

TERRA NOVA

Friday, 6 May 2022, 4.30 PM
Conservatory Concert Hall

Alison Wong *soprano*

Tay Shu Wen *piano, harpsichord*

Alan Choo *violin*

Rachel Ho *traverso*

Leslie Tan *cello*

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Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart

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I. *Wozu noch, Mädchen*

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V. *Hoffen und wieder verzagen*

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Welcome

Welcome to my senior recital, in which I present music that employs imagery and metaphors from nature to expound on the topics of beauty, idealism, love, and death.

While acknowledging the theme of nature that runs through this programme of music, the term *terra nova* (new land) captures the idea of lands idyllic and uncharted, such as the Island of Delos, extolled by Clérambault in his cantata, or the realm beyond death that features so prominently in Quilter's Songs of Sorrow. *Terra nova* can also allude to experiences unfamiliar and exciting, such as love, or as we will see from today's programme, perhaps even death, which are topics so heavily favoured in German *Lieder*.

I hope you enjoy this variegated programme, which spans the French Baroque to the early twentieth century English parlour tradition, and is in itself *terra nova* for me in more ways than one.

Alison

Biographies



Alison Wong

Alison Wong is a soprano pursuing an undergraduate degree at the Yong Siew Toh Conservatory of Music in Singapore, where she studies with lyric tenor Alan Bennett, and is a recipient of the Steven Baxter Memorial Scholarship.

Having cultivated an interest in vocal music from singing in school choirs, Alison has performed in the choruses of Borodin's *Prince Igor* with the Singapore Symphony Orchestra, Mozart's *Così fan tutte* with the Singapore Pocket Opera Theatre, and Haydn's *The Creation* with the International Festival Chorus.

As a soloist, Alison's recent appearances include Vaughan William's *Serenade to Music* with conductor Chong Wai Lun and the Symphonia Choralis, Schubert's Mass No. 2 in G major with conductor Ignatius Wang and the Chorollective, and Bach's *St. John Passion* with Red Dot Baroque and the YST Orchestral Institute. As an undergraduate, Alison has been coached by Graham Johnson, Paul Weigold, Allen Henderson and Eduardo Chama, and periodically dabbles in hosting and voiceover work. This August, she will appear in Cheng Zhangyi's chamber opera, *Kampung Spirit*, at the Voyage Festival.

Tay Shu Wen

Shu Wen is a fourth-year Singaporean pianist studying under Professor Albert Tiu at the Yong Siew Toh Conservatory of Music. She is most inspired making music as a soloist and in collaborative ensembles. An exponent of local compositions, she has premiered pieces by composers including Tai Yun-Ming (*His Wings*) and Cliff Tan (*Lapis*).

She has won numerous prizes, including the First Prize at the Asia Youth Piano Competition (Open Category) in 2016, and the Dakademy Scholarship Award (Best Performer) at the 7th Singapore Performers' Festival in 2018, following her performance of Schumann's Abegg Variations. Featured on the Virtual Young Artist Concert Series in the 2020 edition of Bowdoin International Music Festival, she also participated in 2021, where she studied with Professor Julian Martin. She has had the chance to work with renowned pianists, such as Arnaldo Cohen, Lars Vogt, Kirill Gerstein and Dean Kramer, in masterclasses. Recent notable collaborations and concerts include chamber concerts featuring Vaughan Williams Piano Quintet in C Minor, Brahms Cello Sonata in E minor, Schubert's Arpeggione Sonata and Trout Quintet in completion.

As a musician, she has a soft spot for making music inclusive for the community, and organized a multi-sensory concert, entitled "Deep Blue Sea", for children with autism spectrum disorder, together with her schoolmates, in 2018.

Alan Choo

Violinist Alan Choo, whose performances have been described by The Straits Times as “an intoxicating brew of poetry and dare-devilry,” performs on the global stage as a leading soloist, chamber musician and historical specialist. He is currently rotating Concertmaster and Artistic Leadership Fellow of the Grammy Award-winning baroque orchestra Apollo’s Fire, where he also takes on soloist and guest director roles. At home in Singapore, he is Founder and Artistic Director of Red Dot Baroque, Singapore’s first professional period ensemble and Ensemble-in-Residence at the Yong Siew Toh Conservatory of Music. With the goal to build an early music scene in Asia, he appeared as guest concertmaster and soloist with the Shanghai Camerata in 2019.

