

THE HYPERION FRENCH SONG EDITION

The songs of
HENRI DUPARC

SARAH WALKER THOMAS ALLEN
ROGER VIGNOLES

hyperion


A painting of a village scene, likely a French village, viewed from an elevated perspective. The central focus is a large, light-colored house with a prominent chimney and a balcony. The house is surrounded by lush green trees and foliage. In the foreground, a path or road leads towards the house. The background shows a hazy landscape with rolling hills and a cloudy sky. The overall style is impressionistic, with soft colors and visible brushstrokes.

THE SONGS OF HENRI DUPARC

(1848–1933)

- 1 **L'invitation au voyage** CHARLES BAUDELAIRE *Sarah Walker* [4'40]
- 2 **Sérénade florentine** JEAN LAHOR *Thomas Allen* [2'08]
- 3 **Testament** ARMAND SILVESTRE *Sarah Walker* [3'16]
- 4 **Phidylé** LECONTE DE LISLE *Thomas Allen* [5'10]
- 5 **Extase** JEAN LAHOR *Sarah Walker* [3'18]
- 6 **La vague et la cloche** FRANÇOIS COPPÉE *Thomas Allen* [4'36]
- 7 **Chanson triste** JEAN LAHOR *Sarah Walker* [3'21]
- 8 **Le galop** ARMAND SULLY-PRUDHOMME *Thomas Allen* [2'38]
- 9 **Romance de Mignon** VICTOR WILDER, after GOETHE *Sarah Walker* [4'37]
- 10 **Sérénade** GABRIEL MARC *Thomas Allen* [2'01]
- 11 **La fuite** THÉOPHILE GAUTIER *duet* [3'13]
- 12 **Lamento** THÉOPHILE GAUTIER *Thomas Allen* [3'17]
- 13 **Elégie** E MACSWINEY ?, after THOMAS MOORE *Sarah Walker* [3'14]
- 14 **Le manoir de Rosemonde** ROBERT DE BONNIÈRES *Thomas Allen* [2'28]
- 15 **Au pays où se fait la guerre** THÉOPHILE GAUTIER *Sarah Walker* [5'12]
- 16 **Soupir** ARMAND SULLY-PRUDHOMME *Thomas Allen* [3'23]
- 17 **La vie antérieure** CHARLES BAUDELAIRE *Sarah Walker* [4'42]

SARAH WALKER mezzo-soprano
THOMAS ALLEN baritone
ROGER VIGNOLES piano



MARIE EUGÈNE HENRI FOUQUES-DUPARC, who shortened his name to Henri Duparc on the advice of a music publisher, was born in 1848. By the time he was thirty-five he had completed the handful of songs which were to assure his immortality. He wrote no more until he died aged eighty-five in 1933.

As a boy Duparc studied at a Jesuit school in Paris where the music teacher was César Franck. At first he was more interested in the law than in music. Gradually Franck, sensing an inborn talent, encouraged his aptitude for music by giving him Bach and Beethoven scores to read. At the age of nineteen Duparc composed a cello sonata and soon Franck was describing him as his most gifted pupil. Two years afterwards he published a suite of piano pieces, and in 1870 he brought out his first collection of songs which included *Chanson triste* and *Soupir*. A visit to Munich with his friend Saint-Saëns for the premiere of *Die Walküre* was a revelation to him and he became a confirmed Wagnerian. Five years later he wrote the symphonic poem *Lénore* inspired by the Bürger ballad, a Romantic tale about a girl who, awaiting news of her lover away at the wars, prays for death to release her from her anguish. Her prayer is granted when a stranger calls and takes her on a nightmare ride across country to a graveyard where he reveals himself to be Death in person.


Lénore was Duparc's only major orchestral work and, apart from an opera based on a Pushkin story with which he tinkered for some ten years before destroying it in a fit of despair, he was to complete only the dozen or so *mélodies* for which he is famous. These were produced during the extended rush of high inspiration that lasted throughout his early manhood. As a perfectionist who was his own severest critic, he ceaselessly revised and polished them, destroying far more than he ever allowed to be published.

