

A Sundial of Song – a song for each hour of the day

The Myriad Song –

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www.themyriadsong.com

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Benjamin Britten

Supper

Benjamin Britten (1913-1976) - text: William Soutar (1898-1943)

Steepies for the bairnie
 Sae moolie in the mou':
 Parritch for a strappan lad
 To mak his beard grow.
 Stovies for a muckle man
 To keep him stout and hale:
 A noggin for the auld carl
 To gar him sleep weel.

Bless the meat, and bless the drink,
 And the hand that steers the pat:
 And be guid to beggar-bodies
 Whan they come to your yett

steepies: curds *moolie: crumbly*
stovies: potatoes *steers the pat: stirs the pot*
yett: gate

1. There was a man of Newington

Benjamin Britten (1913-1976) - text: Anon

There was a man of Newington,
 And he was wondrous wise,
 He jump'd into a quickset hedge,
 And scratch'd out both his eyes.

But when he saw his eyes were out,
 With all his might and main
 He jump'd into another hedge,
 And scratch'd them in again.

2. There was an old woman

Peter Warlock (1894-1930) - text: Anon

There was an old woman went up in a basket
 Seventy times as high as the moon,
 What she did there I could not but ask it
 For in her hand she carried a broom.
 "Old woman, old woman, old woman," said I,
 "Whiter, o whither, o whither so high?"
 "To sweep the cobwebs from the sky,
 And I shall be back again by-and-by."

3. Three jolly gentlemen

Arthur Edward Drummond Bliss (1891-1975) - text: Walter de la Mare (1873-1956)

Three jolly gentlemen,
 In coats of red,
 Rode their horses
 up to bed.

Three jolly gentlemen
 Snored till morn,
 Their horses champing
 the golden corn.

Three jolly gentlemen
 At break of day,
 Came clitter-clatter
 down the stairs
 And galloped away.

Lullaby

Ernest John Moeran (1894-1950) - text: Seumas O'Sullivan (1879-1958)

Husheen, the herons are crying
 Away in the rain and the sleet,
 Flying and flying and flying,
 With never a rest for their feet.
 But warm in your coverlid nestle,
 Wee Bird, till the dawn of the day,
 Nor dream of the wild wings that wrestle
 In the night and the rain and the gray.

Come, sweetheart, the bright ones would bring you
 By the magical meadows and streams,
 With the light of your dreaming they build you
 A house on the hill of your dreams.
 But you stir in your sleep and you murmur,
 As though the wild rain and the gray
 Wet hills, with the wind ever blowing
 Had driven your dreams away.

A child's prayer

Arthur Edward Drummond Bliss (1891-1975) - text: Siegfried Lorraine Sassoon (1886-1967)

For Morn, my dome of blue,
 For Meadows, green and gay,
 And Birds who love
 the twilight of the leaves,
 Let Jesus keep me joyful when I pray.

For the big Bees that hum
 And hide in bells of flowers;
 For the winding roads that come
 To Evening's holy door,
 May Jesus bring me grateful to his arms,
 And guard my innocence for evermore.

Abendstern

Franz Peter Schubert (1797-1828) - text: Johann Baptist Mayrhofer (1787-1836)

Was weilst du einsam an dem Himmel,
O schöner Stern? und bist so mild;
Warum entfernt das funkelnde Gewimmel
Der Brüder sich von deinem Bild?
"Ich bin der Liebe treuer Stern,
Sie halten sich von Liebe fern."

Why do you linger alone in the sky,
o beautiful star? and you are so mild;
why does the sparkling crowd
of your brothers distance itself from your face?
"I am the star of true love,
and they keep far away from Love."

So solltest du zu ihnen gehen,
Bist du der Liebe, zaud're nicht!
Wer möchte denn dir widerstehen?
Du süßes eigensinnig Licht.
"Ich säe, schaue keinen Keim,
Und bleibe trauernd still daheim."

So you should go to them,
if you are love, do not delay!
Who could then withstand you,
you sweet but stubborn light?
"I sow no seed, I see no shoot,
and so I remain here, mournful and still."

In stiller Nacht

Johannes Brahms (1833-1897) - text: Friedrich Spee von Langenfeld (1591-1635)

In stiller Nacht, zur ersten Wacht,
ein Stimm' begunnt zu klagen,
der nächt'ge Wind hat süß und lind
zu mir den Klang getragen.
Von herben Leid und Traurigkeit
ist mir das Herz zerflossen,
die Blümelein, mit Tränen rein
hab' ich sie all' begossen.

