

NAXOS

Henri DUPARC

Chansons • Songs

L'invitation au voyage • Elégie • Chanson triste

Paul Groves, Tenor
Roger Vignoles, Piano



Henri DUPARC (1848-1933)

Songs

A piano pupil of César Franck as a schoolboy, Henri Duparc studied law, while continuing his musical interests with composition lessons from the same teacher. Much of the music he wrote at this time, he discarded, but in 1868 he published a set of piano pieces, *Feuilles volantes*, and wrote five songs, of which he kept only two, *Soupir* and *Chanson triste*, although the other three were not destroyed and were rediscovered some years after his death. Duparc's career as a composer was a short one. In Paris he was associated with the foundation of the Société Nationale de Musique, which gave its first concert in 1871 and involved, on its committee, Saint-Saëns, Alexis de Castillon, Romaine Bussine, the violinist and composer Jules Auguste Garcin and the composer and teacher Charles Lenepveu. As secretary of the organization, Duparc had a reputation for administrative efficiency, reflected in his subsequent career in local provincial government but sorting ill with the hyperaesthesia that ended his creative career as a composer at the age of 36.

Duparc, in common with other contemporaries in France, was greatly influenced by Wagner. In Munich he had heard *Das Rheingold* and *Tristan und Isolde*, during a visit there with Vincent d'Indy in 1869, and the following years brought further visits, including, in 1879, an expedition to Bayreuth with Emmanuel Chabrier. At the same time he was at the forefront of cultural fashions of the time, an enthusiast for the literature, drama and painting of the day.

In the years that followed the end of his career as a composer, Duparc continued to interest himself in all the arts, occupying himself with painting and drawing, until the onset of blindness and in his final years complete paralysis. He died in 1933 at the age of 85.

The creative career of Duparc lasted sixteen years and his most significant contribution to music lies in his sixteen solo songs. After the last of these, written in 1884, he wrote nothing, but was able to work on

orchestrations of some of the song accompaniments and on editing earlier compositions, while he was still able to see. His choice of texts for his songs suggests a mood of melancholy that ultimately seems to have triumphed in final silence.

The 1868 songs begin with *Chanson triste* (Sad Song) [2], revised in 1902 with an orchestral version ten years later. The text is by Henri Cazalis, who used the pen-name Lahor. It was Cazalis, one of the Parnassian poets of the period, who wrote the *Danse macabre* set by Saint-Saëns and later the basis of the orchestral work of that title. The range of the vocal part is relatively wide, the accompaniment in broken chords, with adventurous use of harmony. This is followed in apparent order of composition by *Soupir* (Sigh) [3], also revised in 1902. The verse set is by Sully-Prudhomme, one of the leading French Parnassian poets of the time, and the setting is dedicated to Duparc's mother. The early group of songs also includes a setting of Victor Wilder's version of Goethe's *Kennst du das Land*, from *Wilhelm Meisters Lehrjahre*, the *Romance de Mignon* (Mignon's Song), set by so many composers, from Beethoven and Schubert onwards. *Sérénade* [1] sets words by Gabriel Marc with an arpeggiated accompaniment that suggests something of the earlier work of Fauré. The group of five songs, of which Duparc himself only retained the first two, ends with a setting of Sully-Prudhomme's *Le galop* [2], dedicated to the composer's brother and impelled forward with the impetus suggested by the text.

1870 brought Duparc's setting of Baudelaire's *L'invitation au voyage* (Invitation to a Journey) [4], dedicated to his wife and acknowledged as one of the finest of his songs. It was later orchestrated. In 1871 came the dramatic *La vague et la cloche* (The Wave and the Bell) [9], conceived first with an orchestral accompaniment that was first arranged for piano by Vincent d'Indy, to whom the work is dedicated, to be

followed by Duparc's own piano version of the accompaniment. The words are by François Coppée, known as the *poète des humbles*, from the title of one of his poems and his preoccupation with the ordinary people of Paris. The same year brought the duet for soprano and tenor, *La fuite* (The Flight) [15], with words by Théophile Gautier and dedicated to Henri Regnault. The girl Kadidja urges her hesitant lover Ahmed to elope with her, in spite of the dangers that threaten them from her brothers and the sorrow caused her father.