Apart from music his chief interests were philosophy, literature and painting, though his heavy moustache and military bearing were at first sight oddly incompatible with the tender, delicate songs he composed. When working he needed absolute silence and could not bear the slightest interruption. He wrote with a triple-pointed gold nib thick enough to indite a filled-in note at a stroke. All composition ceased, though, in his mid-thirties when he was attacked by an obscure nervous disease. Then he began to lose his eyesight and, despite an operation for glaucoma, went to all intents and purposes blind. The last forty years of his life were sustained by religious resignation and hopeful trips to Lourdes. He wrote: 'The loss of my sight and the deprivation of what has been my life—music and drawing; music above all—is such a sorrow for me that God could only console me for it by giving me Himself: that is what He has done, and, far from regretting anything, I thank Him. The joys of music are of little account compared with the Peace He gives. And then, the eyes of the soul see things from a higher plane than those of the body ...'

Of the songs on this disc, *Sérénade*, the *Romance de Mignon*, *Le Galop* and the duet *La Fuite* are early works that Duparc suppressed because they did not reach his abnormally high standard, although the manuscripts have since been rescued. *L'invitation au voyage*, one of his most famous *mélodies*, belongs to 1870. When Baudelaire published his *Les Fleurs du mal* from which it comes, he said he hoped that some composer of genius would set the verse and offer it to the woman he loved. That is precisely what the twenty-two year-old Duparc did, for he dedicated it to his wife, an Irish girl from County Cork. The impressionistic accompaniment, so exquisitely attuned to the words, creates a luminous haze with its harmonic fluency and serene rhythms.

Extase and *Testament* show that even when Duparc set minor poets like Lahor and Silvestre, the middling





quality of the words by no means hampered the flow of his genius. Both settings have a flavour which recall his hero Wagner. *Chanson triste*, heavily revised, is an early song with an echo of Gounod, although in *Elégie*, which Duparc probably translated into French with the aid of his Irish wife, the atmosphere is Tristanesque.

Au pays où se fait la guerre, an even earlier work of 1869, is thought to contain borrowings from the unfinished opera which Duparc eventually destroyed. The dramatic rhythm and urgent phrasing come over particularly well in the orchestral version he later made.

Fauré and Hahn also set Leconte de Lisle's *Phidylé*, which in Duparc's case must be accounted one of his finest achievements with its lyrical splendour and beautifully graded expression, all to be quietened at the end by a tranquil postlude in the accompaniment. *La vie antérieure*, another Baudelaire setting, was the last song Duparc ever composed and one of his finest. Originally intended for voice and orchestra, it sounds nonetheless perfectly natural and original in the piano version he

afterwards made. Here he distils an aching nostalgia and captures in purely musical terms that *frisson nouveau* which Victor Hugo attributed to Baudelaire's revolutionary poetry.

The gentle lullaby of *Sérénade florentine*, smooth and graceful, can be contrasted with the bold drama of *La vague et la cloche*, which, first written for bass and orchestra, was arranged for the piano by Duparc's close friend Vincent d'Indy. Equally dramatic, declamatory even, is *Le manoir de Rosemonde*, in which unity is preserved by a piano episode linking each section. As Lotte Lehmann pointed out, 'something akin to madness rages through this song'. *Lamento* takes extracts from a poem already set by Berlioz and is dedicated to Fauré—a suitable choice because it has Fauré's own characteristics of supple grace and feline motion. Duparc was only twenty when he wrote *Soupir* in 1868, but it shows clearly, in its refined yet passionate utterance, just why he was destined to rank among the greatest of all French writers of *mélodies*.

JAMES HARDING © 1989

1 L'invitation au voyage

Mon enfant, ma sœur,
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.

La, 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.
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 (1821–1867)

2 Sérénade florentine

Étoile dont la beauté luit
Comme un diamant dans la nuit,
Regarde vers ma bien-aimée
Dont la paupière s'est fermée,
Et fais descendre sur ses yeux
La bénédiction des cieux.

