

Charles Villiers Stanford, Sir (1852 - 1924) Songs of Faith; Joy, Shipmate, Joy! – op. 97, no. 6; Tekst: Walt Whitman

Joy, shipmate, joy!
Pleased to my soul at death I cry,
Our life is closed, our life begins,
The long, long anchorage we leave,
The ship is clear at last, she leaps!
She swiftly courses from the shore,
Joy, shipmate, joy.

Peter Warlock (1894 - 1930) Three Belloc Songs no. 2, Tekst: Josephe Hilaire Belloc

I shall go without companions,
And with nothing in my hand;
I shall pass through many places
That I cannot understand -
Until I come to my own country,
Which is a pleasant land!

The trees that grow in my own country
Are the beech tree and the yew;
Many stand together
And some stand few.
In the month of May in my own country
All the woods are new.

When I get to my own country
I shall lie down and sleep;
I shall watch in the valleys
The long flocks of sheep.
And then I shall dream, for ever and all,
A good dream and deep.

Errollyn Wallen (1958 -) Jesus on a Train, Tekst: Errollyn Wallen

Rolling hills go past this place I'm in,
Rolling land reminds me that I can
Fall from grace...

Half this world will eat their sandwiches
So confident that life was and shall remain
So sure.

The middle of the night finds him crying
And the stone is covered in blood,
Children huddle from bullets raining down
And so hungry,
And while you talk I see pain buried deep in your lips
And on your hand gold tells me
Nothing about love
Still we're sure, So sure.

Rolling hills go past this place I'm in,
Rolling land reminds me that I can
Fall from grace...

Rolling hills,
Yet we're still so sure.

Sylvia Maessen (1959 -) Oh Che Tranquillo Mar, Tekst: Vittoria Colonna

Oh che tranquillo mar, oh che chiare onde
solcava già la mia spalmata barca,
di ricca e nobile merce adorna e carca,
con l'air puro e con l'aure seconde!

Il ciel ch'ora i bei vaghi lumi asconde,
porgea serena luce e d'ombra scarca;
ah! quanto ha da temer chi lieto varca!
che non sempre al principio il fin risponde.

Ecco l'empia e volubile fortuna
scoperse poi l'irata iniqua fronte,
dal cui furor si gran procella insorge.

Venti, pioggia, saette insieme aduna,
e fiere intorno a divorarmi pronte;
ma l'alma ancor la fida stella scorge.

O upon what smooth waves and tranquil seas
My bark erewhile sailed onward with her prize,
A load of rich and noble merchandise,
Through the pure air and with propitious breeze.

Heaven, that now hides her lovely brightnesses,
Lent me a light serene and free from shade.
Ah! let who blither travels feel afraid:
The first stage with the last not oft agrees.

Behold where fell and fickle fortune shows
Her angry, evil face, the hurricane
Bred of her fury doth around me close,

And savage beasts are ravening at my side;
Against me fight the winds and storms and rain,
But still the faithful star my soul doth guide

Michael (Dewar) Head (1900 - 1976) The Estuary; Six Poems of Ruth Pitter; no.6, Tekst: Ruth Pitter

Light, stillness and peace lie on the broad sands,
On the salt-marshes the sleep of the afternoon.
The sky's immaculate; the horizon stands
Steadfast, level and clear over the dune.

There are the voices of children, musical and thin
Not far, not near, there in the sandy hills;
As the light begins to wane, so the tide comes in,
The shallow creek at our feet silently fills:

And silently, like sleep to the weary mind,
Silently, like evening after day,
The big ship bears inshore with the inshore wind,
Changes her course, and comes on up through the bay,

Rolling along the fair deep channel she knows,
Surging along, right on top of the tide.
I can see the flowery wreath of foam at the bows,
The long bright wash streaming away from her side:

I can see the flashing gulls that follow her in,
Screaming and tumbling, like children wildly at play,
The sea-born crescent arising, pallid and thin,
The flat safe twilight shore shelving away.

Whether remembered or dreamed, read of or told,
So it has dwelt with me, so it shall dwell with me ever:
The brave ship coming home like a lamb to the fold,
Home with the tide into the mighty river.

