opening bar of the next song, **Ich kann’s nicht fassen, nicht glauben**, all this has changed. Marked *Mit Leidenschaft* (with passion), this fervent song relives the moment when the man declared his love for her. Her response is a mixture of ecstasy, tenderness and erotic desire (“O let me die... Let me savour blissful death”). **Du Ring**

an meinem Finger celebrates their engagement and contrasts her present rapture with the desolation of the life she led as a single woman. The passage starting “Ich will ihm dienen, ihm leben,/Ihm angehören ganz” (“I shall serve him, live for him,/Belong to him wholly”) has been unfairly criticized in some quarters by people who fail to realize that any woman or any man in the first intoxicating days of love can indulge in such hyperbole. Schumann’s marking here, incidentally, is *nach und nach rascher* (progressively faster): the gradually quickening tempo and the harmonic progressions help to convey her rising passion.

Helft mir, ihr Schwestern is marked *ziemlich schnell* (fairly fast) – an unfortunate directive that has encouraged too many singers and pianists to perform the song at such breakneck speed that the crucial details of the poem are gabbled. While asking her bridesmaids to dress her for the wedding day (church bells can be heard pealing in the accompaniment), she muses on her relationship with her fiancé, remembers lying in his arms, remembers his sexual impatience – “Immer noch rief er,/Sehnsucht im Herzen/Ungeduldig den heutigen Tag” (“Still he called,/With longing heart,/Impatiently for this day”) – and hopes that she will receive him without shyness or trepidation on the wedding night.

Süßer Freund is the most tender song of the cycle, and the most moving. The scene is probably the bridal bed, and before the start of this wonderful music the man, noticing her tears, asks her without much understanding of the opposite sex, what is amiss. At the end of the second verse she says she will whisper into his ear the cause of her tears. What then follows is one of the miracles of the Lieder repertoire. The piano interlude, no longer than three and a half bars, traces the man’s reaction to his wife’s statement that she is pregnant: initial disbelief gives way to gradual realization and, finally, ecstatic acceptance – a progression that is signposted by Schumann in a succession of *crescendi* and *decrescendi*, and a rhythmic variety that culminates in one single, held and rapturous semibreve chord that the pianist is expected to play *crescendo* and *decrescendo*.

An meinem Herzen, an meiner Brust sees her holding her child to her breast, dandling him on her knee and lifting him above her head. Schumann's *fröhlich, innig* (happy, heartfelt) marking is frequently ignored: mezzos, instead of singing the first verse *happily, tenderly* and *fervently*, clatter through it as fast as possible – which makes the quicker tempo at “Nur eine Mutter”, and the even quicker one at “Du lieber, lieber Engel du” an impossibility. The final song, **Nun hast du mir den ersten Schmerz getan**, introduces a new note: the initial *sforzando* and *marcato* chord is in D minor, which immediately dispels the joyous D major of the previous song. The reason, of course, is the death of her husband and her feeling of bereavement. Hysteria yields to anger and then, at “Geliebet hab’ ich und gelebt”, to numbed grief and love. The accompaniment grows rhythmically smoother, the dynamic softer, the tempo (at “Da hab’ ich dich und mein verlorne Glück”) slower – until the pianist recapitulates in the postlude the music of “Seit ich ihn gesehen”. There is nothing in the notation to suggest that this postlude should be played differently to the prelude – but what seemed energized and vibrant in the opening song should now be played with greater sadness, poignancy and tenderness, as the bereaved woman turns to the future and feeds off fond memories.

Richard Stokes © 2021

Richard Stokes' The Complete Songs of Hugo Wolf will be published by Faber in the autumn and launched at Wigmore Hall on October 2, 2021.



Four Songs from Hafez for tenor and piano, 2007

The 14th-century Persian Sufi poet Hafez often uses imagery of birds or animals to describe the feeling of separation from, and longing for, “the Beloved”.

The Four Songs were inspired by Hafez, and by the Iranian-born, Glasgow-based Jila Peacock's art and translations in her extraordinary book, *Ten Poems from Hafez* [Sylph Editions, 2006], in which the original Persian text of each poem has been designed in the style of Persian calligraphy, shaped as the animal mentioned in Hafez's text, and set alongside a new English translation by the artist.

