Lovers and Other Monsters: Songs Celebrating the Legacy of Charles Baudelaire

Liederabend LXVII

Coached by J.J. Penna

Wednesday, October 18, 2023
6:00 p.m.
Williams Hall

PROGRAM

Claude Debussy
(1862–1918)

Le balcon

Ruoxi Peng, soprano
Pualina Lim, piano

Amy Beth Kirsten
(b. 1972)

let me go on from *Ophelia Forever*

Ruoxi Peng, Megan Hull, soprano
Olivia Sheehy, mezzo-soprano
Tristen Leung, piano

Gabriel Fauré
(1845–1924)

Hymne

Megan Hull, soprano
Doris Wang, piano

Edie Hill
(b. 1962)

Vernal Equinox
The Giver of Stars

Olivia Sheehy, mezzo-soprano
Tristan Leung, piano

Osvaldo Golijov
(b. 1960)

Lúa descolorida

Megan Hull, soprano
Doris Wang, piano

Claude Debussy — *Recueillement*

Olivia Sheehy, mezzo-soprano
Tristan Leung, piano

Henri Duparc
(1848–1933) — *La vie antérieure*

Shiyu Zhuo, soprano
Rafe Schaberg, piano

Sebastian Currier
(b. 1959) — *The Nymphs Are Departed*

Megan Hull, soprano
Doris Wang, piano

Aaron Jay Kernis
(b. 1960) — *The Blue Animals*

Hyungjin Son, baritone
SuJin Choi, piano

Benjamin Boyle
(b. 1979) — *Le mort des amants*

Ruoxi Peng, soprano
Pualina Lim, piano

H. T. Burleigh
(1866–1949) — *Among the Fuchsias*

Ruoxi Peng, soprano
Pualina Lim, piano

Henri Duparc — *L'invitation au voyage*

Hyungjin Son, baritone
SuJin Choi, piano

Le balcon	**The balcony**
Mère des souvenirs, maîtresse des maîtresses,	Mother of memories, mistress of mistresses,
Ô toi, tous mes plaisirs! ô toi, tous mes devoirs!	O you, all my pleasures, O you, all my duties!
Tu te rappelleras la beauté des caresses,	You will recall the beauty of caresses,
La douceur du foyer et le charme des soirs,	The hearth's sweetness and the evenings' charm,
Mère des souvenirs, maîtresse des maîtresses.	Mother of memories, mistress of mistresses!
Les soirs illuminés par l'ardeur du charbon,	Evenings lit with the glow of coals,
Et les soirs au balcon, voilés de vapeur rose.	And evenings on the balcony, veiled in pink vapours.
Que ton sein m'était doux! que ton cœur m'était bon!	How soft your breast was, how warm your heart!
Nous avons dit souvent d'impérissables choses	We have often said imperishable things,
Les soirs illuminés par l'ardeur du charbon.	On evenings lit with the glow of coals.
Que les soleils sont beaux par les chaudes soirées!	How beautiful the suns on warm evenings!
Que l'espace est profond! que le cœur est puissant!	How space is deep, how strong the heart!
En me penchant vers toi, reine des adorées,	Leaning toward you, queen of my loves,
Je croyais respirer le parfum de ton sang.	I seemed to breathe the scent of your blood.
Que les soleils sont beaux par les chaudes soirées!	How beautiful the suns on warm evenings!
La nuit s'épaississait ainsi qu'une cloison,	Night thickened like a wall,
Et mes yeux dans le noir devinaient tes prunelles,	And my eyes in the dark divined your own,
Et je buvais ton souffle. Ô douceur! ô poison!	And I drank in your breath, O sweetness, O poison!
Et tes pieds s'endormaient dans mes mains fraternelles,	And your feet were cradled in my fraternal hands.
La nuit s'épaississait ainsi qu'une cloison.	Night thickened like a wall.
Je sais l'art d'évoquer les minutes heureuses,	I am skilled in the art of recalling rapture,
Et revis mon passé blotti dans tes genoux.	And relive my past, my head in your lap.
Car à quoi bon chercher tes beautés langoureuses	For where else should I seek your languid beauty
Ailleurs qu'en ton cher corps et qu'en ton cœur si doux?	But in your dear body and most loving heart?
Je sais l'art d'évoquer les minutes heureuses!	I am skilled in the art of recalling rapture!
Ces serments, ces parfums, ces baisers infinis,	These vows, these scents, these infinite kisses,
Renaîtront-ils d'un gouffre interdit à nos sondes	Will they rise from a pit we are forbidden to fathom,
Comme montent au ciel les soleils rajeunis	As the reborn suns ascend the sky,
Après s'être lavés au fond des mers profondes	Having washed themselves in the depths of the sea?
O serments! ô parfums! ô baisers infinis!	O vows! O scents! O infinite kisses!

