



Gabriel Fauré - Paul Verlaine

La Bonne Chanson, Les Cinq Mélodies (op. 58) dites de Venise, Clair de Lune, Spleen, Prison.

It was Winaretta Singer (Winnie), Princess Edmond de Polignac, who had the idea of wanting to couple the talents of Verlaine and of Fauré by asking them to write - jointly - a lyrical work which would inaugurate splendidly her large Atelier in Paris (the “Hall”, according to Marcel Proust) in Cortambert Street.

The Princess accordingly invited Gabriel Fauré to Venice for a few days of ‘divine’ existence; there, Fauré started his op. 58 (*Mandoline*, more exactly) while Verlaine began his slow round of the Hospitals where the composer was to try to join him, “bed to bed with anybody”, in order to sketch joint projects that - from reported meetings to missed ones - never really materialized, in spite of the Princess' open-handedness or Verlaine's letter to Fauré, dated 16th April 1892, at the Hôpital Broussais (or was it at the Hôpital Watteau?), a letter peppered with ironic anglicisms (Collection Madame Fauré-Frémiot).

For *tout cet ail de basse cuisine* (“all this garlic of lowly cooking”, Verlaine, *Art Poétique*) that the ancestors of Gabriel Fauré, man of the South par excellence, would stick into the legs of lamb for their customers in Sunday - best in order to “soften” them better while inquiring after the little last-born or the old one who only advanced, now, but with the help of swigs of the Varilhes local wine, all this garlic could obviously not inspire Paul Verlaine, man of the North above all:

*Flux de verve gauloise et flot
d'aplomb romain,
Avec, puisque un peu franc,
de bon limon germain*

(“Flux of gallic verve and flood of Roman assurance with, because a bit frank, some good Germanic clay”), Verlaine who always preferred the fortified fare: *l'appétit avait de la dent* (“the appetite was keen”) of the Hospitals of the Welfare organisation: *Je me nourris de gluten, de viandes rôties, de légumes vert, et ne bois que de bon vin* (I feed on gluten, roast meats, green vegetables and only drink good wine”; *Aï, Beaune, Sauterne, Grave* or the divine Château Batailley?) for lack of hazy siestas

in front of a glass of green absinthe in certain cafés of the Rive Gauche: *des cafés que traverseront des bandes de musique* (“cafés crossed by bands of music”) on the very edge of these artificial Paradises, such as in the *Kaléidoscope* where humans are reduced to masks or bergamasks under a calm *Clair de lune* (Moonshine) or an evanescent luminescence of souls in strange Dreams of a Midsummer Night.

The usher Verlaine in charge of the prep-room will in fact always pride himself on his knowledge of English. He will read Shakespeare (and his ‘Bergomasks’) or Dickens in the original during his ‘holiday’ at the Prison of Mons; he will stay in London or in the Provinces accompanied or not by Rimbaud, “the little dirt” (See, among others, the grammatical duel between Verlaine / Rimbaud in Verlaine's letter dated 18th May 1873, at Boglione) who was to drag him onto “perfidious paths”, in order to learn all the better the language of Edgar Allan Poe, his equal in dipsomania, before teaching it to the pupils of Rethel or of Reims. “Vôlez-vô dire à môa...” he liked to shout at his pupils in order to inculcate all the better the tonic accent. As for the director Fauré, he will be happy handling the oar on the Thames.

Saint-Saëns' Upper Normandy might have momentarily brought together the Poet and the composer (the Mauté de Fleurville, Mathilde among them, were staying at Gouëlle Manor, near Neufchâtel-en-Bray and the Baugnies, friends and admirers of Fauré, in their residence at Cuy-Saint-Fiacre - for lack of tow paths along la Scarpe or of the steep banks of the Seine at Bougival where Fauré will re-experience, *En Sourdine* (in Secret), the trepidation of his own betrothal to Marianne Viardot, in a midday passion (*La Bonne Chanson*) for Emma Moysse (“some are gossiping about your age which is no longer 16 or 20 years”), Emma Bardac the beautiful secret lady counsellor of the great French melodists on the occasion of the Summer Nights at Prunay: *L'hiver a cessé* (the winter has ceased).