They were the first in a series of works inspired by the ancient poet and his modern interpreter, including the *Rhapsody* for viola, harp and strings; and *The Lion and the Deer* for choir, cello, trumpet, harp and orchestra. Later she wrote *Divan*, for countertenor, solo oboe and viol consort, with a second version for string orchestra. The Four Songs also exist in a version for voice and harp.

Peacock's striking images are matched by the musical imagery of the settings. The first song suggests a **Nightingale's** call, singing its passionate song in constantly varied phrases high in the piano set against a recurring ostinato accompaniment, and the second, **Peacock**, is created almost entirely from ‘falling’ motifs, which are a feature of the poem. That poetic cadence is matched by the piano's cascading falling figures at different speeds.

The **Fish** in the third song swims in clear water, disturbed only by the swirling eddies directly inspired by traditional Iranian motif *setar*-playing (a four-stringed plucked instrument), which develops into fast-flowing, breathless semiquavers. **Hoopoe** – in Middle Eastern mythology a magical bird, the messenger between King Solomon and the Queen of Sheba – uses the bird's distinctive call as a refrain throughout, with the piano repeating paragraphs of intensifying chords.

The Four Songs were commissioned by Leeds Lieder+ with funds partly provided by the RVW Trust, and first performed by Mark Padmore and Roger Vignoles at Leeds College of Music, on October 12, 2007.

Sally Beamish © 2021

JOHANNES BRAHMS

1 An die Nachtigall

(Ludwig Hölty, 1748-76)

Geuss nicht so laut der liebentflammten Lieder
Tonreichen Schall
Vom Blütenast des Apfelbaums hernieder,
O Nachtigall!
Du tönest mir mit deiner süssen Kehle
Die Liebe wach;
Denn schon durchbebt die Tiefen meiner Seele
Dein schmelzend Ach.

Dann flieht der Schlaf von neuem dieses Lager,
Ich starre dann
Mit nassem Blick und totenbleich und hager
Den Himmel an.
Fluch, Nachtigall, in grüne Finsternisse,
Ins Haingesträuch,
Und spend' im Nest der treuen Gattin Küsse;
Entfleuch, entfleuch!

To the nightingale

(Ludwig Hölty, 1748-76)

*Do not pour so loudly the full-throated sounds
Of your love-kindled songs
Down from the blossoming boughs of the apple tree,
O nightingale!
The tones of your sweet throat
Awaken love in me;
For the depths of my soul already quiver
With your melting lament.*

*Sleep once more forsakes this couch,
And I stare
Moist-eyed, haggard and deathly pale
At the heavens.
Fly, nightingale, to the green darkness,
To the bushes of the grove,
And there in the nest kiss your faithful mate;
Fly away, fly away!*

2 Mädchenlied

(Paul Heyse, 1830-1914)

Auf die Nacht in der Spinnstub'n,
Da singen die Mädchen,
Da lachen die Dorfbub'n,
Wie flink gehn die Rädchen!

Spinnt Jedes am Brautschatz,
Dass der Liebste sich freut.
Nicht lange, so gibt es
Ein Hochzeitsgeläut.

Kein Mensch, der mir gut ist,
Will nach mir fragen;
Wie bang mir zu Mut ist,
Wem soll ich's klagen?

Die Tränen rinnen
Mir übers Gesicht –
Wofür soll ich spinnen?
Ich weiss es nicht!

A young girl's song

(Paul Heyse, 1830-1914)

*At night in the spinning-room,
The girls are singing,
The village lads are laughing,
How swiftly the wheels go round!*

*Each girl spins for her trousseau
To please her lover.
It won't be long
Before wedding-bells sound.*

*No man who cares for me
Will ask after me;
How anxious I feel,
In whom shall I confide?*

*The tears go coursing
Down my cheeks –
What am I spinning for
I do not know!*

3 Das Mädchen

(Anon. trs. Siegfried Kapper, 1821-79)

Stand das Mädchen, stand am Bergesabhang,
Widerschien der Berg von ihrem Antlitz,
Und das Mädchen sprach zu ihrem Antlitz:
"Wahrlich, Antlitz, o du meine Sorge,
Wenn ich wüsste, du mein weisses Antlitz,
Dass ein Alter dich wird küssen,
Ging' hinaus ich zu den grünen Bergen,
Pflückte allen Wermut in den Bergen,
Presste bittres Wasser aus dem Wermut,
Wüsche dich, o Antlitz, mit dem Wasser,
Dass du bitter, wenn dich küsst der Alte!
Wusst' ich aber, du mein weisses Antlitz,
Dass dereinst ein Junger dich wird küssen,
Ging' hinaus ich in den grünen Garten,
Pflückte alle Rosen in dem Garten,
Presste duftend Wasser aus den Rosen,
Wüsche dich, o Antlitz, mit dem Wasser,
Dass du duftest, wenn dich küsst der Junge!"

