



BRILLIANT  
CLASSICS

SCHOENBERG  
LIEDER

Jasmine Law *soprano*  
Nancy Loo *piano*

## Arnold Schoenberg 1874-1951

### Lieder

#### 4 Lieder Op.2

*Poems by Richard Dehmel (1863-1920)  
and Johannes Schlaf (1862-1941)*

1. No.1 Erwartung (Dehmel) 3'47
2. No.2 Jesus bettelt (Dehmel) 3'39
3. No.3 Erhebung (Dehmel) 1'36
4. No.4 Waldsonne (Schlaf) 2'57

#### from 2 Balladen Op.12

*Poem by Heinrich Amman (1785-1849)*

- 5 No.1 Jane Grey 7'48

#### from 2 Lieder Op.14

*Poem by Karl Henckell (1864-1929)*

6. No.2 In diesen Wintertagen 3'01

#### Das Buch der hängenden Gärten Op.15 (The Book of the Hanging Gardens)

*Poems by Stefan George (1868-1933)*

7. No.1 Unterm Schutz von dichten  
Blättergründen 2'49
8. No.2 Hain in diesen Paradiesen 1'47
9. No.3 Als Neuling trat ich ein  
in dein Gehege 1'46

10. No.4 Da meine Lippen reglos  
sind und brennen 1'36
11. No.5 Saget mir auf welchem  
Pfade 1'27
12. No.6 Jedem Werke bin ich  
fürder tot 1'03
13. No.7 Angst und Hoffen wechselnd  
mich beklemmen 0'55
14. No.8 Wenn ich heut nicht deinen  
Leib berühre 0'55
15. No.9 Streng ist uns das Glück  
und spröde 1'30
16. No.10 Das schöne Beet betracht  
ich mir im Harren 2'33
17. No.11 Als wir hinter dem  
beblühten Tore 2'54
18. No.12 Wenn sich bei heilger  
Ruh in tiefen Matten 2'12
19. No.13 Du lehnest wider eine  
Silberweide 2'09
20. No.14 Sprich nicht immer  
von dem Laub 0'38
21. No.15 Wir bevölkerten die  
abend-düstern 5'35

#### Arnold Schoenberg: The Most Unreal Things That Exist

Shortly after Paul Zukofsky's death in Hong Kong, I overheard soprano Jasmine Law say something like "we shall not see his like again."

What she may have meant becomes clear in the *New York Times* obituary for the notoriously difficult Zukofsky. It outlines his career as an outstanding violinist, conductor, and new music advocate. It includes the story of Paul as young prodigy, playing violin for Ezra Pound on the lawn of the mental asylum where the poet was confined. It recounts fierce battles Paul fought to protect the copyright to his father's poetry, and how in later years Paul "disappeared" to Hong Kong.

Not detailed was much of what he did there (writing a book-length analysis of Haydn minuet morphology, publishing the "Chord Catalog" of possible violin double-, triple- and quadruple-stops, which he had made for John Cage's use in the "Freeman Etudes", doing occasional teaching, recording, and conducting).

In 2012 he conducted one group of hand-picked young musicians in an electrifying Hong Kong performance of *Pierrot Lunaire*, to mark its centennial. In that performance, Jasmine sang the Sprechstimme. Rehearsals were sometimes brutal. If anyone complained about the conductor's impossibly high standard of musicianship, he would answer, with a deadpan stare, "What other kind of standard is there?"

In the concert's aftermath, Paul suggested Jasmine study *The Book of the Hanging Gardens* (by then she had become a protégé). Having been director at the Arnold Schoenberg Institute in the 1990s, Paul was clearly expert, and the possibility of his coaching a performance seemed to Jasmine too good a chance to miss.