John (Nicholson) Ireland (1879 - 1962) Tekst: Harold Monro

The fresh air moves like water round a boat.
The white clouds wander. Let us wander too.
The whining, wavering plover flap and float.

That crow is flying after that cuckoo.
Look! Look! . . . they're gone. What are the great trees calling?
Just come a little farther, by that edge
Of green, to where the stormy ploughland, falling
Wave upon wave, is lapping to the hedge.
Oh, what a lovely bank! Give me your hand.
Lie down and press your heart against the ground.
Let us both listen till we understand
Each through the other, every natural sound . . .

I can't hear anything today, can you,
But, far and near: "Cuckoo! Cuckoo! Cuckoo!"

Ivor (Bertie) Gurney (1890 - 1937) Five Elizabethan Songs (The Elizas) no.5; Tekst: Thomas Nashe

Spring

Spring, the sweet Spring, is the year's pleasant king;
Then blooms each thing, then maids dance in a ring,
Cold doth not sting, the pretty birds do sing,
Cuckoo, jug-jug, pu-we, to-witta-woo!

The palm and may make country houses gay,
Lambs frisk and play, the [shepherds pipe]¹ all day,
And we hear aye birds tune this merry lay,
Cuckoo, jug-jug, pu-we, to-witta-woo!

The fields breathe sweet, the daisies kiss our feet,
Young lovers meet, old wives a-sunning sit,
In every street these tunes our ears do greet,
Cuckoo, jug-jug, pu-we, to-witta-woo!
Spring! The sweet Spring!

Phyllis Margaret Duncan Tate (1911 - 1987) The lark in the clear air; Tekst: Samuel Ferguson, Sir

Dear thoughts are in my mind, and my soul soars enchanted
As I hear the sweet lark sing in the clear air of the day
For a tender beaming smile to my hope has been granted,
And tomorrow she shall hear all my fond heart would say.

I shall tell her all my love, all my soul's adoration,
And I think she will [hear]¹ and will not say me nay.
It is this that gives my soul all its joyous elation,
As I hear the sweet lark sing in the clear air of the day.

James MacMillan (1959 -) Three Scottish Songs no.2; Tekst: William Soutar

O! shairly ye hae seen my love
Down whaur the waters wind:
He walks like ane wha fears nae man
And yet his e'en are kind.

O! shairly ye hae seen my love
At the turnin o' the tide;
For then he gethers in the nets
Down by the waterside.

O! lassie I hae seen your love
At the turnin o' the tide;

And he was wi' the fisher-folk
Down by the waterside.

The fisher-folk were at their trade
No far frae Walnut Grove;
They gether'd in their dreepin nets
And fund your ain true love.

Roger Quilter (1877 - 1953) Ye banks and braes o' bonnie Doon; Tekst: Robert Burns

Ye banks and braes o' bonnie Doon,
How can ye bloom sae fresh and fair;
How can ye chant, ye little birds,
And I sae weary, fu' o' care!
Thou'lt break my heart, thou warbling bird,
That wantons thro' the flower thorn:
Thou minds me o' departed joys,
Departed -- never to return!
Oft hae I rov'd by bonnie Doon,
To see the rose and woodbine twine;
And ilka bird sang o' its love,
And fondly sae did I o' mine.
Wi' lightsome heart I pu'd a rose,
Fu' sweet upon its thorny tree;
And my fause lover stole the rose,
And, oh! he left the thorn wi' me.

Benjamin Britten (1913 - 1976) O can ye sew cushions Tekst: Volkslieder

O can ye sew cushions and can ye sew sheets,
And can ye sing ballulow when the bairn greets?
And hie and baw, birdie, and hie and baw, lamb,
And hee and baw, birdie, my bonnie wee lamb.

Hie-o, wie-o, what will I do wi' ye?
Black's the life that I lead wi' ye,
Many o' you, little for to gi' ye,
Hie-o, wie-o, what will I do wi' ye?

I've placed my cradle on yon hilly top,
And aye as the wind blew my cradle did rock.
O hush-a-by, babie, O baw lily loo,
And hee and baw, birdie, my bonnie wee doo.