Charles Baudelaire (1821–1867)

Translation © Richard Stokes, author of A French

Song Companion *(Oxford University Press), provided via Oxford International Song Festival (www.oxfordsong.org)*

let me go on

Her clothes spread wide
and mermaidlike awhile
they
…laid her beckoning body
out for love; far below the
waves of passion broke;
from high above she
watched them break
impetuous and slow.
Let me go on biting at your
heavy black tresses,
When I chew at your elastic
rebellious hairs

I seem to be eating
memories

Shakespeare Hamlet / *Baudelaire* A Hemisphere in Your Hair

Hymne

À la très chère, à la très belle
Qui remplit mon coeur de clarté,
À l'ange, À l'idole immortelle,
Salut en l'immortalité!

Elle se répand dans ma vie
Comme un air imprégné de sel,
Et dans mon âme inassouvie
Verse le goût de l'éternel.

Comment, amour incorruptible,
T'exprimer avec vérité?
Grain de musc qui gis, invisible,
Au fond de mon éternité!

À la très bonne, à la très belle
Qui fait ma joie et ma santé,
À l'ange, à l'idole immortelle,
Salut en l'immortalité!

Charles Baudelaire

Hymn

To the very dear, to the very beautiful
who fills my heart with clarity,
to the angel, the immortal idol,
Greetings in eternity!

She spreads in my life
like air saturated with salt,
and in my unfulfilled soul
pours the taste of the eternal.

How, incorruptible love,
May I express you with truth?
Grain of musk which lies, invisible,
In the depths of my eternity!

To the very dear, to the very beautiful
who fills my heart with clarity,
to the angel, the immortal idol,
Greetings in eternity!

Translation by Megan Hull

Vernal Equinox

The scent of hyacinths, like a pale mist, lies
between me and my book;
And the South Wind, washing through the room, Makes the candles quiver.
My nerves sting at a spatter of rain on the shutter, And I am uneasy with the thrusting of green shoots
Outside, in the night.
Why are you not here to overpower me with your tense and urgent love?

The Giver of Stars

Hold your soul open for my welcoming.
Let the quiet of your spirit bathe me
With its clear and rippled coolness,
That, loose-limbed and weary, I find rest, Outstretched upon your peace, as on a bed of ivory.
Let the flickering flame of your soul play all about me, That into my limbs may come the keenness of fire,
The life and joy of tongues of flame,
And, going out from you, tightly strung and in tune,
I may rouse the blear-eyed world,
And pour into it the beauty which you have begotten.

Amy Lowell

Lúa descolorida

Ay
Lúa descolorida
como de ouro pálido,
vesme i eu non qui xera
me vises de tan alto.
Ó espaso que recorres, lévame, caladiña,
nun teu ralo

Astro das almas orfas
lúa descolorida,
eu bensei quen'alumas
tristeza cal a miña.
Vai contalo ó teu dono,
e dille que me leve adonde habita.

Mais non lle contesnada,
descolorida lúa,
poisnin neste nin noutros
mundos teréis fertuna.
Se sabe onde a morte
ten a morada escura,

Faded Moon

Ah!
Moon faded
like pale gold
You see me, and I wouldn't like
to be seen from so high.
In your ray, lift me quietly
to your side.

Star of orphaned souls,
Faded moon;
I know you don't illuminate
such sadness which is mine.
Go tell your master,
to take me to where he lies

But tell him nothing
Faded moon
For neither in this or
other worlds will my fate improve
If you know where death
has its dark home,

dille que corpo e alma xuntamente me leve
adonde non recorden nunca,
nin no mundo en que est óu nin en las alturas.

Rosalia de Castro

tell it to lift me body and soul together
to where I'll never be remembered
neither in this world, nor in the heights.

Translation by Megan Hull

Recueillement

Sois sage, ô ma Douleur, et tiens-toi plus tranquille.
Tu réclamais le Soir; il descend; le voici:

Une atmosphère obscure enveloppe la ville,
Aux uns portant la paix, aux autres le souci.