The next problem was finding a pianist to meet impossible high standards. But after a long and hard search, Nancy Loo became the obvious answer. As Paul wrote about her playing from a video clip:

Jasmine Law *soprano* · Nancy Loo *piano*

*the Sunken Cathedral was gorgeous. Once again, voicing was excellent, and remember that this is YouTube coming through computer speakers. It was calm. It was still. It had structure, or if you wish, elegance and very good bones. First rate, and in case you don't know me, I don't say that very often... a serious musician... AND she played some of Schoenberg.... and Opus 19 is not that far away from the musical language of Go Hang Yourself in the Garden [Paul's nickname for the Schoenberg masterpiece]....*

I wish I had been a fly on the wall at his sessions with the singer and the pianist. He spoke of piano figures in one song as “champagne bubbles” left over from a previous chord. He focused attention on new pitches that make their appearance in various passages.

Through Jasmine's introduction, I had started corresponding with Paul, and he mentioned the Hanging Gardens project. Trying to read up on the songs, I found that Op.15 was Schoenberg's first major atonal piece. Paul wrote back:

Pay no attention to blurbs. They are usually BS. It's hard to pin-point exactly where the “atonality” started BUT clearly Op.11 has stretched things to at least the breaking point?

He went on to cite harmonic oddities in the Second String Quartet, Op.10, as the more likely psychological beginning (“...*ich fühle Luft von anderem Planeten*”). And listed that, together with Hanging Gardens, the Serenade, and Suite Op.25, as his favorite Schoenberg.

He added that, per Milton Babbitt, Schoenberg took from Hugo Riemann the idea that any pitch may serve to define a sonic or harmonic territory, “which one may visit, then retreat from, and the length of time in the territory may not mean that that is THE territory. For example, you have spent a great deal of time in Asia. I do not think that makes you an Asian...”

And such shifting, malleable, polychromatic harmony pervades the songs on this album.

#### Musicologists remark on color words in *Erwartung* of Op.2:

...the words “*meergrünen*” and “*roten*” are accompanied by a distinctive five-note harmony built from the tonic note E-flat and four neighbor notes. Schoenberg proceeds to make this “coloristic” chord structural...

...this single *Klang*, or harmonic configuration, comes to dominate the song. Edward T. Cone has shown how the color chord is successively transformed...

– Walter Frisch, in *The Early Works of Arnold Schoenberg*

And analysis follows that chord through the song, in transpositions that are anything but random, designed to maximize shared pitches from the original instance, while still staying readable (with some difficulty) in a tonal context.

We need not know such inner workings to hear the explosive musical imagination (and this is Op.2, written at age 25, even before *Verklärte Nacht!*). Schoenberg's fingerprint is already clear, as is the overwrought esthetic that appears again in *Gurrelieder*.

But like hothouse plants, the early songs outgrow their (tonal) containers to run wild in the ruined gardens of Op.15.

Schoenberg had called the songs of Op.12 “immediate predecessors of the Second String Quartet,” and their mannerist harmonies still strain against tonal bonds. The music of Op.14 seems bleaker, colder.

Biographers suggest Op.14's winter poems already reflect Schoenberg's anxiety about his wife Mathilde, who was to abscond with their friend, the painter Richard Gerstl. And that conflict (which ended with Gerstl's suicide and Mathilde's eventual return to Schoenberg) also forms the biographical backdrop to composition of *The Book of the Hanging Gardens*.

But putting biography aside, Op.15 is monumental: a kaleidoscope of emotions transforming with every harmonic twist, while the voice floats above and through exotic landscapes painted by the piano. Even if this music is termed “atonal”, it is impossible not to hear resonant memories of tonality and its rich colors, especially in context with earlier songs that appear here.

Jasmine conceived the idea for this album after performing the Hanging Gardens with Nancy Loo in Hong Kong. Final recording did not take place until after Paul’s death, but it seems appropriate that Musical Observations, the non-profit organization he founded, provided some support.

Music may be less preoccupied today with Schoenberg than it was half a century ago, but a collection like this reminds us of the composer’s titanic gifts.

We leave the last word to Schoenberg (in *Style & Idea*):

Atonality and dissonance are no yardsticks for evaluation. Superficiality might base its judgements on such qualities. True love and understanding of music will wonder: What has been said? How was it expressed? Was there a new message delivered in music? Has a new personality been discovered? Was the technical presentation adequate?