The girl

(Anon. trs. Siegfried Kapper, 1821-79)

*The girl stood, stood by the mountain slope,
The mountains reflected her face,
And the girl spoke to her face:
"Truly, my face, O you my sorrow,
If I knew, white face of mine,
That an old man would one day kiss you,
I'd go out to the green mountain,
Gather all the wormwood in the mountain,
Press the bitter juice from the wormwood,
And wash you, O my face, in that juice,
That you'd taste bitter when the old man kisses you!
But were I to know, white face of mine,
That a young man would one day kiss you,
I'd go out into the green garden,
Pick all the roses in the garden,
Press scented water from the roses,
Wash you, O face, in the water,
That you'd taste sweet when the young man kisses you!"*

CLARA SCHUMANN

4 Liebst du um Schönheit

(Friedrich Rückert, 1788-1866)

Liebst du um Schönheit,
O nicht mich liebe!
Liebe die Sonne,
Sie trägt ein goldnes Haar.
Liebst du um Jugend,
O nicht mich liebe!
Liebe den Frühling,
Der jung ist jedes Jahr!
Liebst du um Schätze,
O nicht mich liebe!
Liebe die Meerfrau,
Sie hat viel Perlen klar.
Liebst du um Liebe,
O ja, mich liebe!
Liebe mich immer,
Dich lieb' ich immerdar.

If you love for beauty

(Friedrich Rückert, 1788-1866)

*If you love for beauty,
O love not me!
Love the sun,
She has golden hair.
If you love for youth,
O love not me!
Love the spring
Which is young each year.
If you love for riches,
O love not me!
Love the mermaid
Who has many shining pearls.
If you love for love,
Ah yes, love me!
Love me always,
I shall love you ever more!*

JOHANNES BRAHMS

5 Das Mädchen spricht

(Otto Gruppe, 1804-76)

Schwalbe, sag mir an,
Ist's dein alter Mann,
Mit dem du's Nest gebaut,
Oder hast du jüngst erst
Dich ihm vertraut?

Sag, was zwitschert ihr,
Sag, was flüstert ihr
Des Morgens so vertraut?
Gelt, du bist wohl auch noch
Nicht lange Braut?

6 Salamander

(Carl Lemcke, 1831-1913)

Es sass ein Salamander
Auf einem kühlen Stein,
Da warf ein böses Mädchen
In's Feuer ihn hinein.

Sie meint, er soll verbrennen,
Ihm war erst wohl zu Mut,
Wohl wie mir kühlem Teufel
Die heisse Liebe tut.

The girl speaks

(Otto Gruppe, 1804-76)

*Tell me, swallow,
Is it last year's mate
You've built your nest with?
Or are you
But recently betrothed?*

*Say, what are you twittering,
Say, what are you whispering
So intimately in the morning?
Am I right, you haven't long
Been a bride either?*

Salamander

(Carl Lemcke, 1831-1913)

*A salamander was sitting
On a cool stone,
When suddenly a bad girl
Threw it into the fire.*

*She thought it would burn up,
But it felt even more at ease,
Just as hot love
Suits a cool devil like me.*

7 Nachtigall

(Christian Reinhold, 1813-56)

O Nachtigall,
Dein süsser Schall,
Er dringet mir durch Mark und Bein.
Nein, trauter Vogel, nein!
Was in mir schafft so süsse Pein,
Das ist nicht dein,
Das ist von andern, himmelschönen,
Nun längst für mich verklungnen Tönen,
In deinem Lied ein leiser Widerhall!