Pendant que des mortels la multitude vile,
Sous le fouet du Plaisir, ce bourreau sans merci,

Va cueillir des remords dans la fête servile,
Ma Douleur, donne-moi la main; viens par ici,

Loin d'eux. Vois se pencher les défuntes Années,

Sur les balcons du ciel, en robes surannées;

Surgir du fond des eaux le Regret souriant;

Le soleil moribond s'endormir sous une arche,
Et, comme un long linceul traînant à l'Orient,
Entends, ma chère, entends la douce Nuit qui marche.

Charles Baudelaire

Contemplation

Be wise, oh my sorrow, and hold yourself more calm
You demanded the night, it descends, it is here:
An obscure atmosphere envelopes the city,
To some bringing peace, to others worry.

While the vile multitude of mortals
Under the whip of pleasure, this merciless tormentor
Go to gather remorse in this servile party,
My sorrow, give me your hand, come this way,

Far from them. See the departed years leaning,
On the heavenly balconies, in outdated clothes;
Looming from the depths of the water, Regret smiles;

The dying sun falls asleep under an arch,
And, like a long shroud trailing to the East,
Hear, my darling, hear the night softly tread.

Translation by Olivia Sheehy

La vie antérieure

J'ai longtemps habité sous de vastes portiques
Que les soleils marins teignaient de mille feux,
Et que leurs grands piliers, droits et majestueux,
Rendaient pareils, le soir, aux grottes basaltiques.

A previous life

For long I lived beneath vast colonnades
Tinged with a thousand fires by ocean suns,
Whose giant pillars, straight and majestic,
Made them look, at evening, like basalt caves.

(The text continues on the following page. Please turn the page quietly.)

Les houles, en roulant les images des cieux,
Mêlaient d'une façon solennelle et mystique
Les tout-puissants accords de leur riche musique
Aux couleurs du couchant reflété par mes yeux.

The sea-swells, mingling the mirrored skies,
Solemnly and mystically interwove
The mighty chords of their mellow music
With the colours of sunset reflected in my eyes.

C'est là que j'ai vécu dans les voluptés calmes

Au milieu de l'azur, des vagues, des splendeurs,

Et des esclaves nus, tout imprégnés d'odeurs,

It is there that I have lived in sensuous repose,
With blue sky about me and brightness and waves
And naked servants all drenched in perfume.

Qui me rafraîchissaient le front avec des palmes,
Et dont l'unique soin était d'approfondir
Le secret douloureux qui me faisait languir.

Who fanned my brow with fronds of palm,
And whose only care was to fathom
The secret grief which made me languish.

Charles Baudelaire

Translation © Richard Stokes, author of A French Song Companion *(Oxford University Press), provided via Oxford International Song Festival (www.oxfordsong.org).*

The Nymphs Are Departed

The river's tent is broken: the last fingers of leaf
Clutch and sink into the wet bank. The wind
Crosses the brown land, unheard. The nymphs are departed.
Sweet Thames, run softly, till I end my song.
The river bears no empty bottles, sandwich papers,
Silk handkerchiefs, cardboard boxes, cigarette ends
Or other testimony of summer nights. The nymphs are departed.
And their friends, the loitering heirs of City directors;
Departed, have left no addresses.
By the waters of Leman I sat down and wept . . .
Sweet Thames, run softly till I end my song,
Sweet Thames, run softly, for I speak not loud or long.

T.S. Eliot, The Waste Land

The Blue Animals

When I awoke this morning
they were there, just as blue
as the morning, as calm
as the long green lawn

they grazed upon, turning
their delicate heads. You

would have said: No harm
shall befall us. But you were gone.

So these two opened my morning
gracefully wide and blue
as the morning sky. Their calm
mouths moved over the lawn,

and as I was turning
to call out again for you,
I saw that there was no harm
at all, though you were gone.

Jon Anderson

La mort des amants

Nous aurons des lits pleins d'odeurs légères,
Des divans profonds comme des tombeaux,
Et d'étranges fleurs sur des étagères,
Écloses pour nous sous des cieux plus beaux.

Usant à l'envi leurs chaleurs dernières,
Nos deux coeurs seront deux vastes flambeaux,
Qui réfléchiront leurs doubles lumières
Dans nos deux esprits, ces miroirs jumeaux.

Un soir fait de rose et de bleu mystique,
Nous échangerons un éclair unique,
Comme un long sanglot tout chargé d'adieux ;

Et plus tard un Ange, entr'ouvrant les portes,
Viendra ranimer, fidèle et joyeux,
Les miroirs ternis et les flammes mortes.