Invitation to journey

*My child, my sister,
think of the sweetness
of going to live there together.
To love at leisure;
to love and to die
in the land which resembles you.
The watery suns
of those hazy skies
have, for me, the charms,
so mysterious,
of your treacherous eyes
shining through their tears.*

*There, all is naught but order and beauty,
comfort, peace and pleasure.*

*See, on those waterways,
how the ships slumber,
though wanderers by nature;
it is to satisfy
your smallest desire
that they come from the ends of the earth.
The setting suns
clothe the fields,
the waters, all the town,
in hyacinth and gold;
the world falls asleep
in a warm light.*

*There, all is naught but order and beauty,
comfort, peace and pleasure.*

Florentine serenade

*Star, whose beauty sparkles
like a diamond in the night,
look towards my beloved
whose eyelids have closed,
and send down upon those eyes
the blessing of the heavens.*

Elle s'endort ... par la fenêtre
En sa chambre heureuse pénètre ;
Sur sa blancheur, comme un baiser,
Viens jusqu'à l'aube te poser,
Et que sa pensée alors rêve
D'un astre d'amour que se lève !

JEAN LAHOR (1840–1909)

3 Testament

Pour que le vent te les apporte
Sur l'aile noire d'un remords,
J'écrirai sur la feuille morte
Les tortures de mon cœur mort !

Toute ma sève s'est tarie
Aux clairs midis de ta beauté,
Et, comme à la feuille flétrie,
Rien de vivant ne m'est resté ;

Tes yeux m'ont brûlé jusqu'à l'âme,
Comme des soleils sans merci !
Feuille que le gouffre réclame,
L'autan va m'emporter aussi ...

Mais avant, pour qu'il te les porte
Sur l'aile noire d'un remords,
J'écrirai sur la feuille morte
Les tortures de mon cœur mort !

ARMAND SILVESTRE (1837–1901)

4 Phidylé

L'herbe est molle au sommeil sous les frais peupliers,
Aux pentes des sources moussues
Qui dans les prés en fleurs germant par mille issues,
Se perdent sous les noirs halliers.

Repose, ô Phidylé.
Midi sur les feuillages
Rayonne, et t'invite au sommeil.

*She sleeps ... through the window
come into her happy room.
Upon her purity, like a kiss,
rest until the dawn,
and may her dreams then be
of a rising star of love.*

Testament

*So that the wind may carry them to you
on the black wing of remorse,
I shall write upon the dead leaf
the torments of my dead heart!*

*All my sap has dried up
in the bright noons of your beauty,
and, like the withered leaf,
nothing living remains in me;*

*your eyes have scorched me to the soul
like pitiless suns!
A leaf claimed by the abyss,
the storm will carry me away too ...*

*But first, so that it may carry them to you
on the black wing of remorse,
I shall write upon the dead leaf
the torments of my dead heart!*

Phidylé

*The grass is soft to sleep on beneath the cool poplars,
On the slopes of mossy springs
Which, in the flowery meadows, rise by a thousand outlets
And are lost beneath the dark thickets.*

*Rest, oh Phidylé.
The midday sun shines through the leaves
and invites you to sleep—*

Par le trèfle et le thym, seules, un plein soleil,
Chantent les abeilles volages ;
Un chaud parfum circule au détour des sentiers,
La rouge fleur des blés s'incline,
Et les oiseaux, rasant de l'aile la colline,
Cherchent l'ombre des églantiers.
Repose, ô Phidylé.

Mais quand l'Astre incliné sur sa courbe éclatante,
Verra ses ardeurs s'apaiser,
Que ton plus beau sourire et ton meilleur baiser
Me récompensent de l'attente !

CHARLES-MARIE-RENÉ LECONTE DE LISLE (1818–1894)

5 Extase

Sur un lys pâle mon cœur dort
D'un sommeil doux comme la mort ...
Mort exquise, mort parfumée
Du souffle de la bien-aimée ...

Sur ton sein pâle mon cœur dort
D'un sommeil doux comme la mort ...