“A Self-Analysis”

In music, no one is ever really killed or tortured unjustly; here, there is never an event which could awaken sympathy in itself, for only musical matters appear. And only when these events have power to speak for themselves – only when this alternation of high and low tones, fast and slow rhythms, loud and soft sounds, tells of the most unreal things that exist – only then are we moved to utmost sympathy. He who has once felt the impact of this purity remains immune to all other impressions!

“Gustav Mahler”

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**Jasmine Law** is a Hong Kong soprano, known for performing a wide repertoire that includes operas, oratorios, art songs and contemporary music.

In 2018, she made her European operatic début as Eliza, the lead role in the European premiere production of *Dark Sisters* by Nico Muhly (Trentino Music Festival, Italy) conducted by Neal Goren. Other highlights include curating and singing in Brahms/Schoenberg recital *The Book of the Hanging Gardens* in collaboration with renowned pianist Nancy Loo, soprano soloist in Kurtag’s *Kafka Fragments* (New Vision Arts Festival, Hong Kong), making her Italian concert début in the world premiere of chamber work *Due volte è iniziata la mia vita* by Fausto Tusciano, singing as June in Angel Lam’s *June Lovers* conducted by Perry So (Hong Kong Arts Festival), soloist in the first performance

of Schoenberg’s *Pierrot Lunaire* by Hong Kong musicians with the Hong Kong New Music Ensemble under the baton of contemporary music maverick Paul Zukofsky, soloist in the Asian premiere of Romitelli’s *An Index of Metals* conducted by Manuel Nawri. Other important engagements in Jasmine’s career to date include Mimì in *La Bohème* and Contessa Almaviva in *Le nozze di Figaro*.

Jasmine received her Master of Music degree from the Royal Academy of Music, London. In 2019, she became one of the young artists in the Jockey Club Opera Hong Kong Young Artist Development and Education Program.



Nancy Loo is one of Hong Kong's most versatile artists. Having started to learn the piano at the age of five with Betty Drown, Loo attended the Juilliard School in 1965. After graduating with a Master's degree, she continued her studies in France, Italy and the UK. She has won awards in many international competitions, including, in 1976, the first prize at the Fourth Rina Sala Gallo International Competition in Monza, Italy.

Loo has performed in concerts worldwide and has appeared as a soloist with the Juilliard Orchestra, Danish Radio Symphony Orchestra and the Singapore Symphony Orchestra. She performs in festivals and concerts on the local scene frequently with the Hong Kong Philharmonic Orchestra, Hong Kong Sinfonietta, Hong Kong

Chinese Orchestra, Hong Kong Arts Festival, and the Hong Kong Composers' Guild. Not limited to concert performance alone, Loo is also a veteran presenter of RTHK Radio Four's classical music program *Cantilena* and *Children's Corner*, and has participated in various multi-media performances, musicals, operas and drama productions.

Loo's engagement with music education in both community and tertiary institutions is noteworthy. Her service to the community through music was first recognized when she became a recipient of the Ten Outstanding Young Persons Award early in 1978. She received the HKSAR Medal of Honour in 2010, and was honored as the Artist of the Year (Music) by the Hong Kong Arts Development Council in 2016. Recently, she has become actively involved in music ministry in prisons, sharing her passion for music with some of the least advantaged in our society.

1-4.  
4 Lieder Op.2  
No.1 Erwartung  
*Poem by Richard Dehmel (1863-1920)*

Aus dem meergrünen Teiche  
neben der roten Villa  
unter der toten Eiche  
scheint der Mond.

Wo ihr dunkles Abbild  
durch das Wasser greift,  
steht ein Mann und streift  
einen Ring von seiner Hand.

Drei Opale blinken;  
durch die bleichen Steine  
schwimmen rot und grüne  
Funken und versinken.