Frank Bridge (1879 - 1941) Adoration: Tekst: John Keats

Asleep! O sleep a little while, white pearl!
And let me kneel, and let me pray to thee,
And let me call Heaven's blessing on thine eyes,
And let me breathe into the happy air
That doth enfold and touch thee all about,
Vows of my slavery, my giving up,
My sudden adoration, my great love!

Michael (Dewar) Head (1900 - 1976) A slumber song of the Madonna; Tekst: Alfred Noyes)

Sleep, little baby, I love thee;
Sleep, little king, I am bending above thee!
How should I know what to sing

Here in my arms as I sing thee to sleep?
Hushaby low, rockaby so.
Kings may have wonderful jewels to bring,
Mother has only a kiss for her king!
Why should my singing so make me to weep?
Only to know that I love thee, I love thee,
Love thee, my little one, sleep.

Ralph Vaughan Williams (1872 - 1958) 3 Songs from Shakespeare no. 3. Orpheus with his Lute; Tekst: John Fletcher;
William Shakespeare

Orpheus with his lute made trees,
And the mountain-tops that freeze,
Bow themselves, when he did sing:

To his music, plants and flowers
Ever sprung; as sun and showers
There had made a lasting spring.

Everything that heard him play,
Even the billows of the sea,
Hung their heads, and then lay by.

In sweet music is such art:
Killing care and grief of heart
Fall asleep, or, hearing, die.

Judith Weir (1954 -) Scotch Minstrelsy no. 3. Lady Isobel and the Elf-Knight; Tekst: Volkslied)

Fair Lady Isobel sits in her bower sewing,
There she heard the Elf-Knight blowing his horn.

'If I had yon horn that I hear blowing,
And yon Elf-Knight to sleep in my bosom.'

The maiden had scarcely these words spoken,
When in at her window the Elf-Knight has luppen.

'It's a very strange matter, fair maiden' said he,
'I canna blow my horn but ye call on me.

But will ye go to yon Greenwood side?
If ye canna gaing, I will cause you to ride'.

He leapt on a horse and she on another,
And they rode on to the greenwood together.

'Light down, light down, fair lady Isobel', said he,
'We are come to the place where you are to die'.

'Have mercy, have mercy kind sir on me,
Till once my dear father and mother I see'.

'Seven king's daughters here have I slain,
And you shall be the eighth of them'.

'O sit down a while, rest your head upon my knee,
That we may have some rest before I die'.

She stroked him so softly the nearer he did creep;
With a small secret charm she lulled him fast asleep.

With his own sword belt so softly she bound him;
With his own dagger so softly she killed him.

Charles Villiers Stanford, Sir (1852 - 1924) La belle dame sans merci; Tekst: John Keats, as Caviare

O what can ail thee, knight-at-arms,
So lone and palely loitering?
The sedge has wither'd from the lake,
And no birds sing.

O what can ail thee, knight-at-arms!
So haggard and so woe-begone?
The squirrel's granary is full,
And the harvest's done.

I see a lily on thy brow
With anguish moist and fever dew,
And on thy cheeks a fading rose
Fast withereth too.

I met a lady in the meads,
Full beautiful -- a faery's child,
Her hair was long, her foot was light,
And her eyes were wild.

I made a garland for her head,
And bracelets too, and fragrant zone;
She look'd at me as she did love,
And made sweet moan.

I set her on my pacing steed,
And nothing else saw all day long,
For [sidelong would she bend, and sing
A faery's song.

She found me roots of relish sweet,
And honey wild, and manna dew,
And sure in language strange she said -
"I love thee true."

She took me to her elfin grot,
And there she wept, and sigh'd full sore,
And there I shut her wild wild eyes
With kisses four.

And there she lull'd me asleep,
And there I dream'd -- Ah! woe betide!
The latest dream I ever dream'd
On the cold hill's side.

I saw pale kings and princes too,
Pale warriors, death-pale were they all;
They cried -- "La Belle Dame sans Merci
Hath thee in thrall!"

I saw their starved lips in the gloom,
With horrid warning gaping wide,
And I awoke and found me here,
On the cold hill's side.

And this is why I sojourn here,
Alone and palely loitering,
Though the sedge is wither'd from the lake,
And no birds sing.