Charles Baudelaire

The death of lovers

We shall have beds drenched in light scents,
Divans as deep as tombs,
And displays of exotic flowers
That bloomed for us beneath fairer skies.

Outdoing even their most recent passions
Our two hearts will be two mighty torches,
Reflecting their twin lights
In our two twin-mirrored souls.

On an evening of pink and mystic blue,
We shall exchange a single radiant glance,
Like a long sob laden with farewells;

And later an Angel, pushing the portals ajar,
Will come, faithful and joyous, to revive
The tarnished mirrors and lifeless flames.

Translation © Richard Stokes, author of A French Song *Companion (Oxford University Press), provided via Oxford International Song Festival (www.oxfordsong.org).*

Among the Fuchsias

Call me not to a secret place
When daylight dies away,
Tempt me not with thine eager face
And words thou shouldst not say.
Entice me not with a child of thine,
Ah, God, if such might be,
For surely a man is half divine
Who adds another link to the line
Whose last link none may see.
Call me not to the Lotus lake
That drooping fuchsias hide,
What if my latent youth awakes
And will not be denied?
Ah, tempt me not for I am not strong
(Thy mouth is a budded kiss)
My days are empty, my nights are long.
Ah, why is a thing so sweet so wrong,
As thy temptation is?

Laurence Hope

L'invitation au voyage

Mon enfant, ma soeur,
Songe à la douceur
D'aller là-bas vivre ensemble!
Aimer à loisir,
Aimer et mourir
Au pays qui te ressemble!
Les soleils mouillés
De ces ciels brouillés
Pour mon esprit ont les charmes
Si mystérieux
De tes traîtres yeux,
Brillant à travers leurs larmes.

Là, tout n'est qu'ordre et beauté,
Luxe, calme et volupté.

Vois sur ces canaux
Dormir ces vaisseaux
Dont l'humeur est vagabonde;
C'est pour assouvir
Ton moindre désir
Qu'ils viennent du bout du monde.

Invitation to journey

My child, my sister,
Think how sweet
To journey there and live together!
To love as we please,
To love and die
In the land that is like you!
The watery suns
Of those hazy skies
Hold for my spirit
The same mysterious charms
As your treacherous eyes
Shining through their tears.

There - nothing but order and beauty dwell,
Abundance, calm, and sensuous delight.

See on those canals
Those vessels sleeping,
Vessels with a restless soul;
To satisfy
Your slightest desire
They come from the ends of the earth.

— Les soleils couchants
Revêtent les champs,
Les canaux, la ville entière,
D'hyacinthe et d'or;
Le monde s'endort
Dans une chaude lumière.

Là, tout n'est qu'ordre et beauté,
Luxe, calme et volupté.

Charles Baudelaire

The setting suns
Clothe the fields,
Canals and all the town
With hyacinth and gold;
The world falls asleep
In a warm light.

There - nothing but order and beauty dwell,
Abundance, calm, and sensuous delight.

Translation © Richard Stokes, author of A French Song *Companion (Oxford University Press), provided via Oxford International Song Festival (www.oxfordsong.org).*

Upcoming Sonata Night and Liederabend concerts

Sonata Night 47
All Brahms, in collaboration with Mai Motobuchi's viola studio
Thursday, October 26, 2023 at 6:30 p.m., Burnes Hall

Liederabend LXVIII
Wednesday, November 1, 2023 at 6:00 p.m., Williams Hall

Sonata Night 48
All Schumann, in collaboration with Ayano Ninomiya's violin studio
Thursday, November 9, 2023 at 6:00 p.m., Burnes Hall

Liederabend LXIX
Wednesday, December 6, 2023 at 6:00 p.m., Williams Hall

Support the future of music at NEC!
Your gift to The NEC Fund has a direct and immediate impact on student scholarships, NEC's world-class faculty, and a collaborative and innovative learning environment rooted in the highest level of musical excellence.
Please consider making a gift to support NEC at necmusic.edu/give.

Food and drink are not allowed in the concert hall,
and photography and audio or video recording are prohibited.
Assistive listening devices are available for all Jordan Hall concerts;
contact the head usher or house manager on duty or inquire at the Coat Room.
Latecomers will be seated at the discretion of management.

Stay connected

NEC
New England Conservatory

necmusic.edu/tonight