As a modern violinist, Alan has appeared as a soloist with the St. Petersburg Symphony Orchestra, Singapore Symphony Orchestra, Singapore Chinese Orchestra, Orchestra of the Music Makers and more. He is also the recipient of the Early Music Award 2016 from Peabody Conservatory, the Paul Abisheganaden Grant for Artistic Excellence 2015, the Goh Soon Tioe Centenary Award 2014, the Grace Clagett Ranney Prize in Chamber Music 2014 and 1st prize in the National Piano and Violin Competition 2011, Artist Category.

Alan holds a Doctorate in Historical Performance from Case Western Reserve University, as well as degrees from the Peabody Conservatory and the Yong Siew Toh Conservatory. His teachers include Julie Andrijeski, Risa Browder, Victor Danchenko and Alexander Souptel. He is currently recording an album of the complete Rosary Sonatas by Heinrich Biber with Apollo’s Fire.

Rachel Ho

Rachel Ho has been praised by The Straits Times on her “lovely flute solo gliding the melody as an added voice, making the aria especially poignant” during her performance on the baroque flute of J.S Bach’s Cantata BWV 55 with YST under the direction of Masaaki Suzuki, a leading authority on the works of J.S Bach.

During her semester on exchange at Peabody Conservatory, Rachel studied the baroque flute with Gwyn Roberts and actively performed with the Baltimore Baroque Band and the Peabody Recorder Consort. Upon returning to Singapore, she led a student-initiated concert, “A New Dawn”, showcasing chamber music of the early 18th Century all played on period instruments, with her colleagues. While pursuing her graduate studies at the Royal Conservatory of The Hague, Netherlands in 2018, Rachel furthered her baroque flute studies with Kate Clark.

Proficient in both baroque and modern flute, Rachel has appeared as a flute soloist exploring works by Telemann, Mozart and Ibert and is also a founding member of Red Dot Baroque. As an active orchestra and chamber musician, she has performed internationally with Sichuan Symphony Orchestra, Ricciotti Ensemble, Hermes Wind Orchestra as well as locally with Metropolitan Festival Orchestra and Orchestra of the Music Makers among others. She was a Festival Artist representing Singapore at the 10th Asia Flutists Congress 2019 in Shanghai and was a jury member of the 3rd Asia Flute Federation Junior Competition.

Leslie Tan

In a career that has spanned almost 20 years, Leslie is much sought after as a soloist and chamber musician.

After performing as a cellist at the Singapore Symphony Orchestra (SSO), he was awarded a scholarship to study at both the Trinity College of Music and Royal College of Music in London. Spending 13 years with the SSO, he went to the Tchaikovsky-Moscow State Conservatory as a graduate-assistant of Natalia Shakhovskaya.

He has performed at major venues and festivals around the world, including the Prague-Vienna-Budapest Sommerakademie and Aarhus Festival in Europe. His performances have been broadcasted by the BBC in London. Leslie has ventured into other disciplines, collaborating with artists in dance, theatre and popular music.

Programme Notes



Louis-Nicolas Clérambault

L'île de Délos

Louis-Nicolas Clérambault (1676-1749) was widely regarded during his lifetime as one of France's finest organists, and was incomparable as a composer of French cantatas. The son of a member of *Les Vingt-quatre Violons du Roi*, Clérambault likely received his earliest training from his father, before studying the organ with André Raison and composition and singing from Jean-Baptiste Moreau. Like his father, Clérambault served as a court musician, with his first appointment in the service of Louis XIV being as supervisor of the private concerts of Madame de Maintenon, the king's wife in his later years.