Und er küßt sie, und  
seine Augen leuchten  
wie der meergrüne Grund:  
ein Fenster tut sich auf.

Aus der roten Villa  
neben der toten Eiche  
winkt ihm eine bleiche  
Frauenhand ...

No.2 Jesus bittet  
*Poem by Richard Dehmel (1863-1920)*

Schenk mir deinen goldenen Kamm;  
jeder Morgen soll dich mahnen,  
daß du mir die Haare küßt.  
Schenk mir deinen seidenen Schwamm;  
jeden Abend will ich ahnen,  
wem du dich im Bade rütest -  
o Maria!

Schenk mir Alles, was du hast;  
meine Seele ist nicht eitel,  
stolz empfang'ich deinen Segen.  
Schenk mir deine schwerste Last;  
willst du nicht auf meinen Scheitel  
auch dein Herz, dein Herz noch legen -  
Magdalena?

1-4.  
4 Lieder Op.2  
No.1 Erwartung (Expectation)  
*Poem by Richard Dehmel (1863-1920)*  
*Translation by Richard Stokes*

From the sea-green pond  
near the red villa  
beneath the dead oak  
the moon is shining.

Where its dark image  
gleams through the water,  
a man stands, and draws  
a ring from his hand.

Three opals glimmer;  
through the pale stones  
red and green sparks float  
and sink.

And he kisses them, and  
his eyes gleam  
like the sea-green depths:  
a window opens.

From the red villa  
near the dead oak  
a woman's pale hand  
waves to him ...

No.2 Jesus bittet (Jesus begs)  
*Poem by Richard Dehmel (1863-1920)*  
*Translation by Richard Stokes*

Give me your golden comb;  
every morning shall remind you  
that you kissed my hair.  
Give me your silken sponge;  
every evening I want to sense  
for whom you prepare yourself in the bath -  
oh, Maria!

Give me everything you have;  
my soul is not vain,  
proudly I receive your blessing.  
Give me your heaviest burden:  
will you not lay on my head  
your heart too, your heart -  
Magdalena?

**No.3 Erhebung**

*Poem by Richard Dehmel (1863-1920)*

Gieb mir nur die Hand,  
nur den Finger, dann  
seh ich diesen ganzen Erdkreis  
als mein Eigen an!

O wie blüht mein Land!  
Sieh dir's doch nur an,  
daß ich mit dir über die Wolken  
in die Sonne kann!

**No.4 Waldsonne**

*Poem by Johannes Schlaf (1862-1941)*

In die braunen, rauschenden Nächte  
flittert ein Licht herein,  
grüngolden ein Schein.  
Blumen blinken auf und Gräser  
und die singenden, springenden  
Waldwässerlein und Erinnerungen.

Die längst verklungenen:  
golden erwachen sie wieder,  
all deine fröhlichen Lieder.  
Und ich sehe deine goldenen Haare glänzen,  
und ich sehe deine goldenen Augen glänzen,  
aus den grünen, raunenden Nächten.

Und mir ist, ich läge neben dir auf dem Rasen  
und hörte dich wieder auf der glitzelblanken Syrinx  
in die blauen Himmelslüfte blasen.

In die braunen, wühlenden Nächte  
flittert ein Licht, ein goldener Schein.

5.

*from 2 Balladen Op.12*  
**No.1 Jane Grey**

*Poem by Heinrich Amman (1785-1849)*

Sie führten ihn durch den grauen Hof,  
daß ihm sein Spruch gescheh';  
am Fenster stand sein junges Gemahl,  
die schöne Königin Grey.

**No.3 Erhebung (Exaltation)**

*Poem by Richard Dehmel (1863-1920)*

*Translation by Richard Stokes*  
Give me your hand only,  
only a finger, then  
I shall see this whole round earth  
as my own!

Oh, how my country blossoms!  
Just look at it,  
ah! to go with you above the clouds  
into the sun!