Fauré will admit, by the way : “I have never written anything so spontaneously as *La Bonne Chanson*. I must add that I was helped by the spontaneity of comprehension at least equal (to mine) on the part of her who remains its most moving interpreter” (letter from Fauré to Roger Ducasse, 17-05-1923) and even if “the young musicians are about unanimous in not liking *La Bonne Chanson*, as Marcel Proust, for his part, noted with regret. For Verlaine, as well as for Fauré, of course:

*At 20 years of age a new
confusion
Under the name of love flames
Caused me to find women
beautiful
They did not find me handsome.*

It will therefore be necessary to await the meeting of Mathilde Mauté and Paul Verlaine, at Montmartre in order to exorcize this injustice, before the formal proposal of marriage to *Une Sainte en son auréole* (“a Saint in her halo”):

*Bientôt nous porteront envie
Tellement nous nous aimerons,*
Paul Verlaine (“Soon we shall cause envy, so much shall we love each other”).

Mathilde artless-innocent little bourgeoisie whose voice was of “fine music”, in grey and green dress next to the grand piano Pleyel “kissed by a fragile hand” and that “shines in the evening vaguely pink and grey”. A piano which - in its tunic of probity - and far from the orgies of the Artois or of the Boulevard des Batignolles where the Cut-Throats and their Ladies venture as far as Pauline Viardot's Douai Street from where Berlioz ran towards the Château des Brouillards, from where one can also run downhill as far as Notre-Dame de Clignancourt; a piano which made it possible to know again *lent réveil après bien des métempsychose* (“slow awakening after many metempsychoses”) *un fin pays d'eau vive et de côteaux* (“a fine country of live water and of hillsides”) where the fountains under *La Lune blanche* (the white moon) make *un bruit d'assassins postés se concertant* (a noise as of scheming assassins ready for action”) (O Pelleas, ô Mélisande!).

Others will sing Verlaine, the poet of shades, of the imprecise, of the impalpable, of verses which drag their wing or which limp like the partridge shortly before it flies off brusquely, invariably surprizing the hunter, the Verlaine poet of moods (*Spleen*), of whisper, of absolute confidence (*Extase*), the Verlaine sensitive to sound as much as to sense:

J'ai presque peur (I am nearly afraid) or to this voice:
*Qui fait comme du bien et du mal
à la fois
Et le mal et le bien, tout a les mêmes
charmes*

(“which does like good and evil at the same time

And the evil and the good, it all has the same charms”)

this voice that Fauré alone (is Verlaine not “exquisite to set to music”?) will recognize in the confidences of Emma Bardac; a voice set in a casket of piano arpeggi, of harmonic instabilities, a voice that refuses all gaudy colours (“I shall be pleased to show you Gabriel Fauré’s study”, letter from Madame Blanche Fauré-Frémiet to the author, 10-03-1979); a voice where only shades of meaning rule and which wrings the neck of eloquence and which goes “smelling of mint and thyme”, like the meadows after the very first cut in the heart of every June in the Barguilhère dales; a voice which satisfies with far away souvenirs of a mandoline or of the swaying of gondolas); a “medium voice” with opera timbre “with drive and without slowing down”, as Fauré appreciated them, he who loathed the “delicate throats”; a measured voice (Fauré was “a living metronome”, Claire Croiza insisted), a disciplined voice for a “difficult interpretation slow of movement and agitated in expression, happy and painful, ardent and discouraged” (letter to Winaretta Singer, on the subject of *Green*) or, also, as he advised the charming Madame Beaugnies: “not to sing slowly, the pace is lively, touched with emotion, almost panting”, directions that will attempt to follow - more or less helped by accompanists - all those Raunay, Balguerrie, Breval, Croiza (“the vocal part is difficult to determine”, the latter noted with astonishment) or Madeleine Mathieu or others like Germaine Lubin (“I was at the Conservatoire when Gabriel Fauré was its Director and during four years he used to call me from my class and made me sing many of his Melodies - I was also his Penelope at the opéra. He liked me very much.” (Letter to the author, 20-03-1978). A voice that will, accordingly, render to best effect these “chamber operas” or these “apartment symphonies” which are produced by the Faurean melody cycles, works in which instrument and song merge to the point of bringing together - all things considered and for ever: *cette chair accroupie et cet esprit malade* (this squatting flesh and this sick spirit), thus fulfilling the most secret wish of the Prince of poets who, alone, Mallarmé confirms: *affronta dans toute l'épouvante l'état du chanteur et du rêveur* (“faced in all its terror the state of the singer and of the dreamer”).