John (Nicholson) Ireland (1879 - 1962) The three ravens; Tekst: Volkslieder

There were three ravens sat on a tree,
Down a down hey down hey down.
They were as black as they might be,
With a down.
Then one of them said to his mate:
"Where shall we our breakfast take?"
With a down derry derry derry down down.

Down in yonder greenfield,
Down a down hey down hey down.
There lies a knight slain under his shield;
With a down.
His hounds they lie down at his feet,
So well they their master keep.
With a down derry derry derry down down.

His hawks they fly so eagerly,
Down a down hey down hey down.
There is no fowl dare him come nigh
With a down.
[But] down there comes a fallow doe,
As great with young as she might go.
With a down derry derry derry down down.

She lifted up his bloody head,
Down a down hey down hey down.
And kissed his wounds that were so red.
With a down.
She got him up upon her back
And carried him to [an] earthen lake.
With a down derry derry derry down down.

She buried him before the prime,
Down a down hey down hey down.
She was dead herself ere evensong time.
With a down.
Now God send every gentleman
Such hounds, such hawks and such a leman.
With a down derry derry derry down down.

Richard Rodney Bennett (1936 - 2012) Songs before sleep no.1; The mouse and the bumblebee; Tekst: Anonymous

A cat came fiddling out of a barn,
With a pair of bagpipes under her arm.
She could sing nothing but fiddle-de-dee,
The mouse shall marry the bumblebee.

Pipe, cat, dance, mouse!
We'll have a wedding at our good house.

Fiddle-de-dee, fiddle-de-dee,
The mouse has married the bumblebee.
They went to church and married was she,
The mouse has married the bumblebee.

The cat came fiddling out of the barn,
With a pair of bagpipes under her arm.
She sang nothing but fiddle-de-dee,
Which worried the mouse and the bumblebee.
Puss began purring, the mouse ran away,
And the bee flew off with a loud huzra!

Cecil Armstrong Gibbs (1889 - 1960) Five eyes, op. 15 no. 2; Tekst: Walter De la Mare

In Hans' old Mill his three black cats
Watch the bins for the thieving rats.
Whisker and claw, they crouch in the night,
Their five eyes smouldering green and bright:
Squeaks from the flour sacks, squeaks from where
The cold wind stirs on the empty stair,
Squeaking and scampering, everywhere.
Then down they pounce, now in, now out,
At whisking tail, and sniffing snout;
While lean old Hans he snores away
Till peep of light at break of day;
Then up he climbs to his creaking mill,
Out come his cats all grey with meal -
Jeckel, and Jessup, and one-eyed Jill.

Lee Hoiby (1926 - 2011) Jabberwocky; Tekst: Charles Lutwidge Dodgson, as Lewis Carroll

'Twas brillig, and the slithy toves
Did gyre and gimble in the wabe:
All mimsy were the borogoves,
And the momeraths outgrabe.
"Beware the Jabberwock, my son!
The jaws that bite, the claws that catch!
Beware the Jubjub bird, and shun
The frumious Bandersnatch!"

He took his vorpal sword in hand:
Long time the manxome foe he sought --
So rested he by the Tumtum tree,
And stood awhile in thought.

And, as in uffish thought he stood,
The Jabberwock, with eyes of flame,
Came whiffing through the tulgey wood,
And burbled as it came!

One, two! One, two! And through and through
The vorpal blade went snicker-snack!
He left it dead, and with its head
He went galumphing back.

"And, has thou slain the Jabberwock?
Come to my arms, my beamish boy!
O frabjous day! Callooh! Callay!"
He chortled in his joy.

'Twas brillig, and the slithy toves
Did gyre and gimble in the wabe;
All mimsy were the borogoves,
And the momeraths outgrabe.