Nightingale

(Christian Reinhold, 1813-56)

*O nightingale,
Your sweet voice
Pierces me to the marrow.
No, dear bird, no!
What causes me such sweet pain
Is not your notes
But others, of heavenly beauty,
Long since vanished for me,
A gentle echo in your song!*

SALLY BEAMISH Four Songs from Hafez

(Divan-e-Hafez, 1350-90, trans. Jila Peacock)

8 Nightingale

Roaming the dawn garden
I heard the call of a nightingale
Forlorn like me he loved the rose
And in that cry surged all his warbling grief
I drifted in that garden's timeless moment
Balancing the plight of rose and bird

For endless roses flower each day
Yet no man plucks a single bloom
Without the risk of thorn

O Hafez, seek no gain from the orbit of this wheel
It has a thousand failings and no concern for you

9 Peacock

Until your hair falls through the fingers of the breeze,
My yearning heart lies torn apart with grief.

The dusty mole encircled by your curls,
Is like the ink-drop falling in the curve of a J.

And waiting tresses in the perfect garden of your face,
Drop like a peacock falling into paradise.

My soul searches for the comfort of a glance,
Light as the dust arising from your path,

Your shadow falls across my frame,
Like the breadth of Jesus over melting bones.

And those who turned to Mecca as their only haven,
Now at the knowledge of your lips tumble at the tavern door.

O precious love, the suffering of your absence and lost Hafez
Fell and fused together with the ancient pact.

10 Fish

When my beloved offers the cup
Graven idols are crushed,

And those who gaze into that intoxicating eye
Call ecstatically for rescue.

I plunge into the ocean like a fish
Craving the beloved's hook,

I fall pleading at those feet
In hope of a helping hand.

O happy the heart who like Hafez
Has tasted the wine of creation.

11 Hoopoe

O Hoopoe of the east wind,
To Sheba I shall send you.
Take heed from where to where
I shall send you

Pity a bird like you

Lodged in a well of sorrow.

From here, to the nest of devotion
I shall send you
In quest of love

There is no near or far but only now.

I see you whole, and my fealty

I shall send you

Whispering in the winds
Each dawn and dusk,
Convoys of sweet invocations
I shall send you

Love's face
Reveals the joy of all Creation
In the God-reflecting mirror
I shall send you

JOHANNES BRAHMS

12 Vergebliches Ständchen

(Anon. Lower Rhine folk song)

Er: Guten Abend, mein Schatz,
Guten Abend, mein Kind!
Ich komm aus Lieb' zu dir,
Ach, mach' mir auf die Tür,
Mach' mir auf die Tür!

To the nightingale

(Anon. Lower Rhine folk song)

He: *Good evening, my sweetheart,
Good evening, my child!
I come because I love you;
Ah! open up your door to me,
Open up your door!*

Sie: Mein Tür ist verschlossen,
Ich lass' dich nicht ein;
Mutter, die rät mir klug,
Wär'st du herein mit Fug,
Wär's mit mir vorbei!

Er: So kalt ist die Nacht,
So eisig der Wind,
Dass mir das Herz erfriert,
Mein' Lieb' erlöschen wird;
Öffne mir, mein Kind!

Sie: Löschet dein' Lieb,
Lass' sie löschen nur!
Löschet sie immerzu,
Geh' heim zu Bett, zur Ruh'!
Gute Nacht, mein Knab'!

*She: My door's locked,
I won't let you in;
Mother gave me good advice –
If you were allowed in,
All would be over with me!*

*He: The night's so cold,
The wind's so icy,
My heart is freezing,
My love will go out;
Open up, my child!*

*She: If your love goes out,
Then let it go out!
If it keeps going out,
Then go home to bed and go to sleep!
Good night, my lad!*

13 Sapphische Ode

(Hans Schmidt, 1854-1923)

Rosen brach ich nachts mir am dunklen Hage,
Süßser hauchten Duft sie, als je am Tage;
Doch verstreuten reich die bewegten Äste
Tau, der mich nässte.

Auch der Küsse Duft mich wie nie berückte,
Die ich nachts vom Strauch deiner Lippen pflückte;
Doch auch dir, bewegt im Gemüt gleich jenen,
Tauten die Tränen.