Written in 1874, *Élégie* [14], in memory of Henri de Lassus, is a deeply felt setting of a prose translation of Thomas Moore's poem on the death of the Irish patriot Robert Emmet. In the same year Duparc wrote his setting of Lahor's *Extase* (Ecstasy) [10], dedicated to the composer and writer Camille Benoît, later keeper of antiquities at the Louvre. The song is again imbued with a mounting emotional intensity.

It was not until about 1879 that Duparc returned to the composition of songs with a setting of *Le manoir de*

Rosemonde (Rosemonde's Manor) [3], with its haunted search, dedicated to the author of the text, Robert de Bonnières. In 1880 or 1881 followed a setting of another poem by the pseudonymous Jean Lahor, *Sérénade florentine* (Florentine Serenade) [7], with its suggestions of Fauré. 1882 brought a setting of the Parnassian poet Leconte de Lisle's *Phidylé* [5], dedicated to Ernest Chausson, with a setting of Théophile Gautier's *Lamento* [13] the following year, dedicated to Fauré. *Testament* [6], written about this time, is an effective setting of verse by Armand Silvestre, a poet who attracted the attention of a number of composers, in spite of what is now seen as the mediocrity of his verse. The last completed song is *La vie antérieure* (My Previous Life) [11], written in 1884 and dedicated to the composer Joseph Guy Ropartz, a setting of a poem by Baudelaire. The rest was silence.

Keith Anderson



Paul Groves
Photo: Henry Fair



Roger Vignoles
Photo: Matthew Ford

Paul Groves

Winner of the 1995 Richard Tucker Foundation Award, the American tenor Paul Groves has embarked upon a major international career with engagements at the world's leading opera houses and concert halls. He is well-known to audiences throughout Europe and North America, and made his début at La Scala in 1996 as Tamino in the opening night performance of *Die Zauberflöte*, under Riccardo Muti. He has returned in several rôles, including Renaud in Gluck's *Armide* and Nemorino in *L'elisir d'amore*, the only non-Italian tenor ever invited to La Scala for this rôle. Audiences in Paris have seen the tenor often since his début in 1996 season when he appeared as Tom Rakewell at the Châtelet in a new Sellers/Salonen production. He returned to the Châtelet in 1999 as Admète in their season-opening production of *Alceste*, under Sir John Eliot Gardiner. These performances were followed by concerts of the same work at the Barbican Centre in London together with a recording. Paul Groves made his début with the Opéra de Paris later that season as Fenton in a new production of *Falstaff*, and he soon returned for performances as Tamino. This same rôle was the vehicle for his début at Royal Opera, Covent Garden. He has performed often with the Vienna Staatsoper in rôles including Tamino, Nemorino, Don Ottavio in *Don Giovanni*, Flamand in *Capriccio*, Count Almaviva in *Il barbiere di Siviglia*, and the Italian Singer in *Der Rosenkavalier*. He also appeared in Vienna as Camille in a new production of *Die lustige Witwe*, led by John Eliot Gardiner and as Carlo in a new production of *Linda di Chamounix*, opposite Thomas Hampson and Edita Gruberova. He has appeared frequently with the Salzburg Festival since his début there in 1995 as Don Ottavio under the baton of Daniel Barenboim including his recent portrayal of the title rôle in a critically-acclaimed new production of *La damnation de Faust*, as well as performances as Pylade in a new production of *Iphigénie en Tauride*, and Belmonte in a new production of *Die Entführung aus dem Serail*. He made his début with the Deutsche Oper Berlin in 1998 as Des Grieux in a new production of *Manon* and with the Netherlands Opera in 2001 as Bénédic in *Béatrice et Bénédicte*. His debut with the Bayerische Staatsoper was in 1997 as Don Ottavio, and he has returned to Munich for performances as Tamino and as Arturo in the Bayerische Staatsoper's new production of *I puritani*, opposite Edita Gruberova. Other successes include the tenor's European début as Belfiore in *La finta giardiniera* with the Welsh National Opera and his return there for his first performances of Tom Rakewell as well as his début with the Grand Théâtre de Genève as Idamante in *Idomeneo*.