JEAN LAHOR (1840–1909)

6 La vague et la cloche

Une fois, terrassé par un puissant breuvage,
J'ai rêvé que parmi les vagues et le bruit
De la mer, je voguais sans fanal dans la nuit,
Morne rameur, n'ayant plus l'espoir du rivage.

L'Océan me crachait ses baves sur le front,
Et le vent me glaçait d'horreur jusqu'aux entrailles.
Les vagues s'écroulaient ainsi que des murailles
Avec ce rythme lent qu'un silence interrompt ...

Puis tout changea ; la mer et sa noire mêlée sombrèrent ...
Sous mes pieds s'effondra le plancher de la barque ...
Et j'étais seul dans un vieux clocher,
Chevauchant avec rage une cloche ébranlée.

J'étreignais la criarde opiniâtrement,
Convulsif et fermant dans l'effort mes paupières,
Le grondement faisait trembler les vieilles pierres
Tant j'activais sans fin le lourd balancement.

*Alone amid the clover and the thyme
in the sun's full light where the humming bees hover.
A warm fragrance pervades the winding paths;
the red flowers in the corn droop their heads,
and the birds, skimming the hillside with their wings,
seek the shade of the wild rose bushes.
Rest, oh Phidylé.*

*But when the sun, low on his shining curve,
sees his brilliance dimmed,
let your loveliest smile and most ardent kiss
reward my waiting!*

Ecstasy

*Upon a pale lily my heart sleeps
in a drowsiness as soft as death ...
an exquisite death, a death perfumed
by the breath of the beloved.*

*Upon your pale breast my heart sleeps
in a drowsiness as soft as death ...*

The wave and the bell

*Once, overwhelmed by a potent draught,
I dreamed that amid the waves and the sound
of the sea I was sailing without lamp in the night,
a gloomy oarsman, bereft of hope of reaching land ...*

*The ocean splashed its foam upon my brow,
and the wind froze me with horror to my heart;
The waves crashed down like high walls
with that slow rhythm which a silence interrupts ...*

*Then all changed; the sea and its black turbulence died down;
under my feet the boat bottom foundered ...
and I was alone in an old belfry,
angry, astride a swinging bell.*

*I gripped the clangorous thing doggedly,
convulsive, screwing up my eyes with the effort;
the pealing made the old stones tremble;
my urging endlessly increased the heavy swinging.*

Pourquoi n'as-tu pas dit, ô rêve, où Dieu nous mène ?
Pourquoi n'as-tu pas dit s'ils ne finiraient pas,
L'inutile travail et l'éternel fracas
Dont est faite la vie, hélas ! la vie humaine ?
FRANÇOIS COPPÉE (1842–1908)

7 Chanson triste

Dans ton cœur dort un clair de lune,
Un doux clair de lune d'été,
Et pour fuir la vie importune
Je me noierai dans ta clarté.

J'oublierai les douleurs passées,
Mon amour, quand tu berceras
Mon triste cœur et mes pensées
Dans le calme aimant de tes bras.

Tu prendras ma tête malade,
Oh ! quelquefois sur tes genoux,
Et lui diras une ballade
Qui semblera parler de nous,

Et dans tes yeux pleins de tristesses
Dans tes yeux alors je boirai
Tant de baisers et de tendresses
Que peut-être je guérirai.
JEAN LAHOR (1840–1909)

8 Le galop

Agite, bon cheval, ta crinière fuyante,
Que l'air autour de nous se remplisse de voix,
Que j'entende craquer sous ta corne bruyante
Le gravier des ruisseaux et les débris des bois.

Aux vapeurs de tes flancs mêle ta chaude haleine,
Aux éclairs de tes pieds ton écume et ton sang.
Cours, comme on voit un aigle, en effleurant la plaine,
Fouetter l'herbe d'un vol sonore et frémissant.

Allons ! les jeunes gens, à la nage, à la nage,
Crie à ses cavaliers le vieux chef de tribu,
Et les fils du désert respirent le pillage,
Et les chevaux sont fous du grand air qu'ils ont bu.