In the quiet night, at the first watch,
a voice began to lament;
the night wind sweetly and gently
carried to its sound to me.
From bitter sorrow and grief
my heart has melted.
The little flowers - with my pure tears
I have watered them all.

Der schöne Mond will untergon,
für Leid nicht mehr mag scheinen,
die Sterne lan ihr Glitzen stahn,
mit mir sie wollen weinen.
Kein Vogelsang noch Freudenklang
man höret in den Lüften,
die wilden Tier' traur'n auch mit mir
in Steinen und in Klüften.

The beautiful moon wishes to set
and never shine again out of pain;
the stars will let their gleam fade
for they wish to weep with me.
Neither bird-song nor sound of joy
can be heard in the air;
the wild animals also grieve with me
in the rocks and the clefts.

An die Leier

Franz Peter Schubert (1797-1828) - text: Franz Seraph Ritter von Bruchmann (1798-1867)

Ich will von Atreus' Söhnen,
Von Kadmus will ich singen!
Doch meine Saiten tönen
Nur Liebe im Erklingen.

I want to sing of Atreus' sons,
And of Cadmus!
But my strings sound out
only songs of love.

Ich tauschte um die Saiten,
Die Leier möcht ich tauschen!
Alcidens Siegesschreiten
Sollt' ihrer Macht entauschen!

I have changed the strings,
and I would even switch lyres!
Alcides' victorious march
should roar forth in its might!

Doch auch die Saiten tönen
Nur Liebe im Erklingen!
So lebt denn wohl, Heroen!
Denn meine Saiten tönen
Statt Heldensang zu drohen,
Nur Liebe im Erklingen.

Yet even these strings
sound out only songs of love!
Farewell then, heroes!
For my strings will sound out,
instead of threatening heroes' song,
only songs of love.

Ständchen

Johannes Brahms (1833-1897) - text: Franz Theodor Kugler (1808-1858)

Der Mond steht über dem Berge,
So recht für verliebte Leut';
Im Garten rieselt ein Brunnen,
Sonst Stille weit und breit.

The moon hangs over the mountain,
So fitting for love-struck people.
In the garden trickles a fountain;
Otherwise, it is quiet, far and wide.

Neben der Mauer im Schatten,
Da stehn der Studenten drei,
Mit Flöt' und Geig' und Zither,
Und singen und spielen dabei.

Near the wall, in shadows,
there stand the students three:
with flute and fiddle and zither,
and they sing and play there.

Die Klänge schleichen der Schönsten
Sacht in den Traum hinein,
sie schaut den blonden Geliebten
und lispelt: »Vergiß nicht mein!«

The sounds waft up to the loveliest of girls,
gently entering her dreams.
She gazes on her blond beloved
and whispers: "Forget me not!"

Unfall

Hugo Wolf (1860-1903) - text: Josef Karl Benedikt von Eichendorff (1788-1857)

Ich ging bei Nacht einst über Land,
ein Bürschlein traf ich draußen,
das hat 'nen Stutzen in der Hand
und zielt auf mich voll Grausen.
Ich renne, da ich mich erbos',
auf ihn in vollem Rasen,
da drückt das kecke Bürschlein los
und ich stürzt' auf die Nasen.
Er aber lacht mir ins Gesicht,
daß er mich angeschossen,
Cupido war der kleine Wicht
das hat mich sehr verdrossen.

Once I was walking in the country at night
and met a young lad out there:
he had a rifle in his hand
and aimed it at me, full of menace.
I ran at him - I was so angry
- in full rage,
but the cheeky lad pulled the trigger
and I fell on my nose.
He, however, laughed in my face
for having shot me;
Cupid was this little creature
- and all this has really put me in a bad mood.

Neue Liebe

Felix Mendelssohn-Bartholdy (1809-1847) - text: Heinrich Heine (1797-1856)

In dem Mondenschein im Walde,
Sah ich jüngst die Elfen reiten;
Ihre Hörner hört ich klingen,
Ihre Glöckchen hört ich läuten.

In the moonlit forest
I recently saw elves riding,
I heard their horns sound
I heard their bells ring.