Paul Groves came to national attention as a winner of the Met's National Council Auditions in 1991. A graduate of the Metropolitan Opera's Young Artists Development Program, he made his Metropolitan Opera début in 1992 as the Steuermann in *Der fliegende Holländer*, and has since returned to the Metropolitan Opera for performances as Camille de Rosillon in the Metropolitan Opera's new production of *The Merry Widow*, opposite Plácido Domingo and Frederica von Stade, Ferrando in a new production of *Così fan tutte*, Tom Rakewell in *The Rake's Progress*, Lysander in Britten's *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, Belmonte, Fenton, and Don Ottavio in nationally-televvised season-opening performances opposite Bryn Terfel and Renée Fleming. He has also appeared with the Metropolitan Opera for productions of *Ariadne auf Naxos*, *Il barbiere di Siviglia*, *Death in Venice*, *Fidelio*, *Lucia di Lammermoor*, *Parsifal*, *Der Rosenkavalier*, *Les Troyens*, and *The Ghosts of Versailles*. His Metropolitan Opera collaborations with James Levine have led to recordings of *Rigoletto*, *Parsifal*, and *Idomeneo* for Deutsche Grammophon. *Der fliegende Holländer* for SONY, and *Manon Lescaut* for Decca.

A gifted musician, Paul Groves is continually in demand for concerts with the world's leading orchestras and conductors. In 2003 he made his début with the New York Philharmonic as soloist in Berlioz's *Requiem* in performances conducted by Charles Dutoit. His début with the Boston Symphony Orchestra came that same year in the world première of John Harbison's *Requiem* conducted by Bernard Haitink in performances in Boston and at New York's Carnegie Hall. The tenor made his début with the Cleveland Orchestra in Berlioz's *La damnation de Faust*, led by Christoph von Dohnányi, and he has since appeared with them in performances of Beethoven's

Ninth Symphony also under the direction of von Dohnanyi at Cleveland's Severance Hall and at New York's Carnegie Hall. Other performances at Carnegie Hall include Berlioz's *L'enfance du Christ* with the Orchestra of St Luke's and Sir Charles Mackerras. The tenor made his début with the Los Angeles Philharmonic in a programme of works of Mozart and Britten led by Esa-Pekka Salonen, and he first appeared with the Minnesota Orchestra in Berlioz's *Te Deum*. All this is only a part of a busy national and international career that takes him to leading concert halls and opera houses throughout the world.

Roger Vignoles

The pianist Roger Vignoles is one of Britain's most outstanding musicians. Originally inspired by the playing of Gerald Moore, he decided on leaving university to pursue a career as a piano accompanist, completing his essential training with the distinguished Viennese-born teacher Paul Hamburger. Since then reviewers worldwide have consistently recognised his distinctive qualities as a player. Among his first partners was the great Swedish soprano Elisabeth Söderström, whom he regularly accompanied throughout the 1970s and 1980s. During this period, he also developed particularly fruitful collaborations with Dame Kiri te Kanawa, with Sir Thomas Allen, recording many works including Schumann's *Dichterliebe* and Schubert's *Winterreise*, and with Sarah Walker, in a wide repertoire of song, from German lieder and French mélodies to cabaret songs by Gershwin, Britten and others. He has toured with Sylvia McNair, Dame Felicity Lott, Susan Graham, Véronique Gens, Sir Thomas Allen and Joan Rodgers, and collaborated in recitals with Olaf Bär, Kathleen Battle, Brigitte Fassbaender, Bernarda Fink, Christine Schaefer, Thomas Hampson, Lorraine Hunt, Stephan and Christoph Genz, Monica Groop and Sarah Walker, with appearances at the Bath, Cheltenham, Brighton, Aldeburgh, Prague, Schleswig-Holstein, Verbier and Ravinia Festivals. He is also a regular visitor to the Schubertiade in Feldkirch. In 1997, the Schubert year, he devised and directed at the Queen Elizabeth Hall in London a week-long series entitled *Landscape into Song*, in which his culminating performance of *Winterreise* with Robert Holl was described by *The Times* as 'one of the most memorable performances of the year'. In 1998 he inaugurated the Nagaoka Winter Festival in Japan, giving recitals and masterclasses based on Schubert's *Winterreise* and has subsequently returned each year as artistic director. In 2001 he took part in the Schumann Festival at the South Bank in London giving recitals with Wolfgang Holzmair, Christiane Oelze and Robert Holl and gave staged performances of the complete Britten *Canticles* in Barcelona with John Mark Ainsley and Michael Chance. Among his recent recordings, *La Belle Epoque* with Susan Graham (devoted to the songs of Reynaldo Hahn), *Nuits d'étoiles* with Véronique Gens (Fauré, Debussy, Poulenc) and a CD of Strauss, Mahler and Marx with Katarina Karneus have all been nominated for Gramophone awards, while his recording of Beethoven songs with Stephan Genz won the 1999 Award in the Song Category. Other releases include the complete Wolf *Mörke-Lieder* with Stephan Genz and *Canciones Amatorias*, a CD of Spanish Songs with Bernarda Fink.