*Why did you not say, O dream, where God leads us?
Why did you not say if they would never finish—
the useless toil and eternal strife
of which, alas, human life is made?*

Sorrowful song

*In your heart the moonlight sleeps—
soft summer moonlight;
and to fly from importunate life
I shall drown myself in your radiance.*

*I shall forget past sorrows,
my love, when you cradle
my sad heart and my thoughts
in the loving calm of your arms.*

*You will take my sick head,
Oh! sometimes upon your knees,
and tell it a ballad
—a ballad which will seem to speak of us;*

*and in your eyes, full of sadness,
—in your eyes, I shall then drink
so many kisses and such tenderness
that perhaps I shall be cured.*

The galop

*Toss, good horse, your flying mane,
let the air around us be filled with sound;
let me hear crunching under your clamorous hoof,
the stones of the brooks and the bramble of the woods.*

*With the steam of your flanks mingle your hot breath;
with the flashing of your hooves your foam and your blood.
Race like the eagle as it skims over the plain;
Thrash the ground with your sonorous, quivering flight.*

*Let us away! Young men, away, away—
the ancient chief of the tribe calls to his horsemen;
and the sons of the desert are thirsting for plunder,
the horses mad with the air they have drunk.*

Nage ainsi dans l'espace, ô mon cheval rapide,
Abreuve-moi d'air pur, baigne-moi dans le vent.
L'étrier bat ton ventre, et j'ai lâché la bride.
Mon corps te touche à peine, il vole en te suivant.

Brise tout, le buisson, la barrière ou la branche,
Torrents, fossés, talus, franchis tout d'un seul bond.
Cours, je rêve et sur toi, les yeux clos, je me penche,
Emporte, emporte-moi dans l'inconnu profond !

RENÉ-FRANÇOIS-ARMAND SULLY-PRUDHOMME (1839–1907)

9 Romance de Mignon

Le connais-tu ce radieux pays
Où brille dans les branches l'or des fruits ?
Un doux zéphyr embaume l'air
Et le laurier s'unit au myrte vert.
Le connais-tu ? Le connais-tu ?
Là-bas, là-bas mon bien-aimé
Courons porter nos pas.

Le connais-tu ce merveilleux séjour
Où tout me parle encore de notre amour ?
Où chaque objet me dit avec douleur
Qui t'a ravi ta joie et ton bonheur ?
Le connais-tu ? Le connais-tu ?
Là-bas, là-bas, mon bien-aimé
Courons porter nos pas.

Translation of Goethe's *Kennst du das Land?* by
VICTOR WILDER (1835–1892)

10 Sérénade

Si j'étais, ô mon amoureuse
La brise au souffle parfumé,
Pour frôler ta bouche riieuse,
Je viendrais craintif et charmé.

Si j'étais l'abeille qui vole,
Ou le papillon séducteur,
Tu ne me verrais pas, frivole,
Te quitter pour une autre fleur.

*Swim thus in space, O my speedy horse.
Steep me in pure air; bathe me in the wind.
The stirrup beats your flank, and I have loosened the bridle.
My body, scarcely touching you, flies in your wake.*

*Crush everything—the bush, the gate or the branch;
streams, ditches, slopes—clear all at a single bound.
Race, I dream, and with closed eyes I bend over you.
Bear me, bear me away into the great unknown!*

Song of Mignon

*Do you know that radiant land
Where golden fruit shines among the branches?
A gentle breeze scents the air
And the laurel grows by the green myrtle.
Do you know it? Do you know it?
Yonder, yonder, my beloved.
Hasten, thither let us go.*

*Do you know that marvellous dwelling
Where all still speaks to me of our love?
Where each thing asks with sadness
Who has robbed you of your joy and happiness?
Do you know it? Do you know it?
Yonder, yonder, my beloved
Hasten, thither let us go.*

Translation by Winifred Radford

Serenade

*If I were, O my beloved,
the breeze with its fragrant breath,
to caress your laughing mouth,
I would come with shyness and delight.*

*Were I the winged bee,
or the alluring butterfly,
you would not find me capricious,
leaving you for another flower.*

Si j'étais la rose charmante
Que ta main place sur ton cœur
Si près de toi toute tremblante
Je me fanerais de bonheur.