Gabriel Fauré

Musician of the Ariège (1845 – 1924)

Indulging in memories, Gabriel Fauré admits to the 'Echo de Paris' (April 1924) that he grew up in 'a region altogether beautiful, smiling, magnificent, splendid', adding: 'I even thought about it so often when I was composing... that many of my works almost certainly carry the mark of the walks I took as a very small boy in this beautiful land of my fathers...'

The little Gabriel (should one say Ariel,) was born on 12th May 1845 in rue Major, Pamiers, into an Ariège family of Calibans of the anvil ('faure' means 'blacksmith' in the langue d'oc), who had been successively blacksmiths and butchers before taking to the pen. On his mother's side, the Lalène-Laprade, descended from a veteran officer of the 1st Empire, hold their rank at Gailhac-Toulza, a market-town situated a few miles from Canté, the village which provided a Pope for the Inquisition: 'the Ariège produces men and iron' was a lapidary statement by Bonaparte.

Alberich's hammer - Gabriel Fauré hears its sonorous echoes rise from the smithy at Moulinéry when his parents settle down in the premises of the Ecole Normale of Montgauzy, which according to one of its Heads, looks like the 'Flying Dutchman' from a misty distance; the 4-year-old child will bring back to the composer's memory the symphony of bells ringing out in Ganac and Cadirac at the time of the angelus, which marks the beginning of the *Andante* of the 2nd quartet. The Murmuring Forest - Siegfried-Gabriel listens to it on the slopes of the *Prat d'Albis* or under the big cedars in the School playground above which circle, like furious Rolands, the September ringdoves: they hardly recognize the miraculous chapel built by Charlemagne and where was to be found this harmonium.. ('each time I was able to get away, I ran there and enjoyed myself'), which was replaced by the Debain 1867 which helped with the creation of the *Wedding at Cana* (Le maridadge de Cana).

The *Pilgrims' March*, Tannhäuser-Gabriel accompanies it when he joins the organ of some orthodox capital like Rennes or Paris, for lack of indulgent Rome. But Father Almiré Le Rebours, priest at the Madeleine, reminds him only very little of the moving good-heartedness of the Priest of Rieucros who would come and fetch the small Lohengrin-Gabriel - all dressed in white - from his nanny at Verniolle, before taking him away at the trot of the 'cabàlho' (the mare) who pulls the cart towards Mirepoix where the assistant-master Pagnol was forging a Topaze soul for himself and to the very border of the Aude, near Saint-Gaudéric where one dances la *Troumpuso* (the deceiveress) so well that even Raymond Escholier and Roger Ducasse were mistaken, but not the honorary Secretary of the *Council of Pamiers* when he used it as the theme tune for a radio programme (*L'Inquisition*, 1983) which will be momentous in the history of this town.