L'île de Délos, written in 1716, was performed before Louis XIV—the knowledge of which had, as Clérambault wrote at the time of the cantata's publication, “excited in the public a gratifying eagerness to have [it]”. This cantata's uniqueness lies in its lack of a narrative—there is no story, and the text seems to serve no further purpose than to give the composer an opportunity to employ imitative effects. The island of Delos, considered in Greek mythology to be the “most sacred of all islands”, is believed to be the birthplace of Apollo. The cantata portrays Apollo and the Muses on the idyllic sanctuary, filled with pastoral scenes of dancing shepherds, blooming flowers, flowing waters, and sweet idleness. The treble-heavy scoring conveys the lightness and ethereality of a mythical paradise, and also allows for the agile characterisation of this vividly descriptive text.

No. 1

*Agréable séjour qui dan le sein de l'onde
Par mille objets diver enchantez les regards,
Asile du repos, le Père des beaux arts
Vous préfère au reste du monde,
Il se fait un bonheur sur vos bords écartés
Des plaisirs innocents que vous lui présentez.*

*O pleasant abode, who amidst the waves
By a thousand different objects charm the gaze,
Restful haven, the Father of the arts
Prefers you to the rest of the world,
He finds happiness on your secluded shores
In the innocent pleasures that you offer him.*

No. 2

*Pour lui les filles de mémoire
De leurs divins accords font retentir les airs:*

*Le protecteur de leur gloire
Est l'objet de leur concerts.*

*For him the Daughters of Memory
With their celestial harmonies make the air
resound:*

*The protector of their glory
Is the object of their song.*

No. 3

*Paix tranquille,
Dan cette asile
Formez toujours
Les plus aimable jours:*

*Qu'une image
Du premier âge
Par mille plaisirs
Comble nos innocents désirs.*

*O tranquil peace,
In this haven
Forever form
The loveliest of days:*

*So that an image
Of the first age
With a thousand pleasures
Might crown our innocent desires.*

No. 4

*Terpsichore au son des musettes,
Ranime des bergers les danses et les chants;
Et dans ces paisibles retraites
Annonce par ces mots le retour du printemps:*

*Terpsichore, to the sound of the bagpipes,
Revives the shepherds' dances and songs;
And, in this peaceful refuge,
Announces in these words the return of spring:*

No. 5

*Régné, brillante Flore,
Embellissez ces bords,
Faites partout éclore
Vos plus riches trésors.*

*Emailliez votre empire
De nouvelle couleurs,
Que l'aimable Zéphire
Se couronne de fleurs.*

*Reign, brilliant Flora,
Adorn these shores,
Let your richest treasures
Bloom in every part.*

*Bedeck your empire
With new colours,
So that gentle Zephyr
Might be crowned with flowers.*

No. 6

*De ces champs fortunés la tristesse est bannie,
La Raison s'y repose au sein d'un doux loisir;
La Déesse de l'harmonie
Y sait unir toujours la Sagesse au
plaisir;
Sur ce rivage solitaire
D'un accord si charmant naissent les jours
heureux,
La Sagesse jamais n'a rien de trop sévère,
Et jamais le plaisir n'a rien de dangereux.*

*From these happy fields sorrow is banished,
Reason reposes there amidst sweet idleness;
There the Goddess of harmony
Is ever able to combine Wisdom with
pleasure;
On these solitary shores
Blissful days arise from such charming
accord,
Wisdom is never too austere,
And pleasure never dangerous.*

No. 7

*Coulez dans une paix profonde,
Coulez, moments délicieux,
Imitez le cours de l'onde
Qui vient arroser ces lieux.*

*Le long d'un si charmant rivage
Elle coule parmi les fleurs,
C'est une fidèle image
De nos tranquilles douceurs.*

*Flow in profound peace,
Flow, sweet moments,
Imitate the coursing of the streams
That comes to water these regions.*

*Passing by this charming strand
It flows among the flowers,
It is a faithful image
Of our peaceful diversions.*

No. 8

*Nos désirs sont comblés, sous ce
naissant ombrage
Je vois des doctes soeurs l'arbitre souverain;*

*Our desires are crowned, in this
burgeoning arbor
I see the sovereign arbiter of the learned sisters;*