Sapphic ode

(Hans Schmidt, 1854-1923)

*I gathered roses from the dark hedge by night,
The fragrance they breathed was sweeter than by day;
But when I moved the branches, they showered
Me with dew.*

*And the fragrant kisses thrilled me as never before,
When I gathered them from your rose-bush lips by night;
But you too, moved in your heart like the roses,
Shed the dew of tears.*

14 Von ewiger Liebe

(August Heinrich Hoffmann von Fallersleben, 1798-1874, from the Wendish)

Dunkel, wie dunkel in Wald und in Feld!
Abend schon ist es, nun schweiget die Welt.

Nirgend noch Licht und nirgend noch Rauch,
Ja, und die Lerche sie schweiget nun auch.

Kommt aus dem Dorfe der Bursche heraus,
Gibt das Geleit der Geliebten nach Haus,

Führt sie am Weidengebüsche vorbei,
Redet so viel und so mancherlei:

Leidest du Schmach und betrübest du dich,
Leidest du Schmach von andern um mich,

Werde die Liebe getrennt so geschwind,
Schnell wie wir früher vereinigt sind.

Scheide mit Regen und scheide mit Wind,
Schnell wie wir früher vereinigt sind."

Spricht das Mägdelein, Mägdelein spricht:
"Unsere Liebe, sie trennet sich nicht!

Fest ist der Stahl und das Eisen gar sehr,
Unsere Liebe ist fester noch mehr:

Eisen und Stahl, man schmiedet sie um,
Unsere Liebe, wer wandelt sie um?

Eisen und Stahl, sie können zergehn,
Unsere Liebe muss ewig bestehn!"

Eternal love

*Dark, how dark in forest and field!
Evening already, and the world is silent.*

*Nowhere a light and nowhere smoke,
And even the lark is silent now too.*

*Out of the village there comes a lad,
Escorting his sweetheart home,*

*He leads her past the willow-copse,
Talking so much and of so many things:*

*If you suffer sorrow and suffer shame,
Shame for what others think of me,*

*Then let our love be severed as swiftly,
As swiftly as once we two were plighted.*

*Let us depart in rain and depart in wind,
As swiftly as once we two were plighted."*

*The girl speaks, the girl says:
"Our love cannot be severed!*

*Steel is strong, and iron still stronger,
And our love even stronger still.*

*Iron and steel can both be reforged,
But our love, who shall change it?*

*Iron and steel can be melted down,
Our love must endure for ever!"*

ROBERT SCHUMMAN Frauenliebe und -leben

(Adelbert von Chamisso, 1781-1838)

15 Seit ich ihn gesehen

Seit ich ihn gesehen,
Glaub' ich blind zu sein;
Wo ich hin nur blicke,
Seh' ich ihn allein;
Wie im wachen Traume
Schwebt sein Bild mir vor,
Taucht aus tiefstem Dunkel,
Heller nur empor.

Sonst ist licht- und farblos
Alles um mich her,
Nach der Schwestern Spiele
Nicht begehrt ich mehr,
Möchte lieber weinen
Still im Kämmerlein;
Seit ich ihn gesehen,
Glaub' ich blind zu sein.

Since first seeing him

*Since first seeing him,
I think I am blind,
Wherever I look,
Him only I see;
As in a waking dream
His image hovers before me,
Rising out of deepest darkness
Ever more brightly.*

*All else is dark and pale
Around me,
My sisters' games
I no more long to share,
I would rather weep
Quietly in my room;
Since first seeing him,
I think I am blind.*

16 Er, der Herrlichste von allen

Er, der Herrlichste von allen,
Wie so milde, wie so gut!
Holde Lippen, klares Auge,
Heller Sinn und fester Mut.

So wie dort in blauer Tiefe,
Hell und herrlich, jener Stern,
Also er an meinem Himmel,
Hell und herrlich, hehr und fern.

Wandle, wandle deine Bahnen;
Nur betrachten deinen Schein,
Nur in Demut ihn betrachten,
Selig nur und traurig sein!

Höre nicht mein stilles Beten,
Deinem Glücke nur geweiht;
Darfst mich niedere Magd nicht kennen,
Hoher Stern der Herrlichkeit!

Nur die Würdigste von allen
Darf beglücken deine Wahl,
Und ich will die Hohe segnen,
Viele tausendmal.

Will mich freuen dann und weinen,
Selig, selig bin ich dann;
Sollte mir das Herz auch brechen,
Brich, o Herz, was liegt daran?