Of Pamiers and its Castela where his medallion, signed by *Méric*, welcomes the visitor, Gabriel Fauré will preserve the nostalgic charm of alleys and *Closed Gardens* hemmed in by the little waves of a subtle canal; he will draw from them the *Nocturnes* and the *Secrets*, the limbo light of Notre-Dame du Camp, the sermons in the Oc parlance of Father Amilha who dedicated a canticle to Notre-Dame de Montgauzy (Bernadette's interlocutor always understood the 'oc' vernacular!); the colouring of the tender *Automnes* in the browned vines above which is floating - like a smell of must - the intense blue of the burning nights where *Love is a light thing*. He will preserve the souvenir of the road to Escosse, winding against wind and loose stones, on the sides of Esplas par Brie or of Villeneuve-Durfort, in the midst of 'rastoulhs' which fed more geese than were ever crammed by the Capitole (including 'the Grrrrand Theatre!'); stubble fields, sometimes crowned by a *Cemetery* around which the harvesting machine is rattling, while in the azure shadow of the burnt cypresses a 'Dàmo-Jàno', filled with Noah's wine, is waiting, quenching the harvesters' thirst as well as that of this last country Priest, incomparable instrumentalist, who led his flock to drink from the elixir of *Faust* (or was it that of the *anglers of Pinsaguel*) under the furious eye of some tender-hearted old lady servant

From Foix, on a summer day, one leaves Villote or Flassa for the mountains whose crests towards Suc and its *Bistrounquets* have the contours of the *Romance op. 28* for violin and piano; or else, one walks, with a rucksack on one's back, to La Tour Laffont from where the eye plunges onto the valley of Massat and its *Liadouros*, or divines, on the other slope, the valley of Erce and its joyful Vicar (*Le Vicaré d'Erce*), or Bethmale and its pretty girls with sabots so elegantly turned up by their lovers and whose famous *Berceuse* had the good fortune to please the public of the *Rumanian State Opera* on 15th November 1982.

The *Traveller* Fauré, did he not complete himself the journey to Russia, counting among the ranks of his high-placed audience Queen Alexandra, Emperor William II and the Tzarina of Russia.

The return takes place *Along the Water*, via the sources of the Arize and the meadows of Toch, lost paradise of the *Dalhaires* (mowers), which encompass the crystal torrent where the Schubertian black trout snatch the long green grasshoppers drunk with the juice of the ripened hay against the hedges of bitter boxwood at the foot of giant chesnut trees. This Arize, who, more in front, bores the immense prehistoric grotto of Le Mas d'Azil and whose roaring was diverted, in the years 1924, 1925, 1926, for the duration of a performance of *Polyphème, The Daughter of Roland* or *Sigurd*, to enable an audience, who had come from all over the Midi, to open itself to the voice of Madame Frozier-Marrot, who filled the vault of this natural Opera house; the Arize, smiling again, at the foot of the Carla of the austere Pierre Bayle, such as contemplated by 'Noûste Enric' (Our good King Henry) after the night he spent in the surprising castle of Pailhès where an odour is still floating, something like the sweet perfume of *Margarideto*.

The Gold of the Ariège - Gabriel Fauré will wash it less on the side of l'Hospitalet and Tarascon (homeland of Armand Silvestre to whom Maria dels Caminets restored his local lustre in her 'oc' translations of the French texts of the tunes by the Maestro) than in the Querigut with Noël's vertiginously sublime (*Cantem toutis la neissenço...*) or towards Prades-Montaillou, villages which are less occitan than the Merchants in the Temple of things Roman want to assure us: for Fauré will remain in the line of the heresy, the one opened up by the troubadour Guilhem Montanhagol. He will indeed assume the presidency of the Committee for the monument to *Esclarmonde* ('a woman dares defy Innocent III, contend with him for the sceptre of the souls, the keys to Heaven and Hell', according to the apt formulation of Napoleon Peyrat from Les Bordes-sur-Arize), he who thought that he had put into his *Requiem* everything he possessed as regards religious illusion and who, seized by 'the terrible image of *Parsifal*', considered that 'musical mysticism is necessarily limited in its manifestations'... and that one cannot 'renew this'.