No. 9

*Tout s'empresse à lui rendre hommage,
Les arbres réjouis agitent leur feuillage,
L'air est plus pur et plus serein,
Les oiseaux à l'envi redoublent
leur ramage;*

*Ecoutez les sons touchants
De la tendre Philomèle
L'Écho s'éveille à ses chants
Et les redit après elle.*

*All hasten to render him homage,
The gladdened trees shake their foliage,
The air is more pure and serene,
The birds, vying with each other, redouble
their song;*

*Hear the touching sounds
Of the tender Philomela
Echo awakens to her song
And repeats it after her.*

No. 10

*Durez toujours, tranquilles jeux,
Prenez la Sagesse pour guide,
Dans ce séjour heureux
C'est elle qui préside.*

*Lorsque vous marchez sur ses pas,
Quel spectacle est plus agréable?
Elle vous prête des appas,
Et vous la rendez plus aimable.*

*Live forever, gentle pastimes,
Take Wisdom as your guide,
In this happy abode
It is she who presides.*

*When you follow in her steps,
What sight is more agreeable?
She lends you charm,
And you make her lovelier.*

Wolfgang Amadeuz Mozart

Das Veilchen, K. 476

Mozart's compositional oeuvre includes a modest catalogue of *Lieder*, which he contributed to throughout his career. Mozart's *Lieder* demonstrate his profound capability as a dramatist, as seen from his 1785 setting of Goethe's *Das Veilchen*, where he portrays the dramatic narrative with remarkable brevity. In this case, the music is more intrinsically tied to the text than ever, with the text giving meaning to purely musical elements, as textures, characters, modes, and keys constantly morph to conform to the narrative of the dear sweet violet—a metaphor for a young man's heart.

Ein Veilchen auf der Wiese stand,
Gebückt in sich und unbekannt;
Es war ein herzigs Veilchen.
Da kam ein' junge Schäferin
Mit leichtem Schritt und muntrem Sinn
Daher, daher,
Die Wiese her, und sang.

Ach! denkt das Veilchen, wär ich nur
Die schönste Blume der Natur,
Ach, nur ein kleines Veilchen,
Bis mich das Liebchen abgepflückt
Und an dem Busen matt gedrückt!
Ach nur, ach nur
Ein Viertelstündchen lang!

Ach! aber ach! das Mädchen kam
Und nicht in Acht das Veilchen nahm,
Ertrat das arme Veilchen.
Es sank und starb und freut' sich noch:
Und sterb' ich denn, so sterb' ich doch
Durch sie, durch sie,
Zu ihren Füßen doch.
Das arme Veilchen
Es war ein herzigs Veilchen!

A violet was growing in the meadow,
Unnoticed and with bowed head;
It was a dear sweet violet.
Along came a young shepherdess,
Light of step and happy of heart,
Along, along
Through the meadow, and sang.

Ah! thinks the violet, if I were only
The loveliest flower in all Nature,
Ah! for only a little while,
Till my darling had picked me
And crushed me against her bosom!
Ah only, ah only
For a single quarter hour!

But alas, alas, the girl drew near
And took no heed of the violet,
Trampled the poor violet.
It sank and died, yet still rejoiced:
And if I die, at least I die
Through her, through her
And at her feet.
The poor violet!
It was a dear sweet violet!

Carl Loewe

Süßes Begräbnis, Op, 62 No. 4

Carl Loewe's ***Süßes Begräbnis*** (Sweet Burial) comes from his cycle of twelve Rückert lieder, published in 1837, and describes nature mourning the death of a shepherdess. Loewe, himself a tenor, was well-known enough in his lifetime to be called the "Schubert of North Germany", and although his posthumous reputation has dwindled over time, his songs, which number in the 400s, are still occasionally performed. The charming hymn-like writing of this *Lied* caresses and comforts the listener, displaying a noble restraint that portrays an elegant picture of grief.