Mais en vain je cherche à te plaire,
J'ai beau gémir et soupirer.
Je suis homme, et que puis-je faire? ...
T'aimer ... Te le dire ... Et pleurer!

GABRIEL MARC

11 La fuite

KADIDJA Au firmament sans étoile
La lune éteint ses rayons,
La nuit nous prête son voile,
Fuyons, fuyons.

AHMED Ne crains-tu pas la colère
De tes frères insolents,
Le désespoir de ton père,
De ton père aux sourcils blanc?

KADIDJA Que m'importent mépris, blâme,
Dangers, malédictions,
C'est en toi que vit mon âme,
Fuyons, fuyons!

AHMED Le cœur me manque,
Je tremble,
Et dans mon sein traversé
De leur Kajar il me semble sentir le contact glacé.

KADIDJA Née au désert ma cavale,
Sur les blés, dans les sablons,
Volerait, des vents rivale,
Fuyons, Fuyons!

AHMED Au désert infranchissable,
Sans parasol pour jeter
un peu d'ombre sur le sable,
sans tente pour m'abriter ...

*Were I the charming rose
that your hand lays on your heart,
So close to you, tremulously,
I would perish with happiness.*

*But in vain I seek to please you;
vainly I moan and sigh.
I am human, and what can I do? ...
Love you ... tell you so ... and weep!*

Translation by Winifred Radford

The flight

KADIDJA *The moonbeams are fading
in the starless heaven.
Night shields us with her veil.
Let us flee.*

AHMED *Do you not fear the wrath
of your arrogant brothers;
the despair
of your hoary-haired father?*

KADIDJA *What do I care about their scorn,
their rebukes, their curses, danger?
It is in you that my soul lives.
Let us flee. Let us flee!*

AHMED *My heart fails me.
I am trembling;
and my breast feels as if it is being pierced
by their icy daggers.*

KADIDJA *My desert-born steed will fly
as fleet as the wind
over cornfield and sand dune.
Let us flee! Let us flee!*

AHMED *In the impassable desert,
with no protection from the sun
and no shade in the sand,
without a tent to shelter me ...*

KADIDJA Mes cils te feront de l'ombre,
Et la nuit nous dormirons
Sous mes cheveux, tente sombre,
Fuyons, fuyons !

AHMED Si le mirage illusoire
Nous cachait le vrai chemin,
Sans vivres, sans eau pour boire,
Tous deux nous mourirons demain . . .

KADIDJA Sous le bonheur mon cœur ploie,
Si l'eau manque aux stations,
Bois les larmes de ma joie,
Fuyons, fuyons.

AHMED Au firmament sans étoile
La lune éteint ses rayons,
La nuit nous prête son voile,
Fuyons, fuyons.

KADIDJA Au firmament sans étoile
La lune éteint ses rayons,
Mes cils te feront de l'ombre,
Et la nuit nous dormirons
Sous mes cheveux, tente sombre,
Fuyons, Fuyons !

THÉOPHILE GAUTIER (1811–1872)

12 Lamento

Connaissez-vous la blanche tombe
Où flotte avec un son plaintif
L'ombre d'un if?
Sur l'if une pâle colombe,
Triste et seule au soleil couchant,
Chante son chant.

On dirait que l'âme éveillée
Pleure sous terre à l'unisson
De la chanson,
Et du malheur d'être oubliée
Se plaint dans un roucoulement,
Bien doucement.

KADIDJA *My eyelashes will shade you;
and at night my tresses shall create
a dark tent for us to sleep under.
Let us flee, let us flee!*

AHMED *If some deceptive mirage
concealed our true path from us,
without food, without water to drink,
we should both die tomorrow.*

KADIDJA *My heart is overwhelmed with happiness.
Drink my tears of joy
if there is no water where we halt.
Let us flee, let us flee!*

AHMED *The moonbeams are fading
in the starless heaven.
Night shields us with her veil.
Let us flee. Let us flee.*