He, the most wonderful of all

*He, the most wonderful of all,
How gentle and loving he is!
Sweet lips, bright eyes,
A clear mind and firm resolve.*

*Just as there in the deep-blue distance
That star gleams bright and brilliant,
So does he shine in my firmament,
Bright and brilliant, distant and sublime.*

*Wander, wander on your way,
Just to gaze on your radiance,
Just to gaze on in humility,
To be but blissful and sad!*

*Do not heed my silent prayer,
Uttered for your happiness alone,
You shall never know me, lowly as I am,
You noble star of splendour!*

*Only the worthiest woman of all
May your choice favour,
And I shall bless that exalted one
Many thousands of times.*

*Then shall I rejoice and weep,
Blissful, blissful I shall be,
Even if my heart should break,
Break, O heart, what does it matter?*

17 Ich kann's nicht fassen, nicht glauben

Ich kann's nicht fassen, nicht glauben,
Es hat ein Traum mich berückt;
Wie hätt' er doch unter allen
Mich Arme erhöht und beglückt?

Mir war's, er habe gesprochen:
"Ich bin auf ewig dein" –
Mir war's – ich träume noch immer,
Es kann ja nimmer so sein.

O lass im Traume mich sterben,
Gewieget an seiner Brust,
Den seligsten Tod mich schlürfen
In Tränen unendlicher Lust.

18 Du Ring an meinem Finger You ring on my finger

Du Ring an meinem Finger,
Mein goldenes Ringelein,
Ich drücke dich fromm an die Lippen,
Dich fromm an das Herze mein.

Ich hatt' ihn ausgeträumet,
Der Kindheit friedlich schönen Traum,
Ich fand allein mich, verloren
Im öden, unendlichen Raum.

I cannot grasp it, believe it

*I cannot grasp it, believe it,
A dream has beguiled me;
How from all women, could he
Have exalted and favoured poor me?*

*He said, I thought,
"I am yours forever",
I was, I thought, still dreaming,
After all, it can never be.*

*O let me, dreaming, die,
Cradled on his breast;
Let me savour blissful death
In tears of endless joy.*

You ring on my finger

*You ring on my finger,
My golden little ring,
I press you devoutly to my lips,
To my heart.*

*I had finished dreaming
Childhood's peaceful dream,
I found myself alone, forlorn
In boundless desolation.*

Du Ring an meinem Finger
Da hast du mich erst belehrt,
Hast meinem Blick erschlossen
Des Lebens unendlichen, tiefen Wert.

Ich will ihm dienen, ihm leben,
Ihm angehören ganz,
Hin selber mich geben und finden
Verklärt mich in seinem Glanz.

Du Ring an meinem Finger,
Mein goldenes Ringelein,
Ich drücke dich fromm an die Lippen
Dich fromm an das Herze mein.

19 Helft mir, ihr Schwestern

Helft mir, ihr Schwestern
Freundlich mich schmücken,
Dient der Glücklichen heute mir,
Windet geschäftig
Mir um die Stirne
Noch der blühenden Myrte Zier.

Als ich befriedigt,
Freudigen Herzens,
Sonst dem Geliebten im Arme lag,
Immer noch rief er,
Sehnsucht im Herzen,
Ungeduldig den heutigen Tag.

*You ring on my finger,
You first taught me,
Opened my eyes
To life's deep eternal worth.*

*I shall serve him, live for him,
Belong to him wholly,
Yield to him and find
Myself transfigured in his light.*

*You ring on my finger,
My golden little ring,
I press you devoutly to my lips,
To my heart.*

Help me, my sisters,

*Help me, my sisters,
With my bridal attire,
Serve me today in my joy,
Busily braid
About my brow
The wreath of blossoming myrtle.*

*When with contentment
And joy in my heart
I lay in my beloved's arms,
He still called,
With longing heart,
Impatiently for this day.*

Helft mir, ihr Schwestern,
Helft mir verscheuchen
Eine törichte Bangigkeit;
Dass ich mit klarem
Aug' ihn empfangе,
Ihn, die Quelle der Freudigkeit.

Bist, mein Geliebter,
Du mir erschienen,
Gibst du mir, Sonne, deinen Schein?
Lass mich in Andacht,
Lass mich in Demut,
Lass mich verneigen dem Herren mein.