*Schäferin, ach, wie haben
Sie dich so süß begraben!*

*Shepherdess, O how sweetly
Have they buried you!*

*Alle Lüfte haben gestöhnet,
Maienglocken zu Grab dir getöhnet.
Glühwurm wollte die Fackel tragen,
Stern ihm selbst es tät versagen.
Nacht ging schwarz in Trauerflören,
Und all ihre Schatten gingen in Chören
Die Tränen wird dir das Morgenrot weinen,
Und den Segen die Sonn' aufs Grab dir
scheinen.*

*All the breezes broke out sighing,
Lilies-of-the-valley rang their bells,
The glow-worm wished to bear the torch,
But the star would not allow it.
Night wore black in deep mourning,
And all its shadows formed a choir.
Dawn will shed its tears for you,
And the sun shine its blessing on your
grave.*

*Schäferin, ach, wie haben
Sie dich so süß begraben!*

*Shepherdess, O how sweetly
Have they buried you!*

Felix Mendelssohn

Minnelied, Op. 47 No. 1

Mendelssohn's modest **Minnelied**, Op. 47 No. 1, was likely composed for the domestic sphere, and is a song of simple adoration. The text, by the Romantic poet Johann Ludwig Tieck, enhanced by the symmetry and speech-like quality of Mendelssohn's musical setting, conveys a sense of candour and sincerity. The supple piano writing conjures the images of the bubbling fountain and the rustling firs, the stirring of nature being a presumed metaphor for the speaker's tender affection.

*Wie der Quell so lieblich klinget
Und die zarten Blumen küßt,
Wie der Fink im Schatten singet
Und das nahe Liebchen grüßt!*

*How the fountain so lovely sounds
and kisses the tender flowers,
how the finch in the shade sings
and greets the nearby sweetheart!*

*Wie die Lichter zitternd schweifen
Und das Gras sich grün erfreut,
Wie die Tannen weithin greifen
Und die Linde Blüten streut!*

*How the lights curve trembling
and the grass rejoices in its green,
how the firs reach out far
and the lime tree strews its blooms!*

*In der Linde süß Gedüfte,
In der Tannen Riesellaut,
In dem Spiel der Sommerlüfte
Glänzet sie als Frühlingsbraut.*

*In the lime tree's sweet fragrance,
in the firs loud rustling,
in the play of summer air
She appears as a spring bride.*

*Aber Waldton, Vogelsingen,
Duft der Blüten, haltet ein,
Licht, verdunkle, nie gelingen
Kann es euch, ihr gleich zu sein!*

*But forest sounds, birdsong,
Fragrance of blooms, cease,
light, die away, you can never
Be like unto her!*

Roger Quilter

Songs of Sorrow, Op. 10

Roger Quilter (1877-1953) is known primarily for his songs and light orchestral music, the former making up the overwhelming majority of his output. Born into wealth and educated at Eton, and later the Hoch Conservatory in Frankfurt, Quilter helped to found and administer the Musicians' Benevolent Fund, while also privately aiding his colleagues.

Quilter favoured the texts of Shakespeare and Blake for his songs, setting a number of anonymous Elizabethan lyrics as well. His *Songs of Sorrow* however, makes use of contemporary material—the poems of Ernest Dowson. Dowson was associated with the short-lived Decadent movement, which was characterised by its ideology of excess and artificiality—an ideology that tended to manifest in the use of elaborate and excessive language to address unseemly topics, such as death or depression.

In Quilter's *Songs of Sorrow*, the topic of death is not just addressed, but romanticised. **A Coronal** refers to a funeral wreath, **Passing Dreams** describes life as a brief interlude in a misty dream of existence, **A Land of Silence** refers to the idyllic haven which one discovers after death, and **In Spring** celebrates the beauty of youth that has passed an aged soul by.

Quilter's lyric, pastoral writing, together with Dowson's perhaps superfluous use of imagery from nature, obscures the core subject matter of the texts. The listener is lulled into a state of serenity and transcendence, such that text and music, when packaged together, present death and decay as a palatable pill to swallow.