One was able to renew this... For evidence, the 'Concert Exceptionnel Wagner, Hommage au Comté de Foix' (15th July 1984), given within the walls of the fortress Montségur; a concert which made it possible to add *La Fleur Jetée* by Gabriel Fauré to the 'gralho' (Gaal) of Cathar songs. For the language of his fathers, the composer did not forget it, as little as he forgot the songs of his country: every year he participated in the reunions of 'l'Amicale des Ariégeois de Paris', where they sang in unison the *Arièjo, moun País* by Sabas Maury, priest of Varilhes, and *Aqueros Mountanhos*, this Pyrenean hymn attributed to Gasto Febus, older in reality and 'whose music seems to be in the 'oc vernacular'; music which he preferred to *Lucrezia, Manon* and *Werther* (he says so himself), just as he preferred the Ariège to the *Beautiful Blue Danube*, if we believe what he writes on this to his fiancée Marianne Viardot.

Fauré also appreciated polkas, quadrilles and mazurkas which he occasionally danced, as at the big Fêtes de Foix (*Las Festos de Fouïch*), for is he not after all, Proust sees him like that, 'this great musician ... who loves uniquely and profoundly women'?

The County town - he visits it one last time in 1921, having spent the summer at Ax-les-Thermes, near the 'Bassin des Ladres' from where volcanic water mounts, burning hot, from between the stones opposite that Hospital which *Saint-Louis* had built for the survivors of all the Crusades (except the Albigensian!), and he will catch a last glimpse of the smoky glass roof of Pamiers railway-station...

The Fauré / Lalène-Laprade rest in the small Cemetery of Gailhac-Toulza, burnt by this sun which cracks the soil and splits the naive slabs whose identity is erased by time and the elements; a cemetery on a gentle slope overlooking vineyards.

From rue des Vignes, Gabriel Fauré will come as a neighbour to the Passy cemetery, where he will rejoin - for some last 'Messe Basse' presumably - his old accomplice at Bayreuth, André Messager and also - for one ultimate 'four hands' in honour of the Ariège perhaps - the immense interpreter Yves Nat who, on 7th December 1931, gave the well-known concert at the Trianon of Foix.

'Take a little of my emotion, please, so that I don't succumb to it', the Maestro would say very simply.

Giselle Monsegur Vaillant

Microbiography

Having set off from the Bastille under the bonnet of Clairette Angot (*Jadis, les Rois, race proscrite...*) the singer will seek glory at the bosom of the enemy (*ira chercher la gloire au sein des ennemis...*) by pouring to *Faust*, by Gounod, the elixir of youth of a valiant and pure soprano and, in addition, by giving back to the Provençal language - with the 1st production of *Mirèio* (Rumanian State Opera) in the language of Frédéric Mistral (Nobel Prize) before an audience who appreciated Ninon Vallin - this historical dimension that Dante and Petrarca had granted it a long time ago, although, still, perfectly ignored by the great Opera Houses of London, New York, Milan or Paris (alias La Grande Boutique).

Between the *Abduction from the Seraglio* (Radio France) and the Beggars' operas in the gem-Theatres of deepest France, the American Church of Paris will entrust her with *Alleluias* by Mozart, *Mémoires* by Fauré or other melancholy Ballads by the author of the *Dubliners*, James Joyce, as set to music by the composer-conductor Edmund Pendleton; while one luminous Easter Day, before the altar of the American Cathedral of Paris where Heads of State and Hollywood stars crowd in order to read the Gospel of the day, the Agnus Dei, K 317 op. 14 (*Krönungs Messe*) by Mozart, accompanied by the organ, will transform the Minnie Hauk of the *Barber of Seville* into the deeply moving Countess of the *Marriage of Figaro*.

It took the Austro-Hungarian audience of *La Traviata*, in Duplessis gowns and Germont suits, who greeted this "exceptional voice" in a seemingly endless standing ovation (Magyar State Opera) to feel this new frisson which perhaps was only rivalled by that of the audience at La Scala in 1955, hearing Marias Callas in the same rôle, this being the challenge that the first Vestal of the Gauls sent out - with the help of the cabaletta of Norma - to the Guerra Romana, from Yves Nat's Béziers to the Iron Gate.