Streuet ihm, Schwestern,
Streuet ihm Blumen,
Bringet ihm knospende Rosen dar,
Aber euch, Schwestern,
Grüss' ich mit Wehmut,
Freudig scheidend aus eurer Schar.

*Help me, my sisters,
Help me banish
A foolish fearfulness;
So that I with bright eyes
May receive him,
The source of all my joy.*

*Have you, my love,
Really entered my life,
Do you, O sun, give me your glow?
Let me in reverence,
Let me in humility
Bow before my lord.*

*Scatter flowers, O sisters,
Scatter flowers before him,
Bring him budding roses.
But you, sisters,
I greet with sadness,
As I joyfully take leave of you.*

20 Süsser Freund, du blickest Sweet friend, you look

Süsser Freund, du blickest
Mich verwundert an,
Kannst es nicht begreifen,
Wie ich weinen kann;
Lass der feuchten Perlen
Ungewohnte Zier
Freudig hell erzittern
In dem Auge mir!

Wie so bang mein Busen,
Wie so wonnevoll!
Wüsst' ich nur mit Worten,
Wie ich's sagen soll;
Komm und birg dein Antlitz
Hier an meiner Brust,
Will ins Ohr dir flüstern
Alle meine Lust.

Weisst du nun die Tränen,
Die ich weinen kann,
Sollst du nicht sie sehen,
Du geliebter Mann?
Bleib' an meinem Herzen,
Fühle dessen Schlag,
Dass ich fest und fester
Nur dich drücken mag.

*Sweet friend, you look
At me in wonder,
You cannot understand
How I can weep;
Let the unfamiliar beauty
Of these moist pearls
Tremble joyfully bright
In my eyes.*

*How anxious my heart is,
How full of bliss!
If only I knew
How to say it in words;
Come and hide your face
Here against my breast,
For me to whisper you
All my joy.*

*Do you now understand the tears
That I can weep,
Should you not see them,
Beloved husband?
Stay by my heart,
Feel how it beats,
That I may press you
Closer and closer.*

Hier an meinem Bette
Hat die Wiege Raum,
Wo sie still verberge
Meinen holden Traum;
Kommen wird der Morgen,
Wo der Traum erwacht,
Und daraus dein Bildnis
Mir entgegen lacht.

21 An meinem Herzen, an meiner Brust

An meinem Herzen, an meiner Brust,
Du meine Wonne, du meine Lust!

Das Glück ist die Liebe, die Lieb' ist das Glück,
Ich hab's gesagt und nehm's nicht zurück.

Hab' überschwenglich mich geschätzt
Bin übergücklich aber jetzt.

Nur die da säugt, nur die da liebt
Das Kind, dem sie die Nahrung gibt;

Nur eine Mutter weiss allein,
Was lieben heisst und glücklich sein.

O, wie bedaur' ich doch den Mann,
Der Mutterglück nicht fühlen kann!

*Here by my bed
There is room for the cradle,
Silently hiding
My blissful dream;
The morning shall come
When the dream awakens,
And your likeness
Laughs up at me.*

On my heart, at my breast

*On my heart, at my breast,
You my delight, my joy!*

*Happiness is love, love is happiness,
I've always said and say so still.*

*I thought myself rapturous,
But now am delirious with joy.*

*Only she who suckles, only she who loves
The child that she nourishes;*

*Only a mother knows
What it means to love and be happy.*

*Ah, how I pity the man
Who cannot feel a mother's bliss!*

Du lieber, lieber Engel, Du,
Du schauest mich an und lächelst dazu!

An meinem Herzen, an meiner Brust,
Du meine Wonne, du meine Lust!

22 Nun hast du mir den ersten Schmerz getan

Nun hast du mir den ersten Schmerz getan,
Der aber traf.
Du schläfst, du harter, unbarmherz'ger Mann,
Den Todesschlaf.

Es blicket die Verlassne vor sich hin,
Die Welt ist leer.
Geliebet hab' ich und gelebt, ich bin
Nicht lebend mehr.

Ich zieh' mich in mein Innres still zurück,
Der Schleier fällt,
Da hab' ich dich und mein verlornes Glück,
Du meine Welt!