I. A Coronal

*Violets and leaves of vine,
Into a frail, fair wreath
We gather and entwine:
A wreath for Love to wear,
Fragrant as his own breath,
To crown his brow divine,
All day till night is near.
Violets and leaves of vine
We gather and entwine.*

*Violets and leaves of vine
For Love that lives a day,
We gather and entwine.
All day till Love is dead,
Till eve falls, cold and gray,
These blossoms, yours and mine,
Love wears upon his head.
Violets and leaves of vine
We gather and entwine.*

*Violets and leaves of vine,
Poor Love when poor Love dies
We gather and entwine.
This wreath that lives a day
Over his pale, cold eyes,
Kissed shut by Proserpine,
At set of sun we lay:
Violets and leaves of vine
We gather and entwine.*

II. Passing Dreams

*They are not long, the weeping and the laughter,
Love and desire and hate:
I think they have no portion in us after
We pass the gate.*

*They are not long, the days of wine and roses:
Out of a misty dream
Our path emerges for a while, then closes
Within a dream.*

III. A Land of Silence

<i>What land of Silence, Where pale stars shine On apple-blossom And dew-drenched vine, Is yours and mine?</i>	<i>The world forsaken, And out of mind Honour and labour, We shall not find The stars unkind.</i>
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<i>The silent valley That we will find, Where all the voices Of humankind Are left behind.</i>	<i>And men shall travail, And laugh and weep; But we have vistas Of gods asleep, With dreams as deep.</i>
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<i>There all forgetting, Forgotten quite, We will repose us, With our delight Hid out of sight.</i>	<i>A land of Silence, Where pale stars shine On apple-blossoms And dew-drenched vine, Be yours and mine!</i>
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IV. In Spring

*See how the trees and the osiers lithe
Are green bedecked and the woods are blithe.
The meadows have donned their cape of flowers,
The air is soft with the sweet May showers,
And the birds make melody:
But the spring of the soul, the spring of the soul
Cometh no more for you or for me.*

*The lazy hum of the busy bees
Murmureth through the almond trees;
The jonquil flaunteth a gay, blonde head,
The primrose peeps from a mossy bed,
And the violets scent the lane.
But the flowers of the soul, the flowers of the soul
For you and for me bloom never again.*

Richard Strauss

6 Lieder aus "Lotosblätter"

Op. 19

The German composer Richard Georg Strauss (1864-1949) is considered a leading figure of the late Romantic and early Modern eras. The son of the principal horn player of the Munich Court Orchestra, the young Strauss was brought up on a diet of Haydn, Mozart, Beethoven, and Schubert. Through his father, Strauss became acquainted with Hans von Bülow, and began his conducting career as Bülow's assistant at the Meiningen Court Orchestra in 1883. In his nearly eight decades of artistic output, Strauss became most well-known for his tone poems and operas, enjoying quasi-celebrity status as a conductor throughout Western Europe and the Americas.

Strauss' **6 Lieder aus ,Lotosblätter'**, Op. 19, are settings of texts from a collection of poems by Adolf Friedrich von Schack, a little-known poet and literary historian who flourished in the mid-nineteenth century. Schack's *Lotosblätter* (Lotus Leaves) collection provided Strauss with strikingly expressive imagery that, although not of the highest literary quality, served to ignite the composer's imagination.

Strauss published his opus 19 in 1888, dedicating the set to the Swiss soprano Emilie Herzog, a singer at the Munich Court Opera and teacher to Strauss' future wife, Pauline de Ahna. Strauss and his wife went on to perform *Lieder* recitals all over the world, and although their programming suggests that Strauss did not usually intend for a particular opus to be performed as unit, his six *Lotosblätter* songs chart the development of a romance from its kindling to its decline when presented as a set.

The set opens with a suitor's jocular courting of a maiden of his fancy. "**Wozu noch, Mädchen?** (What for, maiden?)" the suitor teases, as he bids the lady be rid of her inhibitions and declare her love openly. Voice and piano interact in roguish, tongue-in-cheek gestures, and swelling semiquaver figures in the piano perhaps evoke surges of bubbling affection. In the next piece, the suitor, infatuated, utters "**Breit über mein Haupt dein schwarzes Haar** (Unbind your black hair over my head)". Through sweeping vocal lines and exquisitely simple piano writing, Strauss paints the suitor's absorption with the maiden's beauty, which culminates in an impassioned declaration of desire and commitment. This sentiment continues through "**Schön sind, doch kalt die Himmelssterne**", where the suitor sings of the stars of heaven, beautiful but cold, paling in comparison to the blessings bestowed by just one glimpse of the maiden's gaze.