Richard Rodney Bennett (1936 - 2012) A Garland for Marjory Fleming no. 5.; Sonnet on a Monkey; Tekst: Marjory Fleming

O lovely O most charming pug
Thy graceful air and heav'nly mug
The beauties of his mind do shine
And ev'ry bit is shaped so fine
Your very tail is most devine
Your teeth is whiter than the snow
You are a great buck and a [bow]1
Your eyes are of so fine a shape
More like a christians than an ape
His cheeks is like the roses blume
Your hair is like the ravens plume
His noses cast is of the roman
He is a very pretty [weoman]2
I could not get a rhyme for roman
And was oblidge to call it weoman

Jake Heggie (1961 -) Songs to the Moon, Part 1: "Fairy-Tales for the Children" no.3; The Haughty Snail-king; Tekst: Vachel Lindsay

Twelve snails went walking after night.
They'd creep an inch or so,
Then stop and bug their eyes
And blow.
Some folks . . . are . . . deadly . . . slow.
Twelve snails went walking yestereve,
Led by their fat old king.
They were so dull their princeling had
No sceptre, robe or ring --
Only a paper cap to wear
When nightly journeying.

This king-snail said: "I feel a thought
Within. . . . It blossoms soon. . . .
O little courtiers of mine, . . .
I crave a pretty boon. . . .
Oh, yes . . . (High thoughts with effort come
And well-bred snails are ALMOST dumb.)
"I wish I had a yellow crown
As glistering . . . as . . . the moon."

Cole Porter (1891 – 1964) The Tale of the Oyster; Tekst en muziek: Cole Porter

Down by the sea lived a lonesome oyster
Every day getting sadder and moister
He found his home life awf'ly wet

And longed to travel with the upper set
Poor little oyster
Fate was kind to that oyster we know
When one day the chef from the Park Casino
Saw that oyster lying there
And said "I'll put you on my bill of fare."
Lucky little oyster
See him on his silver platter
Watching the queens of fashion chatter
Hearing the wives of millionaires
Discuss their marriages and their love affairs
Thrilled little oyster
See that bivalve social climber
Feeding the rich Mrs. Hoggenheimer
Think of his joy as he gaily glides
Down to the middle of her gilded insides
Proud little oyster
After lunch Mrs. H. complains
And says to her hostess, "I've got such pains
I came to town on my yacht today
But I think I'd better hurry back to Oyster Bay."
Scared little oyster
Off they go through the troubled tide
The yacht rolling madly from side to side
They're tossed about till that fine young oyster
Finds that it's time he should quit his cloister
Up comes the oyster
Back once more where he started from
He murmured, "I haven't a single qualm
For I've had a taste of society
And society has had a taste of me."
Wise little oyster

Benjamin Britten (1913 - 1976) A Boy was Born, op. 3; no. 6. Variation V: In the bleak mid-winter / Corpus Christi Carol

Lully, lulley, lully, lulley,
The falcon hath borne my make away.

He bare him up, he bare him down,
He bare him into an orchard brown.

In that orchard there was an hall
That was hangëd with purple and pall.

And in that hall there was a bed,
It was hangëd with gold so red.

In that bed there lieth a knight,
His woundës bleeding, day and night.

By that bedside kneeleth a may,
And she weepeth both night and day.

And by that bedside there standeth a stone,
Corpus Christi written thereon.

Herbert Norman Howells (1892 - 1983) Come sing and dance; Text: Anonymous

From far the Angels draw near,
Eia, Eia;
Sweet is the Day Spring that heals our fear;
Come sing and dance,
Come pipe and play.
Alleluia, Alleluia,
Sing Jesus Christ and Mary dear.

A child this day to us is born
Eia, eia;
Sing all ye shepherds, proclaim the morn.
Come sing and dance,
Come pipe and play.
Alleluia, Alleluia,
Sing Jesus Christ and Mary dear.

Now all mankind doth say and sing
Eia! Eia!
This is the day of Christ and King.
Come sing and dance,
Come pipe and play.
Alleluia, Alleluia,
Sing Jesus Christ and Mary dear.

Ralph Vaughan Williams (1872 - 1958) Pilgrim's Progress no.6; The Woodcutter's Song; Tekst: John Bunyan

He that is down needs fear no fall,
He that is low, no pride;
He that is humble, ever shall
Have God to be his Guide.

I am content with what I have,
Little be it or much;
And, Lord, contentment still I crave,
Because Thou savest such.

Fullness to such a burden is,
That go on pilgrimage;
Here little, and hereafter bliss,
Is best from age to age.