1 Sérénade

Text by Gabriel Marc

*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.*

*Si j'étais la rose charmante
Que la 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!*

2 Chanson triste

Text by Jean Lahor (Henri Cazalis) (1840-1909),
from *L'Illusion*

*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,*

Serenade

If I were, my beloved,
the breeze with scented breath,
to brush your smiling mouth
I should come fearful and charmed.

If I were the bee that flies,
or the seductive butterfly,
you would not see me in frivolity
leaving you for another flower.

If I were the charming rose
that your hand places on your heart,
so close to you, all trembling,
I should droop with happiness.

But in vain I seek to please you,
moan and sigh.
I am a man, and what can I do? –
Love you... tell you... weep!

Sad Song

In your heart sleeps moonlight,
sweet summer moonlight,
and to escape tiresome life
I shall drown myself in your brightness.

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 ailing head
Oh! sometimes on your knees

*Et lui diras une ballade
Qui semblera parler de nous;*

*Et dans tes yeux pleins de tristesse,
Dans tes yeux alors je boirai
Tant de baisers et de tendresse
Que peut-être je guérirai.*

3 Le manoir de Rosamonde

Text by Robert de Bonnières (1850-1905)

*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 Rosamonde.*

4 L'invitation au voyage

Text by Charles Baudelaire (1821-1867)

*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.*

and to it will repeat a ballad
that will seem to be of us.
And in your eyes full of sadness,
in your eyes then shall I drink
so many kisses and endearments
that perhaps I shall be healed.

Rosemonde's Manor

With its sudden, greedy tooth
like a dog, love bit me...
following the blood I shed,
go, you will be able to follow my tracks...

Take a good horse,
depart and follow my arduous way,
quagmire or lost path,
if the journey does not wear you out!

Passing where I have passed,
you will see that, alone and wounded,
I went through this sad world,

and that so I went away to die
far, far away, without finding
the blue manoir of Rosemonde.

Invitation to a Journey

My child, my sister,
think of the tender pleasure
of going to live there together,
to love at leisure,
to love and to die
in a country so like you!

*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.*

*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.*

5 Phidylé

Text by Charles-Marie-René Leconte
de Lisle (1818-1894)

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

Repose, ô Phidylé! Midi sur les feuillages

The moist sunshine
of those cloudy skies
for my spirit has the charm,
so mysterious,
of your treacherous eyes,
shining through their tears.

There all is order and beauty,
luxury, calm and pleasure.

See on those canals
the vessels sleep
whose way is to wander;
It is to satisfy
your least desire
that they come from the ends of the earth.

The settings of the sun
clothe the fields,
the canals, the whole town,
with hyacinth and gold;
the world sleeps
in a warm light!

There all is order and beauty,
luxury, calm and pleasure!

Phidylé

The grass is soft for sleep
under the cool poplars,
on the banks of mossy springs
that come from a thousand places
in the flowering meadows
and vanish in the dark undergrowth.

Rest, O Phidyle! Mid-day shines down

*Rayonne et t'invite au sommeil.
Par le trèfle et le thym, seules, en 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 Phidy!é!

*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!*

6 Testament

Text by Armand Silvestre (1837-1901)

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

on the foliage and calls you to sleep.
In the clover and the thyme, alone, in full sunlight,
the bees fly and sing;

A warm perfume wafts around the paths,
the red flower of the wheat bends,
and the birds, skimming the hill with their wings,
seek the shade of the wild rose.

Rest, O Phidy!e!

But when the Sun, descending
on his shining arc,
sees his heat grow less,
let your fairest smile and your best kiss
reward me for my waiting!