In "**Wie sollten wir geheim sie halten**", the suitor, now having presumably secured the maiden's affections, declares with unbridled ecstasy the love that the two share. The piano's effervescent triplets are unrelenting throughout the piece, rivalled only by the suitor's seeming matchless energy that propels the singer from one idea without cessation.

From "**Hoffen und wieder verzagen**", we learn that the protagonist has lost his beloved. Strauss's music characterfully illustrates a Romantic ideal of loss, the piano leading each change in mood as the protagonist cycles through his grief. Initially harbouring a vain hope that his love will return, finds respite from his grief in dreams of his beloved. Jolted awake to fresh grief, we see a desperate man bargaining with the heavens: "rob me not of my dearest treasure", he cries, before ultimately resolving in an impassioned declaration to blissfully perish in his enchanting pain.

Mein Herz ist stumm recalls, from the cold of old age, memories of spring—a metaphor for youth and more blissful days gone by. Horn fifths in the piano describe the echos of spring as a call for the aging heart to be young again, but just as all nature is covered in frost, so the heart has reached the winter of life.

I. Wozu noch, Mädchen

*Wozu noch, Mädchen, soll es frommen,
Daß du vor mir Verstellung übst?
Heiß froh das neue Glück willkommen
Und sag es offen, daß du liebst!*

*An deines Busens höherm Schwellen,
Dem Wangenrot, das kommt und geht,
Ward dein Geheimnis von den Quellen,
Den Blumengeistern längst erspäht.*

*Die Wogen murmelns in den Grotten,
Es flüsterts leis der Abendwind,
Wo du vorbei gehst, hörst du's spotten:
Wir wissen es seit lange, Kind!*

*What is the purpose, my sweet,
Of trying to deceive me?
Bid your new bliss a joyful welcome
And say openly that you're in love!*

*The quickened stirring of your breast,
The way your blushes come and go,
Have long since revealed your secret
To fountains and flower-sprites.*

*The waves murmur it in caverns,
The evening breezes whisper it,
Wherever you go, you hear them mocking:
We've known it a long time, child!*

II. Breit' über mein Haupt dein schwarzes Haar

*Breit' über mein Haupt dein schwarzes Haar,
Neig' zu mir dein Angesicht,
Da strömt in die Seele so hell und klar
Mir deiner Augen Licht.*

*Ich will nicht droben der Sonne Pracht,
Noch der Sterne leuchtenden Kranz,
Ich will nur deiner Locken Nacht
Und deiner Blicke Glanz.*

*Unbind your black hair over my head,
Incline to me your face!
Then clearly and brightly into my soul
The light of your eyes will stream.*

*I want neither the glory of the sun above
Nor the gleaming garland of stars,
All I want are your black tresses
And the radiance of your eyes.*

III. Schön sind, doch kalt die Himmelsterne

*Schön sind, doch kalt die Himmelssterne,
Die Gaben karg, die sie verleihn;
Für einen deiner Blicke gerne
Hin geb' ich ihren goldnen Schein!*

*Beautiful but cold are the stars of heaven,
Meagre the gifts that they bestow;
For just one of your glances
I'd gladly forego their golden gleam!*

*Getrennt, so daß wir ewig darben,
Nur führen sie im Jahreslauf
Den Herbst mit seinen Ährengarben,
Des Frühlings Blütenpracht herauf.*

*Apart, so that we suffer without end,
They only bring throughout the year
The autumn with its sheaves of corn
And springtime's splendid flowering.*

*Doch deine Augen—o, der Segen
Des ganzen Jahres quillt überreich
Aus ihnen stets als milder Regen,
Die Blüte und Frucht zugleich.*

*But your eyes, ah, a whole year's blessing
Cascades abundantly from them
On flowers and fruit like incessant gentle rain,
Blossom and fruit together.*