Riga revisited in that Wagner Hall that saw Richard Wagner's beginnings as a conductor and established the triumph of Hector Berlioz, Franz Liszt, Anton Rubinstein and Clara Schumann, was the prelude to the apotheosis of the Moscow Concerts (Maly, Rachmaninoff Halls) with the help of Radio and TV Ostankino - in order to confirm all the more, in the heart of *the* Capital of Music, the words of Pauline Viardot who was bold enough to express surprise in connection with *Tristan* and before a speechless Wagner, that Germany should have no lyrical musical artists. (See the "*Vorspiel und Liebestod*", April 30, 1993, Maly Hall, Moscow: the first occasion ever that the work was performed by a single artist, singing and accompanying at the same time).

La Bonne Chanson

1 / Une Sainte en son auréole

Une Sainte en son auréole,
Une Châtelaine en sa tour,
Tout ce que contient la parole
Humaine de grâce et d'amour ;

La note d'or que fait entendre
Le cor dans le lointain des bois,
Mariée à la fierté tendre
Des nobles Dames d'autrefois ;

Avec cela le charme insigne
D'un frais sourire triomphant
Eclos dans des candeurs de cygne
Et des rougeurs de femme-enfant ;

Des aspects nacrés, blancs et roses,
Un doux accord patricien :
Je vois, j'entends toutes ces choses
Dans son nom Carlovingien ...

2 / Puisque l'aube grandit

Puisque l'aube grandit, puisque voici l'aurore,
Puisque, après m'avoir fui longtemps, l'espoir veut bien
Revoler devers moi qui l'appelle et l'implore,
Puisque tout ce bonheur veut bien être le mien,
Je veux, guidé par vous, beaux yeux aux flammes douces,
Par toi conduit, ô main où tremblera ma main,
Marcher droit, que ce soit par des sentiers de mousse
Ou que rocs et cailloux encombrent le chemin ;
Et comme, pour bercer les lenteurs de la route,
Je chanterai des airs ingénus, je me dis
Qu'elle m'écouterait sans déplaisir sans doute ;
Et vraiment je ne veux pas d'autre Paradis.

3 / La lune blanche

La lune blanche
Luit dans les bois ;
De chaque branche
Part une voix
Sous la ramée ...

O bien-aimée.

L'étang reflète,
Profond miroir,
La silhouette
Du saule noir
Où le vent pleure ...

Rêvons, c'est l'heure.
Un vaste et tendre
Apaînement
Semble descendre
Du firmament
Que l'astre irise ...

C'est l'heure exquise.

4 / J'allais par des chemins perfides

J'allais par des chemins perfides
Douloureusement incertain ;
Vos chères mains furent mes guides.

Si pâle, à l'horizon lointain,
Luisait un faible espoir d'aurore,
Votre regard fut le matin.

Nul bruit, sinon son pas sonore
N'encourageait le voyageur ;
Votre voix me dit : marche encore.

Mon cœur craintif, mon sombre cœur,
Pleurait, seul, dans la triste voie ;
L'amour, délicieux vainqueur
Nous a réunis dans la joie !

5 / J'ai presque peur

J'ai presque peur, en vérité,
Tant je sens ma vie enlacée
A la radieuse pensée
Qui m'a pris l'âme l'autre été ;

Tant votre image, à jamais chère,
Habite en ce cœur tout à vous,
Ce cœur uniquement jaloux
De vous aimer et de vous plaire ;

Et je tremble, pardonnez-moi
D'aussi franchement vous le dire,
A penser qu'un mot, qu'un sourire
De vous est désormais ma loi,

Et qu'il vous suffirait d'un geste,
D'une parole ou d'un clin d'œil,
Pour mettre tout mon être en deuil
De son illusion céleste.

Mais plutôt je ne veux vous voir,
L'avenir dût-il m'être sombre
Et fécond en peines sans nombre,
Qu'à travers un immense espoir,

Plongé dans ce bonheur suprême
De me dire encore et toujours,
En dépit des mornes retours,
Que je vous aime, que je t'aime !