KADIDJA *The moonbeams are fading
in the starless heaven.
My eyelashes will shade you.
And at night we shall sleep
under the dark tent of my tresses.
Let us flee.*

Translation by JAMES DAY

Lament

*Do you know the white tomb
where, with plaintive sound,
waves the shadow of a yew tree?
Upon the yew a pale dove,
sad and lonely in the setting sun,
sings its song.*

*One feels as if the awakened soul
weeps beneath the ground
in unison with the song,
and with unhappiness at being forgotten
laments, with a cooing sound,
very softly.*

Ah ! Jamais plus près de la tombe,
Je n'irai, quand descend le soir
Au manteau noir,
Écouter la pâle colombe
Chanter, sur la branche de l'if
Son chant plaintif !

THÉOPHILE GAUTIER (1811–1872)

13 **Élégie**

Oh ! ne murmurez pas son nom !
Qu'il dorme dans l'ombre, où froide et sans honneur
Repose sa dépouille.
Muettes, tristes, glacées, tombent nos larmes,
Comme la rosée de la nuit,
Qui sur sa tête humecte le gazon ;
Mais la rosée de la nuit, bien qu'elle pleure,
En silence, fera briller la verdure sur sa couche,
Et nos larmes, en secret répandues,
Conserveront sa mémoire fraîche et verte dans nos cœurs.
after THOMAS MOORE (1779–1852) *On the death of Robert Emmet*

14 **Le manoir de Rosemonde**

De sa dent soudaine et vorace,
Comme un chien l'amour m'a mordu ...
En suivant mon sang répandu,
Va, tu pourras suivre ma trace ...

Prends un cheval de bonne race,
Pars, et suis mon chemin ardu,
Fondrière ou sentier perdu,
Si la course ne te harasse !

En passant par où j'ai passé
Tu verras que seul et blessé
J'ai parcouru ce triste monde,
Et qu'ainsi je m'en fus mourir
Bien loin, bien loin, sans découvrir
Le bleu manoir de Rosemonde.
ROBERT DE BONNIÈRES (1850–1905)

*Ab, never again
shall I go near the tomb,
when the black-mantled evening falls,
to listen to the pale dove sing,
on the yew tree's branch,
its plaintive song!*

Elegy

*Ab, murmur not his name! Let it sleep in the darkness
where, cold and unhonoured,
his remains are laid.
Silent, sad, frozen, our tears drop
like the night-time dew
which moistens the turf o'er his head.
But the night dew, though it weeps in silence,
will make bright the green above his bed;
and our tears, secretly shed,
will keep his memory fresh and green in our hearts.*

Rosemonde's manor

*With its sudden, voracious fangs,
love, like a dog, has bitten me ...
Following my spilled blood,
come, you will be able to retrace my path ...

Take a horse of good breed,
set out, and follow my arduous road,
—marsh, or lost pathway—
if the journey does not exhaust you!

Passing where I have passed,
you will see that, alone and wounded,
I have traversed this sorry world,
and that I thus went off to die
far, far away, without discovering
the blue domain of Rosemonde.*

15 Le pays où se fait la guerre

Au pays où se fait la guerre
Mon bel ami s'en est allé,
Il semble à mon cœur désolé
Qu'il ne reste que moi sur terre.
En partant, au baiser d'adieu,
Il m'a pris mon âme à ma bouche ...
Qui le tient si longtemps, mon Dieu ?
Voici le soleil qui se couche,
Et moi toute seule en ma tour,
J'attends encore son retour.

Les pigeons sur le toit roucoulent,
Roucoulent amoureusement,
Avec un son triste et charmant ;
Les eaux sous les grands saules coulent.
Je me sens tout près de pleurer,
Mon cœur comme un lys plein s'épanche,
Et je n'ose plus espérer,
Voici briller la lune blanche.
Et moi toute seule en ma tour,
J'attends encore son retour.