IV. Wie sollten wir geheim sie halten

*Wie sollten wir geheim sie halten,
Die Seligkeit, die uns erfüllt?
Nein, bis in seine tiefsten Falten
Sei allen unser Herz enthüllt!*

*Wenn zwei in Liebe sich gefunden,
Geht Jubel hin durch die Natur,
In längern wonnevollen Stunden
Legt sich der Tag auf Wald und Flur.*

*Selbst aus der Eiche morschem Stamm,
Die ein Jahrtausend überlebt,
Steigt neu des Wipfels grüne Flamme
Und rauscht von Jugendlust durchbebt.*

*Zu höherm Glanz und Dufte brechen
Die Knospen auf beim Glück der Zwei,
Und süßer rauscht es in den Bächen
Und reicher blüht und reicher glänzt der Mai.*

*How could we keep it secret,
This bliss with which we're filled?
No, into its deepest recesses
Our hearts must be revealed to all!*

*When two souls have fallen in love,
Nature's filled with exultation,
And daylight lingers on wood and meadow
In longer hours of rapture.*

*Even the oak tree's rotten trunk,
That has survived a thousand years,
Sends fresh flaming green to its crown
And rustles with the thrill of youth.*

*The buds, seeing the lovers' bliss,
Flower more brightly and fragrantly,
And the brooks babble more sweetly,
And May gleams and blooms more lavishly.*

V. Hoffen und wieder verzagen

*Hoffen und wieder verzagen,
Harrend lauschen an ihrem Balkon,
Ob nicht, vom Winde getragen,
Zu mir dringe von ihr ein Ton,
Also reih'n seit Monden schon
Tage sich mir zu Tagen.*

*Spät, wenn stumm und stummer
Nacht sich lagert im öden Revier,
Senken zu kurzem Schlummer
Sich ermüdet die Wimpern mir;
Wieder empor aus Träumen von ihr
Fahr' ich zu neuem Kummer.*

*Aber, o Himmel, ich flehe:
Raube mir nicht mein teuerstes Gut,
Dies beglückende Wehe,
Das ich genährt mit des Herzens Blut!
Hoch und höher laß lodern die Glut,
Drin ich selig vergehe!*

*Hoping and then despairing,
Waiting and listening by her balcony,
In case, borne by the wind,
A sound from her might reach me,
Thus for many months now
Day has succeeded day.*

*Late in the evening, when ever more silently
Night settles over the desolate land,
My weary eyelids sink
And I sleep for a short while;
From dreams of her
I am jolted awake to fresh grief.*

*But I beseech you, heaven:
Do not steal my dearest treasure,
This enchanting pain
That I've nourished with my heart's blood!
May it blaze ever higher, this fire
In which I blissfully perish!*

VI. Mein Herz ist stumm

*Mein Herz ist stumm, mein Herz ist kalt,
Erstarrt in des Winters Eise;
Bisweilen in seiner Tiefe nur wallt
Und zittert und regt sich leise.*

*Dann ists, als ob ein mildes Thau
Die Decke des Frostes breche;
Durch grünende Wälder, blühende Aun
Murmeln von Neuem die Bäche.*

*Und Hörnerklang, von Blatt zu Blatt
Vom Frühlingswinde getragen,
Dringt aus den Schluchten ans Ohr mir matt,
Wie ein Ruf aus seligen Tagen.*

*Doch das alternde Herz wird jung nicht mehr,
Das Echo sterbenden Schalles
Tönt ferner, immer ferner her,
Und wieder erstarrt liegt Alles.*

*My heart is silent, my heart is cold,
Frozen in the winter's ice;
Only occasionally in its depths
Does it flutter, and quiver and gently stir.*

*It seems then as if a gentle thaw
Breaks the surface of the frost;
Through burgeoning wood, blossoming mead
The brooklets once more murmur.*

*And the sound of horns, borne from leaf to leaf
By the winds of spring,
Rising from ravines, falls faintly on my ear,
Like a call from blissful days.*

*Yet my ageing heart will not be young again,
The echo of the dying sound
Comes from ever further away,
And all once more is frozen.*

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