

Liederabend LXXVII

Paris Visions:
Guillaume Apollinaire & Ned Rorem

Curated and coached by JJ Penna

Wednesday, October 22, 2025

6:00 p.m.

Williams Hall

PROGRAM

CITIZEN – FLANEUR

*Songs in French are by Francis Poulenc (1899–1963) with texts by Guillaume Apollinaire;
songs in English are by Ned Rorem (1923–2022)*

Early in the morning

Hôtel

I am Rose

Montparnasse

Clouds

Fagnes de Wallonie

The Lordly Hudson

Isabel Merat, soprano

Ashly Zhang, piano

Avant le cinéma

Carte postale

La souris

Graham Lin, baritone

Hyojeong Ham, piano

LOVER – VALENTINE

Trois Poèmes de Louise Lalanne

Le présent

Chanson

Hier

Little Elegy

O You Whom I Often and Silently Come

See How They Love Me

Pippa's Song

Dani Jingdan Zhang, soprano

Yoshino Toi, piano

PRISONER – DREAMER

from *Calligrammes*,

Poèmes de la paix et de la guerre

L'Espionne

Vers le Sud

Voyage

Nico Ottersberg Enriquez, baritone

Rafe Lei Schaberg, piano

For Poulenc

Look Down, Fair Moon

What If Some Little Pain

The Silver Swan

Rena Maduro, soprano

Riley Barker, piano

This concert explores Paris's influence on the creative lives of two of the twentieth century's most dynamic artists. Although born a generation apart, composer Ned Rorem and poet Guillaume Apollinaire's works reverberate with city life as they experienced it. A writer of relentless creativity and originality, Apollinaire allowed the city's harshest and most seductive energies to be at play in poems that resonate with new freedoms and new systems of framing personal experience.

Our program features twelve of Apollinaire's most celebrated texts set to the music of Francis Poulenc, alongside the Paris songs of Ned Rorem. Composed while living in the 16th arrondissement in the late 1950s, Rorem's vocal works speak to an artist's coming of age against the backdrop of post-World War II Europe. For both composer and poet, Paris was a source of enchantment, a muse and inspiration point where love and devastation, memory and reverie, played out in an urban setting like no other.

– JJ Penna

Early in the morning

Early in the morning
Of a lovely summer day
As they lowered the bright awning
At the outdoor café
I was breakfasting on croissants
And café au lait
Under greenery like scenery
Rue François Premier

They were hosing the hot pavement
With a dash of flashing spray
And a smell of summer showers
When the dust is drenched away
Under greenery like scenery
Rue François Premier

I was twenty and a lover
And in Paradise to stay
Very early in the morning
Of a lovely summer day

Robert Hillyer

Hôtel

*Ma chambre a la forme d'une cage
Le soleil passe son bras par la fenêtre
Mais moi qui veux fumer pour faire des mirages
J'allume au feu du jour ma cigarette*

Hotel

My room is shaped like a cage
The sun slips its arm through the window
But I who want to smoke to make mirages
I light my cigarette on daylight's fire

Je ne veux pas travailler je veux fumer.

Guillaume Apollinaire

I am Rose

I am Rose, my eyes are blue.
I am Rose, who are you?
I am Rose and when I sing
I am Rose like anything.

Gertrude Stein

Montparnasse

*Ô porte de l'hôtel avec deux plantes vertes
Vertes qui jamais
Ne porteront de fleurs
Où sont mes fruits? Où me planté-je?*

*Ô porte de l'hôtel un ange est devant toi
Distribuant des prospectus
On n'a jamais si bien défendu la vertu
Donnez-moi pour toujours une chambre à la
semaine*

*Ange barbu vous êtes en réalité
Un poète lyrique d'Allemagne
Qui voulez connaître Paris
Vous connaissez de son pavé
Ces raies sur lesquelles il ne faut pas que l'on
marche*

*Et vous rêvez
D'aller passer votre Dimanche à Garches*

*Il fait un peu lourd et vos cheveux sont longs
Ô bon petit poète un peu bête et trop blond
Vos yeux ressemblent tant à ces deux grands
ballons*

*Qui s'en vont dans l'air pur
À l'aventure*

Guillaume Apollinaire

I do not want to work I want to smoke.

Translation © Richard Stokes

Montparnasse

O hotel door with two green plants
Greenery which never
Shall bear any flowers
Where are my fruits? Where did I plant
myself?