6 / Avant que tu ne t'en ailles

Avant que tu ne t'en ailles,
Pâle étoile du matin,
— Mille cailles
Chantent, chantent dans le thym —

Tourne devers le poète,
Dont les yeux sont pleins d'amour,
— L'alouette
Monte au ciel avec le jour. —

Puis fais luire ma pensée
Là-bas, bien loin, oh ! bien loin !
— La rosée
Gaîment brille sur le foin. —
Dans le doux rêve où s'agite
Ma mie endormie encor ...
— Vite, vite
Car voici le soleil d'or !

7 / Donc, ce sera par un clair jour d'été

Donc, ce sera par un clair jour d'été :
Le grand soleil, complice de ma joie,
Fera, parmi le satin et la soie,
Plus belle encor votre chère beauté ;
Le ciel tout bleu, comme une haute tente,
Frissonnera somptueux à longs plis
Sur nos deux fronts heureux qu'auront pâlis
L'émotion du bonheur et l'attente ;

Et quand le soir viendra, l'air sera doux
Qui se jouera, caressant, dans vos voiles,
Et les regards paisibles des étoiles
Bienveillamment souriront aux époux.

8 / N'est-ce pas ?

N'est-ce pas ? nous irons, gais et lents, dans la voie
Modeste que nous montre en souriant l'Espoir,
Peu soucieux qu'on nous ignore ou qu'on nous voie.
Isolés dans l'amour ainsi qu'en un bois noir,
Nos deux cœurs, exhalant leur tendresse paisible,
Seront deux rossignols qui chantent dans le soir.

Sans nous préoccuper de ce que nous destine
Le Sort, nous marcherons pourtant du même pas,
Et la main dans la main, avec l'âme enfantine
De ceux qui s'aiment sans mélange, n'est-ce pas ?

9 / L'hiver a cessé

L'hiver a cessé : la lumière est tiède
Et danse, du sol au firmament clair.
Il faut que le cœur le plus triste cède
A l'immense joie éparse dans l'air.

J'ai depuis un an le printemps dans l'âme
Et le vert retour du doux floral,
Ainsi qu'une flamme entoure une flamme,
Met de l'idéal sur mon idéal.

Le ciel bleu prolonge, exhausse et couronne
L'immuable azur où rit mon amour.
La saison est belle et ma part est bonne
Et tous mes espoirs ont enfin leur tour.

Que vienne l'été ! que viennent encore
L'automne et l'hiver ! Et chaque saison
Me sera charmante, ô Toi que décore
Cette fantaisie et cette raison !

Cinq Mélodies de Venise

1 / Mandoline

Les donneurs de sérénades
Et les belles écouteuses
Echangent des propos fades
Sous les ramures chanteuses.

C'est Tircis et c'est Aminte,
Et c'est l'éternel Clitandre,
Et c'est Damis qui pour mainte
Cruelle fit maint vers tendre.

Leurs courtes vestes de soie,
Leurs longues robes à queues,
Leur élégance, leur joie
Et leurs molles ombres bleues,

Tourbillonnent dans l'extase
D'une lune rose et grise,
Et la mandoline jase
Parmi les frissons de brise.

2 / En sourdine

Calmes dans le demi-jour
Que les branches hautes font,
Pénétrons bien notre amour
De ce silence profond.

Fondons nos âmes, nos cœurs

Et nos sens extasiés,
Parmi les vagues langueurs
Des pins et des arbousiers.

Ferme tes yeux à demi,
Croise tes bras sur ton sein,
Et de ton cœur endormi
Chasse à jamais tout dessein.

Laissons-nous persuader
Au souffle berceur et doux,
Qui vient à tes pieds rider
Les ondes du gazon roux.

Et quand, solennel, le soir
Des chênes noirs tombera,
Voix de notre désespoir,
Le rossignol chantera.

3 / Green

Voici des fruits, des fleurs, des feuilles et des branches,
Et puis voici mon cœur, qui ne bat que pour vous.
Ne le déchirez pas avec vos deux mains blanches,
Et qu'à vos yeux si beaux l'humble présent soit doux.