*You dear, dear angel, you,
You look at me and you smile!*

*On my heart, at my breast,
You my delight, my joy!*

Now you have caused me my first pain

*Now you have caused me my first pain,
But it struck hard,
You sleep, you harsh and pitiless man,
The sleep of death.*

*The deserted one stares ahead,
The world is void.
I have loved and I have lived,
And now my life is done.*

*Silently I withdraw into myself,
The veil falls,
There I have you and my lost happiness,
You, my world!*

Translations © Richard Stokes from The Book of Lieder (Faber, 2005)

RODERICK WILLIAMS is one of the most sought-after baritones of his generation. He performs a wide repertoire from baroque to contemporary music, in the opera house, on the concert platform and is in demand as a recitalist worldwide. He enjoys relationships with all the major UK opera houses and has sung opera world premieres by David Sawer, Sally Beamish, Michel van der Aa, Robert Saxton and Alexander Knaifel. Recent and future engagements include the title role in *Eugene Onegin* for Garsington, the title role in *Billy Budd* with Opera North, Papageno for the Royal Opera House, Covent Garden and productions with Dallas Opera, English National Opera and Netherlands Opera.



Photograph: Benjamin Ealovega

Roderick sings regularly with all the BBC orchestras and all the major UK orchestras, as well as the Berlin Philharmonic, London Philharmonic, Deutsches Symphonie-Orchester Berlin, Russian National Orchestra, Orchestre Philharmonique de Radio France, Ensemble Orchestral de Paris, Accademia Nazionale di Santa Cecilia in Rome, Cincinnati Symphony, Music of the Baroque Chicago, New York Philharmonic, London Symphony and Bach Collegium Japan amongst others. His many festival appearances include the BBC Proms (including the Last Night in 2014), Edinburgh, Cheltenham, Bath, Aldeburgh and Melbourne Festivals.

Roderick Williams has an extensive discography. He is a composer and has had works premiered at the Wigmore and Barbican Halls, the Purcell Room and live on national radio. In December 2016 he won the prize for best choral composition at the British Composer Awards.

In 2015 he started a three-year odyssey of the Schubert song cycles culminating in performances at Wigmore Hall in the 2017-18 season and has now recorded them for Chandos.

His many recordings for SOMM include *Songs of Faith, Love and Nonsense* by Stanford, the three-volume survey of Parry's English Lyrics, Somervell's *A Shropshire Lad* and *Maud*, and Elgar's *The Fringes of the Fleet*.

He was Artistic Director of Leeds Lieder in April 2016 and won the RPS Singer of the Year award in May 2016. He was awarded an OBE in June 2017.

ANDREW WEST plays for many of today's leading singers, including Benjamin Appl, James Gilchrist, Susan Gritton, Robert Murray and Hilary Summers. He appears regularly with tenor Mark Padmore and baritone Roderick Williams. Concerts with Mark Padmore have included the 2013 world premiere of Harrison Birtwistle's song-cycle *Songs from the Same Earth*, subsequently programmed in Amsterdam, Cologne and Wigmore Hall; and the opening recital of the 2016-17 season at the Library of Congress in Washington DC. With Roderick Williams he has performed at many of the leading British music festivals, as well as the Nuremberg Chamber Music Festival where he has been Artistic Director since 2005. Andrew's other chamber music partners have included flautist Emily Beynon, violinist Sarah Chang and cellist Jean-Guihen Queyras.



Photograph: Angela Cushway

CD recordings include Strauss Lieder with soprano Emma Bell; music by Les Six with Emily Beynon (Hyperion); and Schubert's *Die schöne Müllerin* with Robert Murray (Stone Records). He is also the pianist for the three-CD set of Parry's English Lyrics for SOMM Recordings.

Andrew is Chairman and Artistic Director of the Kirkman Concert Society, which for over 50 years has auditioned exceptional young musicians and offered debut recitals at major London venues. He read English at Clare College, Cambridge before studying under Christopher Elton and John Streets at the Royal Academy of Music. He was pianist-in-residence at Lancaster University from 1993-99, where he first collaborated with Ronald Woodley in numerous piano duo and clarinet recitals. Andrew is currently Professor of Chamber Music and Accompaniment at the Guildhall School of Music and Drama, and Royal Academy of Music, where he was recently made a Fellow.