O hotel door an angel stands before you
Distributing leaflets
Virtue has never been so well defended
Give me forever a room by the week

Bearded angel you are in reality
A lyric poet from Germany
Who wants to get to know Paris
You know its pavements'
Cracks where you must not step

And you dream
Of spending your Sunday at Garches

It is somewhat sultry and your hair is long
O good little poet rather stupid and too blond
Your eyes so resemble those two big balloons

Which float away in the pure air
Randomly

Translation © Richard Stokes

Clouds

So effortlessly
we are not given to move on earth
as these in heaven clouds,
nor without desire
to tend whither the airs conspire.
The clouds exaggerate and pile
into heights of mile on mile.
In the breathing o' the universe
they drift asunder and disperse.

Paul Goodman

Fagnes de Wallonie

*Tant de tristesses plénières
Priront mon coeur aux fagnes désolées*

*Quand las j'ai reposé dans les sapinières
Le poids des kilomètres pendant que râlait
Le vent d'ouest
J'avais quitté le joli bois
Les écureuils y sont restés
Ma pipe essayait de faire des nuages
Au ciel
Qui restait pur obstinément*

*Je n'ai confié aucun secret sinon une chanson
énigmatique
Aux tourbières humides*

*Les bruyères fleurant le miel
Attiraient les abeilles
Et mes pieds endoloris
Foulaient les myrtilles et les airelles
Tendrement mariée
Nord
Nord
La vie s'y tord
En arbres forts
Et tors
La vie y mord
La mort*

Walloon moss-hags

So much utter sadness
Seized my heart in the desolate upland moss-
hags
When weary I set down in the fir plantation
The weight of kilometres to the roar
Of the west wind
I had left the pretty wood
The squirrels stayed there
My pipe tried to make clouds
In the sky
Which stubbornly stayed clear

I confided no secret but an enigmatic song

To the dank peat-bogs

The honey-fragrant heather
Attracted the bees
And my sore feet
Crushed bilberries and whortleberries
Tenderly united
North
North
Life is gnarled there
In strong trees
And twisted
Life there bites
Death

*À belles dents
Quand bruit le vent*

Guillaume Apollinaire

Voraciously
When the wind howls

*Translations © Richard Stokes, from A French
Song Companion (Oxford 2000), provided via
Oxford International Song Festival
(www.oxfordsong.org)*

The Lordly Hudson

"Driver, what stream is it?"
I asked, well knowing
it was our lordly Hudson
hardly flowing.

"It is our lordly Hudson
hardly flowing," he said,
"under the green-grown cliffs."

Be still, heart!
No one needs
your passionate suffrage
to select this glory—
this is our lordly Hudson
hardly flowing
under the green-grown cliffs.

"Driver has this a peer
in Europe or the East?"

"No, no!" He said.
Home! Home!
Be quiet, heart!
This is our lordly Hudson
and has no peer
in Europe or the East;
this is our lordly Hudson
hardly flowing
under the green-grown cliffs
and has no peer
in Europe or the East;
be quiet, heart!
Home! Home!

Paul Goodman

Avant le cinéma

*Et puis ce soir on s'en ira
Au cinéma*

*Les Artistes que sont-ce donc
Ce ne sont plus ceux qui cultivent les Beaux-Arts*

*Ce ne sont pas ceux qui s'occupent de l'Art
Art poétique ou bien musique
Les Artistes ce sont les acteurs et les actrices
Si nous étions des Artistes
Nous ne dirions pas le cinéma
Nous dirions le ciné*

*Mais si nous étions de vieux professeurs de
province
Nous ne dirions ni ciné ni cinéma
Mais cinématographe*

Aussi mon Dieu faut-il avoir du gout

Carte postale

*L'ombre de la très douce est évoquée ici,
Indolente, et jouant un air dolent aussi:
Nocturne ou lied mineur qui fait pâmer son âme
Dans l'ombre où ses longs doigts font mourir une
gamme
Au piano qui geint comme une pauvre femme.*

La souris

*Belles journées, souris du temps,
Vous rongez peu à peu ma vie.
Dieu! Je vais avoir vingt-huit ans,
Et mal vécu, à mon envie.*

Guillaume Apollinaire

Before the cinema

And then this evening we will go
To the cinema

The Artists, what kind are they?
They are no longer those who cultivate the
Fine Arts
They are no longer those who deal in art
Poetic art or fine music
The Artists are the actors and actresses
If we were the Artists
We would not say "the cinema"
We would say "le ciné"

But if we were old provincial professors

We would say neither "ciné" nor "cinema"
But cinematography

Well my goodness, we must have good taste!

Postcard

The ghost of the very sweet [one] is evoked
here,
Idle, and playing a doleful air:
A nocturne or Lied in a minor key that makes
her soul swoon
In the shadow, where under her long fingers
a scale is dying away
On the piano, that groans like a poor woman.