Ihre weißen Rößlein trugen
Goldnes Hirschgeweih und flogen
Rasch dahin, wie wilde Schwäne
Kam es durch die Luft gezogen.

Their white horses, with
golden antlers, flew on
swiftly; like white swans
they rushed through the air.

Lächelnd nickte mir die Königin,
Lächelnd, im Vorüberreiten.
Galt das meiner neuen Liebe,
Oder soll es Tod bedeuten?

The queen nodded at me, smiling,
smiling, riding away;
Was it because of my new love?
Or does it mean death?

Der Doppelgänger

Franz Peter Schubert (1797-1828) - text: Heinrich Heine (1797-1856)

Still ist die Nacht, es ruhen die Gassen,
In diesem Hause wohnte mein Schatz;
Sie hat schon längst die Stadt verlassen,
Doch steht noch das Haus auf demselben Platz.

The night is calm, the streets are quiet,
My dear one lived in this house;
She has already left the city long ago,
But house stands there still, in the same place.

Da steht auch ein Mensch und starrt in die Höhe
Und ringt die Hände vor Schmerzensgewalt;
Mir graust es, wenn ich sein Antlitz sehe -
Der Mond zeigt mir meine eigne Gestalt.

A man is standing there, too, staring up into space,
And powerfully wringing his hands in torment.
It horrifies me, when I see his visage,
The moon shows me my own face.

Du Doppelgänger, du bleicher Geselle!
Was äffst du nach mein Liebesleid,
Das mich gequält auf dieser Stelle
So manche Nacht, in alter Zeit?

You doppelgänger, you pale fellow!
Why do you ape the pain of my love
Which tortured me here in this spot
So many a night, in times long past?

Memnon

Franz Peter Schubert (1797-1828) - text: Johann Baptist Mayrhofer (1787-1836)

Den Tag hindurch nur einmal mag ich sprechen,
Gewohnt zu schweigen immer und zu trauern:
Wenn durch die nachtgeboren Nebelmauern
Aurens Purpurstrahlen liebend brechen.

The whole day long I may only speak once,
accustomed to being constantly silent and mourning:
when, through the night-begotten walls of mist
Aurora's purple beams lovingly break.

Für Menschenohren sind es Harmonien.
Weil ich die Klage selbst melodisch künde
Und durch der Dichtung Glut das Rauhe ründe,
Vermuten sie in mir ein selig Blühen.

To human ears this is harmony.
Because I proclaim my lament so melodically
and make its roughness smooth through the glow of poetry,
they suppose in me to be a blissful flowering.

In mir, nach dem des Todes Arme langen,
In dessen tiefstem Herzen Schlangen wühlen;
Genährt von meinen schmerzlichen Gefühlen
Fast wütend durch ein ungestillt Verlangen:

But in me, for whom Death's arms reach,
and in the depths of whose heart burrow serpents,
nourished by my painful thoughts,
I am almost frenzied with unappeased longing:

Mit dir, des Morgens Göttin, mich zu einen,
Und weit von diesem nichtigen Getriebe,
Aus Sphären edler Freiheit, aus Sphären reiner Liebe,
Ein stiller, bleicher Stern herab zu scheinen.

to unite myself with you, O Goddess of the Morning,
and, far from this futile bustle,
from spheres of noble freedom and pure love,
to shine down as a silent, pale star.

Was weinst du, Blümlein, im Morgenschein
Clara Schumann - text: Hermann Rollett (1819-1904)

Was weinst du, Blümlein, im Morgenschein?
Das Blümlein lachte: Was fällt dir ein!
Ich bin ja fröhlich, ich weine nicht -
die Freudenträne durch's Aug' mir bricht.

Du Morgenhimmel, bist blutig rot,
als läge deine Sonne im Meere tot?
Da lacht der Himmel und ruft mich an:
Ich streue ja Rosen auf ihre Bahn!

Und strahlend flammte die Sonn' hervor,
die Blumen blühten freudig empor.
Des Baches Wellen jauchzten auf,
und die Sonne lachte freundlich darauf.

Why weep, dear blossom, in morning sun?
The blossom giggled: "Now what a thought!
I am but joyful, I do not weep -
and joyful tears in my eyes well up."

You morning heavens, are red as blood,
as if your sun in ocean were lying dead.
The laughing heavens called out to me:
"I sprinkle but roses upon its path!"