Testament

So that the wind may bring them to you
on the black wings of remorse,
I shall write on the dead leaf
the suffering of my dead heart!

All my sap has dried up
in the bright noon-tides of your beauty,
and, like the withered leaf,
nothing living is left for me.

Your eyes have burned me to my soul,
like the merciless sun!
A leaf that the abyss claims,
the strong south wind will carry me away as well.

But before, so that it may bring them to you
on the black wings of remorse,
I shall write on the dead leaf,
the suffering of my dead heart!

7 Sérénade florentine

Text by Jean Lahor (1840-1909)

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

8 Soupir

Text by René-François Sully-Prudhomme
(1839-1907)

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

*Ouvrir les bras, et, las d'attendre,
Sur le néant les refermer!
Mais encore, 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!*

Florentine Serenade

Star, whose beauty shines
like a diamond in the night,
look down on my beloved
whose eyelids are shut,
and bring down on her eyes
the blessing of heaven.
She is asleep . . . Through the window
go into her happy room:
on her whiteness, like a kiss,
come and stay there till dawn.
And let her thoughts, then, dream
of a star of love that rises!

Sigh

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

To open my arms, and, tired of waiting,
fold them again on nothing,
but still always to stretch them out to her,
always to love her.

Ah! to be able only to stretch them out to her,
and to waste away in tears,
but always to offer those tears,
always to love her.

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

9 **La vague et la cloche**

Text by François Coppée (1842-1908)

*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'écroutaient 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.*

*Pourquoi n'as-tu pas dit, o 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!*

The Wave and the Bell

Once, overwhelmed by a powerful drink,
I dreamed that amid the waves and noise
of the sea, I was floating without a beacon
in the night,
a gloomy rower, with no hope any more
of the shore.

The ocean was spitting its foam on my brow,
and the wind froze me with fear
to my heart,
the waves were breaking down like walls
with that slow rhythm interrupted by silence.

Then, everything changed... the sea
and its black fray
grew dark . . . under my feet the bottom
of the boat
gave way . . . And I was alone in
an old bell-tower,
madly riding on a ringing bell.

I clung obstinately to the sounding bell,
convulsively and closing my eyes in the effort.
The booming made the old stones tremble,
because I so kept on endlessly
the heavy swinging.

Why did you not say, O dream,
where God leads us?
Why did you not say whether they would not end,
the useless work and eternal noise
of which life is made, alas, human life!

10 Extase

Text by Jean Lahor (1840-1909)

*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*

11 La vie antérieure

Text by Charles Baudelaire (1821-1867)

*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 reflété par mes yeux...*

*C'est là, 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.*

Ectasy

On a pale lily my heart sleeps
 a slumber as gentle as death...
 Exquisite death, death perfumed
 by the breath of the beloved.
 On your pale bosom my heart sleeps
 a slumber as gentle as death...

My Previous Life

I lived long under vast porticoes
 that the suns of the sea tinged with
 a thousand fires,
 and the great pillars of which, straight
 and majestic,
 made them seem, in the evening, basalt caves.

The billows, rolling the images of the sky,
 blended in solemn and mystic fashion
 the all-powerful chords of their rich music
 with the colours of the setting sun, reflected
 in my eyes.

It is there that I lived
 in calm delight
 in the midst of the blue, the waves, the splendours,
 and naked slaves, all perfumed

who cooled my brow with palms
 and whose only care was to understand fully
 the sad secret that made me languish.

12 Le galop

Text by René-François Sully-Prudhomme
(1839-1907)

*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.

*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, cours, je rêve et sur toi, les yeux clos,
je me penche,
Emporte, emporte-moi dans l'inconnu profond!*

The Gallop

Shake, good horse, your flying mane,
let the air around us be filled with voices,
let me hear the scrunching
of your resounding hoofs
on the gravel of streams and
the wooded undergrowth.

Blend your hot breath with the steam from your
flanks,
with the flashing of your feet, your foam and your
blood.

Run, like an eagle, skimming over the plain,
whipping the grass in sonorous, quivering flight.

'Let us go! Young men, swim, swim your horses',
shouts the old tribal chief to his horsemen,
and the sons of the desert breathe
the scent of plunder,
and the horses are mad with the open air
they have drunk.