The mouse

Lovely days, mouse of time,
You gnaw little by little at my life.
God! I will soon be twenty-eight,
With a troubled mind, filled with desires.

*Translations from French (Français) to English
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<https://www.lieder.net>*

Le présent

*Si tu veux je te donnerai
Mon matin, mon matin gai
Avec tous mes clairs cheveux
Que tu aimes;
Mes yeux verts
Et dorés
Si tu veux.*

*Je te donnerai tout le bruit
Qui se fait
Quand le matin s'éveille
Au soleil
Et l'eau qui coule
Dans la fontaine
Tout auprès;*

Et puis encor le soir qui viendra vite.

*Le soir de mon âme triste
A pleurer
Et mes mains toutes petites
Avec mon cœur qu'il faudra près du tien*

Garder.

Chanson

*Les myrtilles sont pour la dame
Qui n'est pas là;
La marjolaine est pour mon âme
Tra-la-la!*

*Le chèvre-feuille est pour la belle
Irrésolue.
Quand cueillerons-nous les airelles
Lanturlu.*

*Mais laissons pousser sur la tombe,
O folle! O fou!
Le romarin en touffes sombres
Laïtou.*

The present

*If you wish, I shall give you
my morning, my happy morning
with all my fair hair
that you love;
my green
and golden eyes
if you wish.*

*I shall give you all the sound
which rises
as the morning awakens
with the sun
and the water which flows
in the spring
close by;*

*and then again the evening which will come
quickly
the evening of my soul unhappy enough
to weep
and my so tiny hands
with my heart which will have to be kept
close
to yours.*

Song

*The bilberries are for the lady
who is not there
the marjoram is for my soul
tralala!*

*The honeysuckle is for the fair
irresolute one.
When shall we pick the blueberries
lanturlu.*

*But let us leave the rosemary,
o foolish, o wild one,
to grow in dark tufts upon the tomb
laïtou!*

Hier

*Hier, c'est ce chapeau fané
Que j'ai longtemps traîné.
Hier, c'est une pauvre robe
Qui n'est plus à la mode.
Hier, c'était le beau couvent
Si vide maintenant
Et la rose mélancolie
Des cours de jeunes filles.
Hier, c'est mon cœur mal donné.
Une autre, une autre année!
Hier n'est plus ce soir qu'une ombre*

Près de moi dans ma chambre.

Louise Lalanne
(the pseudonym Apollinaire used when asked
to write for a monthly column in the magazine
Les Marges); also attributed to Marie
Laurencin

Little Elegy

Without you
No rose can grow;
No leaf be green
If never seen
Your sweetest face;
No bird have grace
Or power to sing;
Or anything
Be kind, or fair,
And you nowhere.

Elinor Wylie

O You Whom I Often and Silently Come

O you whom I often and silently come
where you are that I may be with you,
As I walk by your side or sit near,
or remain in the same room with you,
Little you know the subtle electric fire
that for your sake is playing within me.

Walt Whitman

Yesterday

Yesterday is this faded hat
that I trailed so long
yesterday is a poor dress
which is no longer in fashion.
Yesterday was the beautiful convent
now so empty
and the pink melancholy
of the young girls' classes
yesterday is my ill-given heart
some other, some past year!
This evening, yesterday is no more than a
shadow
close to me in my room.

*Translations by Christopher Goldsack, © the
Mélodie Treasury*

See How They Love Me

See how they love me,
green leaf, gold grass,
swearing my blue wrists tick and are timeless.
See how it moves me,
old sea, blue sea,
curving a half-moon round to surround me.
See how it loves me,
high sky, blue sky,
letting the light be kindled to warm me.
But you rebuke me, oh Love,
Love that I only pursue.
See how they love me.

Howard Moss

Pippa's Song

The year's at the spring,
And day's at the morn;
Morning's at seven;
The hill-side's dew-pearl'd;
The lark's on the wing;
The snail's on the thorn;
God's in His heaven—
All's right with the world!