With radiant flaming the sun shone forth,
the flowers blossomed cheerfully up.
The brooklet gurgles joyfully on,
and upon all the sun laughed its warm-hearted laugh.

Lève-toi!
Georges Bizet (1838-1875) - text: Louis Bouilhet (1822-1869)

Lève-toi! lève-toi! le printemps vient de naître!
Là-bas, sur les vallons, flotte un réseau vermeil!
Tout frissonne au jardin, tout chante et ta fenêtre,
Comme un regard joyeux, est pleine de soleil!

Du côté des lilas aux touffes violettes,
Mouches et papillons bruissent à la fois
Et le muguet sauvage, ébranlant ses clochettes,
A réveillé l'amour endormi dans les bois!

Puisqu'Avril a semé ses marguerites blanches,
Laisse ta mante lourde et ton manchon frileux,
Déjà l'oiseau t'appelle et tes soeurs les pervenches
Te souriront dans l'herbe en voyant tes yeux bleus!

Viens, partons! au matin, la source est plus limpide;
Lève-toi! viens, partons! N'attendons pas du jour les brûlantes
chaleurs;
Je veux mouiller mes pieds dans la rosée humide,
Et te parler d'amour sous les poiriers en fleurs.

Get up! Get up! Spring has just been born!
Over those valleys a rosy mist is floating!
Everything in the garden trembles and sings; your window
is full of sunshine, like a joyful gaze.

Around the bunches of purple-flowering lilac
butterflies and bees flutter and hum together,
and the little shaking bells of lily-of-the-valley
have woken up Love who was sleeping in the woods.

Now that April has scattered its white daisies,
go without your heavy cloak and cold-weather muff!
The birds are already calling you, and the periwinkles (your
sisters)
will smile in the grass when they see your blue eyes.

Let's get going! The stream is clearer in early morning.
Get up! Let's not wait for the day's burning heat.
I want to wet my feet in the moist dew
and talk to you of love under the blossoming pear-trees.

Green
Claude Achille Debussy (1862-1918) - text: Paul Verlaine (1844-1896)

Voici des fruits, des fleurs, des feuilles et des branches
Et puis voici mon coeur 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.

Here are fruits, flowers, leaves and branches,
And then here is my heart, which beats only for you.
Do not tear it up with your two white hands,
And may the humble present be sweet in your beautiful eyes!

I arrive all covered in dew,
Which the wind of morning comes to freeze on my forehead.
Let my fatigue, finding rest at your feet,
Dream of those dear moment that soothe it.

On your young breast allow my head to rest,
Still ringing with your last kisses;
Let it calm itself after the lovely tempest,
And let me sleep a little, since you are resting.

Le colibri

Ernest Amédée Chausson (1855-1899) - text: Charles-Marie-René Leconte de Lisle (1818-1894)

Le vert colibri, le roi des collines,
 Voyant la rosée et le soleil clair,
 Luire dans son nid tissé d'herbes fines,
 Comme un frais rayon s'échappe dans l'air.

The green hummingbird, the king of the hills,
 Seeing the dew and the clear sunlight,
 Shines upon nest of woven grass,
 Just as a fresh beam of light sparkles in the air.

Il se hâte et vole aux sources voisines,
 Où les bambous font le bruit de la mer,
 Où l'açoka rouge aux odeurs divines
 S'ouvre et porte au coeur un humide éclair.

Hurriedly he flies to the springs
 where the bamboo makes the sounds of the sea,
 and the red hibiscus with its heavenly scent
 opens and carries a humid frisson to your heart.

Vers la fleur dorée, il descend, se pose,
 Et boit tant d'amour dans la coupe rose,
 Qu'il meurt, ne sachant s'il l'a pu tarir!

Down to the golden flower he flies, and settles,
 and from the rosy cup drinks so much love
 that he dies, not knowing if he could drink it dry.

Sur ta lèvre pure, ô ma bien-aimée,
 Telle aussi mon âme eut voulu mourir,
 Du premier baiser qui l'a parfumée.

On your pure lips, oh my darling,
 my soul would have wished to die just like this
 from the first kiss which perfumed them.

An einem lichten Morgen

Clara Schumann - text: Hermann Rollett (1819-1904)

An einem lichten Morgen,
 da klingt es hell im Tal:
 wach' auf, du liebe Blume,
 ich bin der Sonnenstrahl!