Quelqu'un monte à grands pas la rampe ...
Serait-ce lui, mon doux amant ?
Ce n'est pas lui, mais seulement
Mon petit page avec ma lampe ...
Vents du soir, volez, dites-lui
Qu'il est ma pensée et mon rêve
Toute ma joie et mon ennui.
Voici que l'aurore se lève.
Et moi toute seule en ma tour,
J'attends encore son retour.
THÉOPHILE GAUTIER (1811–1872)

16 Soupir

Ne jamais la voir ni l'entendre,
Ne jamais tout haut la nommer,
Mais, fidèle, toujours l'attendre,
Toujours l'aimer.

To the country at war

*To the country where they are at war
my dear love has departed.
It seems to my desolate heart
that no one is left on earth but myself.
On leaving, with a farewell kiss,
he took my soul from my lips ...
Who keeps him so long, dear God?
Now the sun is setting,
and I, all alone in my tower,
still await his return.*

*The doves on the roof are cooing,
cooing amorously,
With a sad and charming sound;
the waters under the big willows are flowing.
I feel near to tears.
My heart unfolds like a full-blown lily,
and I dare hope no longer.
Now the pale moon is shining,
and I, all alone in my tower,
still await his return.*

*Someone climbs the stairs with big strides ...
Could it be he, my sweet love?
It is not he, but only
my little page with my lamp ...
Evening winds, fly, tell him
that he is my thought and my dream,
all my joy and my anxiety.
Now the dawn is rising.
and I, all alone in my tower,
still await his return.*

Sigh

*Never to see nor hear her,
never to say her name aloud,
but, faithful, always to wait for her,
always to love her.*

Ouvrir les bras et, las d'attendre,
Sur le néant les refermer,
Mais encor, toujours les lui tendre,
Toujours l'aimer.

Ah ! Ne pouvoir que les lui tendre,
Et dans les pleurs se consumer,
Mais ces pleurs, toujours les répandre,
Toujours l'aimer.

Ne jamais la voir ni l'entendre,
Ne jamais tout haut la nommer,
Mais d'un amour toujours plus tendre,
Toujours l'aimer, toujours !
RENÉ-FRANÇOIS-ARMAND SULLY-PRUDHOMME (1839–1907)

17 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.

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 reflétées par mes yeux ...

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,
Qui me rafraîchissaient le front avec des palmes,

Et dont l'unique soin était d'approfondir
Le secret douloureux qui me faisait languir.

CHARLES BAUDELAIRE (1821–1867)

*To open my arms and, tired of waiting,
to close them again upon emptiness;
but yet to hold them open for her,
always to love her.*

*Ab! To be able only to hold them out to her,
and to be lost in weeping;
but these tears—always to shed them,
always to love her.*

*Never to see nor hear her,
never to say her name aloud,
but, with a love ever more tender,
always to love her ... always!*


The former life

*Long did I live beneath vast porticos
which sea suns coloured with a thousand fires;
whose great pillars, upright and majestic,
they made like basalt grottos at eventide.*

*The rolling sea swells, reflecting the skies,
mingled in a solemn and mystic way
the mighty harmonies of their rich music
with the colours of the sunset reflected by my eyes ...*

*It is there that I lived in calm, serene pleasure
amid the blue, the waves, the splendours,
and the naked perfumed slaves
who cooled my brow with palms,*

*and whose only care was to deepen
the sad secret which made me languish.*



Recorded on 29–31 August 1988
Recording Engineer ANTONY HOWELL
Recording Producer MARK BROWN
Executive Producers CECILE KELLY, EDWARD PERRY
© & © Hyperion Records Limited, London, MCMLXXXIX

Front illustration: *Le Petit Chaville, near Ville d'Avray* by Jean-Baptiste-Camille Corot (1796–1875)
Ashmolean Museum, Oxford

Copyright subsists in all Hyperion recordings and it is illegal to copy them, in whole or in part, for any purpose whatsoever, without permission from the copyright holder, Hyperion Records Ltd, 4 Pancras Square, King's Cross, London N1C 4AG, England. Any unauthorized copying or re-recording, broadcasting, or public performance of this or any other Hyperion recording will constitute an infringement of copyright. Applications for a public performance licence should be sent to Phonographic Performance Ltd, 1 Upper James Street, London W1F 9DE, or via www.ppluk.com