J'arrive tout couvert encore de rosée
Que le vent du matin vient glacer à mon front.
Souffrez que ma fatigue, à vos pieds reposée,
Rêve des chers instants qui la délasseront.

Sur votre jeune sein laissez rouler ma tête
Toute sonore encor de vos derniers baisers ;
Laissez-la s'apaiser de la bonne tempête,
Et que je dorme un peu puisque vous reposez.

4 / A Clymène

Mystiques barcarolles,
Romances sans paroles
Chère, puisque tes yeux,
Couleur des cieux,
Puisque ta voix, étrange
Vision qui dérange
Et trouble l'horizon
De ma raison,

Puisque l'arome insigne
De ta pâleur de cygne
Et puisque la candeur
De ton odeur,

Ah ! puisque tout ton être,
Musique qui pénètre,
Nimbés d'anges défunts,
Tons et parfums,

A sur d'almes cadences,
En ses correspondances
Induit mon cœur subtil,
Ainsi soit-il !

Trois autres mélodies

5 / C'est l'extase

C'est l'extase langoureuse,
C'est la fatigue amoureuse,
C'est tous les frissons des bois
Parmi l'étreinte des brises,
C'est, vers les ramures grises,
Le cœur des petites voix.
O le frêle et frais murmure !
Cela gazouille et susurre,

Cela ressemble au cri doux
Que l'herbe agitée expire ...
Tu dirais, sous l'eau qui vire,
Le roulis sourd des cailloux.

Cette âme qui se lamente
En cette plainte dormante,
C'est la nôtre, n'est-ce pas ?
La mienne, dis, et la tienne,
Dont s'exhale l'humble antienne
Par ce tiède soir, tout bas ?

6 / Clair de lune

Votre âme est un paysage choisi
Que vont charmant masques et bergamasques,
Jouant du luth et dansant, et quasi
Tristes sous leurs déguisements fantasques.

Tout en chantant sur le mode mineur
L'amour vainqueur et la vie opportune,
Ils n'ont pas l'air de croire à leur bonheur
Et leur chanson se mêle au clair de lune,

Au calme clair de lune triste et beau,
Qui fait rêver les oiseaux dans les arbres
Et sangloter d'extase les jets d'eau,
Les grands jets d'eau sveltes parmi les marbres.

7 / Spleen

Il pleure dans mon cœur
Comme il pleut sur la ville.
Quelle est cette langueur
Qui pénètre mon cœur ?

O bruit doux de la pluie
Par terre et sur les toits !
Pour un cœur qui s'ennuie,
O le chant de la pluie !

Il pleure sans raison
Dans ce cœur qui s'écarte.
Quoi ! Nulle trahison ?
Ce deuil est sans raison.

C'est bien la pire peine
De ne savoir pourquoi,
Sans amour et sans haine,
Mon cœur a tant de peine !

8 / Prison

Le ciel est, par-dessus le toit,
Si bleu, si calme !
Un arbre, par-dessus le toit,
Berce sa palme.

La cloche, dans le ciel qu'on voit,
Doucement tinte.
Un oiseau sur l'arbre qu'on voit
Chante sa plainte.

Mon Dieu, mon Dieu, la vie est là,
Simple et tranquille.
Cette paisible rumeur-là
Vient de la ville !

— Qu'as-tu fait, ô toi que voilà
Pleurant sans cesse,
Dis qu'as-tu fait, toi que voilà,
De ta jeunesse ?

Discography

Die schöne Müllerin

Franz Schubert

Die Forelle - Liebesbotschaft - Rastlose Liebe

Finnvox 97001 / 70'01

Recital - Salle Gabriel Fauré Concert Live

Conservatoire de la rue de Madrid / 18 - 05 - 1991

Mozart - Fauré - Schumann - Schubert - Verdi - Berlioz

Finnvox 98001 / 54'24".

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Mayor of Pamiers.

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