On morning bright and shining,
 there rings clear through the vale,
 "Wake up, beloved flower,
 I am the ray of sun!

Erschließe mit Vertrauen
 dein Blütenkämmerlein
 und laß die heiße Liebe
 in's Heiligtum hinein.

"Now open confidently
 your little blossom-chamber
 and let burning love
 into your holy shrine.

Ich will ja nichts verlangen
 als liegen dir im Schoß
 und deine Blüte küssen,
 eh' sie verwelkt im Moos.

"I nothing more require
 than to lie in your lap
 and to kiss your blossoms
 before they wilt in the moss.

Ich will ja nichts begehren
 als ruh'n an deiner Brust
 und dich dafür verklären
 mit sonnenheller Lust.

"I nothing more desire
 than to sleep up on your breast
 and thus I will transform you
 with sunshine's shining joy."

The mermaid's song

Joseph Haydn (1732-1809) - text: Anne Hunter (1742-1821)

Now the dancing sunbeams play
 On the green and glassy sea,
 Come, and I will lead the way
 Where the pearly treasures be.
 Come with me, and we will go
 Where the rocks of coral grow.
 Follow, follow, follow me.

Come, behold what treasures lie
 Far below the rolling waves,
 Riches, hid from human eye,
 Dimly shine in Ocean's caves.
 Ebbing tides bear no delay,
 Stormy winds are far away.
 Come with me...

11am

A vision of beauty illumined by the sun

Silent Worship

Georg Friedrich Händel (1685-1759) and Sir Arthur Somervell (1863-1937)
(this is Somervell's arrangement of Handel's Non lo diro col Labbro)

Did you not hear My Lady
Go down the garden singing?
Blackbird and thrush were silent
To hear the alleys ringing.

Oh saw you not My Lady
Out in the garden there?
Shaming the rose and lily
For she is twice as fair.

Though I am nothing to her,
Though she must rarely look at me,
And though I could never woo her,
I love her till I die.

Surely you heard My Lady
Go down the garden singing,
Silencing all the songbirds:
And setting the alleys ringing.

But surely you see My Lady
Out in the garden there.
Rivaling the glittering sunshine,
With a glory of golden hair.

12pm
(Solar noon 12:57pm)

The sun and time seem to stand still

Silent Noon

Ralph Vaughan Williams (1872-1958) - text: Dante Gabriel Rossetti (1828-1882)

Your hands lie open in the long fresh grass, -
The finger-points look through like rosy blooms:
Your eyes smile peace. The pasture gleams and glooms
'Neath billowing skies that scatter and amass.

All round our nest, far as the eye can pass,
Are golden kingcup fields with silver edge
Where the cow-parsley skirts the hawthorn hedge.
'Tis visible silence, still as the hour glass.

Deep in the sunsearch'd growths the dragon-fly
Hangs like a blue thread loosened from the sky: -
So this wing'd hour is dropt to us from above.
Oh! clasp we to our hearts, for deathless dower,
This close-companioned inarticulate hour,
When twofold silence was the song of love.

1pm

The working day, meanwhile, is well underway

Miller of Dee

Benjamin Britten (1913-1976) - text: Traditional

There was a jolly miller once lived on the river Dee;
He worked and sung from morn till night, no lark more blithe than he.
And this the burden of his song for ever used to be:
"I care for nobody, no, not I, since nobody cares for me.

"I love my mill, she is to me like parent, child and wife,
I would not change my station for any other in life.
Then push, push, push the bowl, my boys, and pass it round to me,
The longer we sit here and drink, the merrier we shall be."

So sang the jolly miller, who lived on the river Dee;
He worked and sung from morn till night, no lark more blithe
than he.
And this the burden of his song for ever used to be:
"I care for nobody, no not I, since nobody cares for me."

2pm

But some jobs are more rewarding than others...!

Bird Scarer's Song

Benjamin Britten (1913-1976) - text: Traditional

Shoo all 'er birds you be so black,
When I lay down to have a nap.
Shoo arlo arlo arlo arlo arlo arlo arlo arlo birds.
Hi shoo all 'er birds!

Out of master's ground into Tom Tucker's ground,
Out of Tom Tucker's ground into Luke Coles's ground
Out of Luke Coles's ground into Bill Veater's ground.
Shoo arlo arlo arlo arlo arlo arlo arlo arlo birds.
Ha! Ha!

The end - 3pm - back where we began today!...