So swim in space, my swift horse,
give me pure air to drink, bathe me in the wind!
The stirrup strikes your belly, and I have loosened
the reins.
My body hardly touches you, it flies after you.

Break a way through everything, bush, barrier
or branch,

torrents, ditches, slopes, cross all
in a single bound!
Run, I dream and with my eyes closed
I lean over you,
carry, carry me off to the deep unknown!

13 Lamento

Text by Théophile Gautier (1811-1872)

*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.*

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

14 Élégie

Prose translation of an English poem by Thomas Moore (1779-1852) on the death of Robert Emmet.

*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
la gazon;*

*Mais la rosée de la nuit, bien qu'elle pleure
en silence,
Fera briller la verdure sur sa couche*

Lament

Do you know the white tomb
where floats with plaintive sound
the shadow of a yew?
On the yew a pale dove,
sad and alone at sunset,
sings its song.

You would think that the soul, awoken,
weeps under the earth in unison
with the song,
and of the misfortune of being forgotten
complained in its cooing,
very quietly.

Ah! Never again near the tomb
shall I go, when evening descends
with its black cloak,
to listen to the pale dove
singing, on the branch of the yew,
its plaintive song!

Elegy

Oh! breathe not his name, let it sleep in the shade,

Where cold and unhonoured his relics are laid:
Sad, silent, and dark, be the tears that we shed,
As the night-dew that falls on the grass
o'er his head.

But the night-dew that falls, though in silence
it weeps,
Shall brighten with verdure the grave
where he sleeps;

*Et nos larmes, en secret répandues,
Conserveront sa mémoire fraîche et verte
dans nos cœurs.*

15 La fuite

Théophile Gautier (1811-1872)

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 blancs?*

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 kandjar il me semble
Sentir le contact glacé*

KADIDJA:

*Née au désert ma cavale,
Sur les blés, dans les sillons,
Volerait, des vents rivale,
Fuyons, fuyons!*

AHMED:

Au désert infranchissable,

And the tear that we shed, though in secret it rolls,
Shall long keep his memory green
in our souls.

The Flight

KADIDJA:

In the starless sky
The moon puts out its beams,
Night lends us its veil,
Let us flee, let us flee!

AHMED:

Are you not afraid of the anger
Of your arrogant brothers,
The despair of your father,
Your father with his white eyebrows.

KADIDJA:

What are scorn and blame to me,
Dangers, curses,
It is in you that my soul lives,
Let us flee, let us flee!

AHMED:

I have no heart for it, I tremble,
And in my breast, pierced,
I seem to feel their dagger's
Icy touch.

KADIDJA:

Born in the desert, my mare,
Over wheat, in the furrows
Would fly, rival to the winds,
Let us flee, let us flee!

AHMED:

In the impassable desert,

*Sans parasol pour jeter
Un peu d'ombre sur le sable,
Sans tente pour m'abriter...*

KADIDJA:

*Mes cils te feront de l'ombre,
Et la nuit, 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 mourrions demain...*

KADIDJA:

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

TOUS LES DEUX:

*Au firmament sans étoile
La lune éteint ses rayons...*

Without sunshade to throw
A little shade over the sand,
Without a tent to shelter me . . .

KADIDJA:

My lashes will make shade for you,
And by night, by night we shall sleep
Under my tresses, a dark tent,
Let us fly, let us fly!

AHMED:

If the deceiving mirage
Hid from us the true way,
Without food, without water to drink,
We shall both die tomorrow . . .

KADIDJA:

My heart gives way to happiness,
If water lacks where we stop
Drink my tears of joy,
Let us flee, let us flee!

BOTH:

In the starless sky
The moon puts out its beams...

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Playing Time
53:56

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In a relatively short career as a composer, curtailed by illness, Henri Duparc left a small group of songs that have since proved a major part of French song repertoire. The songs for tenor and piano recorded on this disc are notable for their poetic atmosphere, emotional intensity and exquisite technique. Highlights include *L'invitation au voyage*, set to words by Baudelaire and perhaps Duparc's best known song, the deeply felt *Elégie*, the dramatic *Le manoir de Rosemonde*, with its haunted search, and the harmonically adventurous *Chanson triste*.

Henri
DUPARC
 (1848-1933)

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2	Chanson triste	3:26
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Paul Groves, Tenor • Roger Vignoles, Piano

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