Robert Browning

L'Espionne

*Pâle espionne de l'Amour
Ma mémoire à peine fidèle
N'eut pour observer cette belle
Forteresse qu'une heure un jour*

*Tu te déguises
À ta guise
Mémoire espionne du cœur
Tu ne retrouves plus l'exquise
Ruse et le cœur seul est vainqueur*

The Spy

Pale spy of love
my hardly trustworthy memory
had but one hour one day
to observe this beautiful fortress

you disguise yourself
as you will
memory spy of the heart
you can no longer find the exquisite
cunning and the heart alone is victorious

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

*Mais la vois-tu cette mémoire
Les yeux bandés prête à mourir
Elle affirme qu'on peut l'en croire
Mon coeur vaincra sans coup férir*

Vers le Sud

*Zénith
Tous ces regrets
Ces jardins sans limites
Où le crapaud module un tendre cri d'azur*

La biche du silence éperdu passe vite

*Un rossignol meurtri par l'amour chante sur
Le rosier de ton corps dont j'ai cueilli les roses*

Nos coeurs pendent ensemble au même grenadier

Et les fleurs de grenade en nos regards écloses

En tombant tour à tour ont jonché le sentier

Voyage

*Adieu,
Amour nuage qui fuis et n'a pas chu pluie féconde
Refais le voyage de
Dante.*

*Télégraphe
Oiseau qui laisse
tomber ses ailes partout*

Où va donc ce train qui meurt au loin

*Dans les vals et les beaux bois frais
Du tendre été si pale*

*La douce nuit lunaire et pleine d'étoiles
C'est ton visage que je ne vois plus*

Guillaume Apollinaire

but do you see her this memory
with eyes bound ready to die
she affirms that we can believe her
my heart will vanquish without striking a
blow

Southwards

Zenith
all these regrets
these unbounded gardens
in which the toad modulates a tender azure
cry
the doe of the bewildered silence passes
quickly by
a nightingale bruised by love sings upon
the rose bush of your body from which I
have gathered the roses
our hearts hang side by side from the same
pomegranate tree
and opened in our view the pomegranate
flowers
falling one by one have strewn the path

Voyage

Farewell
love cloud which is fleeing
and has not shed fertile rain
repeat Dante's journey

telegraph
bird which lets
its wings fall everywhere

whither then is that train heading which is
dying in the distance
in the valleys and the beautiful cool woods
of the tender summer so pale

this sweet night lunar and full of stars
is your face that I no longer see

*Translations by Christopher Goldsack, © the
Mélodie Treasury*

For Poulenc

My first day in Paris I walked
from Saint Germain to the Pont Mirabeau
in soft amber light and leaves
and love was running out
city of light and hearts
city of dusk and dismay
the Seine believed it to be true
that I was unloved and alone
how lonely is that bridge
without your song
the Avenue Mozart, the rue Pergolèse
the tobaccos and the nuns
all Paris is alone for this
brief leafless moment
and snow falls down upon
the streets of our peculiar hearts

Frank O'Hara

Look Down, Fair Moon

Look down, fair moon and bathe this scene,
Pour softly down night's nimbus floods, on faces ghastly, swollen, purple;
On the dead, on their backs, with their arms toss'd wide,
Pour down your unstinted nimbus, sacred moon.

Walt Whitman

What if Some Little Pain

What if some little pain the passage have,
That makes frail flesh to fear the bitter wave?
Is not short pain well home, that brings long ease,
And lays the soul to sleep in quiet grave?
Sleep after toil, port after stormy seas,
Ease after war, death after life doth greatly please.

Edmund Spenser

The Silver Swan

The silver swan who, living, had no note,
when death approached, unlocked her silent throat.

Leaning her breast against the reedy shore,
thus sung her first and last, and sung no more:

"Farewell all joys, O death come close my eyes.
More geese than swans now live, more fools than wise."

Anonymous

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Franck Symphony in D Minor

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Perkin Opera Scenes

Thursday, October 23 & Friday, October 24, 2025 at 6:00 p.m.,

Plimpton Shattuck Black Box Theatre

NEC Chamber Singers, Erica J. Washburn, conductor

"Beyond Boundaries and Borders", works focusing on refugee issues and awareness,

police brutality, victim recognition, and more by Shaw, von Bingen, Thompson,

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[nec]shivaree, Stephen Drury, artistic director

Terry Riley In C, in celebration of the composer's 90th birthday

Sunday, October 26, 2025 at 8:00 p.m., Burnes Hall

Faculty Recital: Borromeo String Quartet

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NEC Philharmonia, Hugh Wolff, conductor

Bacewicz Overture; Shostakovich Piano Concerto No. 1;

Prokofiev Symphony No. 5 in B-flat Major, op. 100

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Works by Haydn, Schuller, Britten, and Brahms

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NEC Philharmonia, NEC Symphonic Choir, David Loebel, conductor

Mozart Symphony No. 31, "Paris"; Debussy Nocturnes; Boulanger Psaume 129;

Poulenc Gloria - Rena Maduro, soprano soloist

Wednesday, November 5, 2025 at 7:30 p.m., Jordan Hall

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