**No.4 Waldsonne (Sun in the forest)**

*Poem by Johannes Schlaf (1862-1941)*

*Translation by Bertram Kottmann*  
A light shimmers  
in the brown, rushing night,  
a green-golden sheen.  
Flowers shine forth and grass  
and the singing, springing rivulets  
and memories.

All your songs of joy  
that faded away long ago:  
golden is their awakening again.  
And I see your lustrous golden hair,  
and I see your bright golden eyes  
shining through the green, whispering nights.

And I fancy I lie on the grass beside you  
and hear you playing the shiny syrinx again  
under azure skies.

A light shimmers  
in the brown, rolling nights –  
a golden sheen.

5.

*from 2 Balladen Op.12*  
**No.1 Jane Grey**

*Poem by Heinrich Amman (1785-1849)*  
*Translation by Sharon Krebs*

They led him through the grey courtyard  
In order to carry out his sentence;  
At the window stood his young wife,  
The lovely Queen Grey.

Sie bog ihr Köpfchen zum Fenster heraus,  
ihr Haar erglänzte wie Schnee;  
er hob die Fessel klirrend auf  
und grüßte sein Weib Jane Grey.

Und als man den Toten vorübertrug,  
sie stand, damit sie ihn seh';  
drauf ging sie freudig denselben Gang,  
die junge Königin Grey.

Der Henker, als ihm ihr Antlitz schien,  
er weinte laut auf vor Weh,  
dann eilte nach in die Ewigkeit  
dem Gatten Königin Grey.

Viel junge Damen starben schon  
vom Hochland bis zur See,  
doch keine war schöner und keuscher noch  
als Dudley's Weib Jane Grey.

Und wenn der Wind in den Blättern spielt  
und er spielt in Blumen und Klee,  
dann flüsterts noch oft vom frühen Tod  
der jungen Königin Grey.

6.

*from 2 Lieder Op.14*  
**No.2 In diesen Wintertagen**  
*Poem by Karl Henckell (1864-1929)*

In diesen Wintertagen,  
nun sich das Licht verhüllt,  
laß uns im Herzen tragen,  
einander traulich sagen,  
was uns mit innerm Licht erfüllt.

Was wilde Glut entzündet,  
soll brennen fort und fort,  
was Seelen zart verbindet  
und Geisterbrücken gründet,  
sei unser Lösungswort.

Das Rad der Zeit mag rollen,  
wir greifen kaum hinein.  
Dem Schein der Welt verschollen,  
auf unserm Eiland wollen  
wir Tag und Nacht der seligen Liebe weih'n.

She bent her dear head out of the window,  
Her hair shone as radiantly as snow;  
He lifted chains with a rattling sound  
And greeted his wife Jane Grey.

And when they carried the dead man past,  
She stood so that she could see him;  
Thereupon she cheerfully went the same way,  
The young Queen Grey.

The executioner, when her face shone upon him,  
He cried out loudly for woe,  
Then she swiftly followed her spouse  
Into eternity, did Queen Grey.

Many young ladies have already died  
From the highland to the sea,  
But none was more beautiful or more chaste  
Than Dudley's wife Jane Grey.

And when the wind plays in the leaves,  
And plays in flowers and clover,  
Then it often whispers still of the early death  
Of the young Queen Grey.

6.

*from 2 Lieder Op.14*  
**No.2 In diesen Wintertagen (In these winter days)**  
*Poem by Karl Henckell (1864-1929)*  
*Translation by Emily Ezust*

In these winter days,  
now the light disguises itself,  
let us bear in our hearts  
and say confidentially to one another  
what fills ourselves with inner light.

That which inflames mild ardor,  
should burn on and on;  
that which tenderly binds souls  
and builds ghostly bridges  
should be our soft password.

The wheel of time may roll,  
but we hardly grasp it,  
forgotten in the glow of the world.  
On our island we would  
dedicate day and night to blissful Love.

7-21.  
Das Buch der hängenden Gärten Op.15  
15 Poems by Stefan George (1868-1933)

1.  
Unterm schutz von dichten blättergründen  
Wo von sternem feine flocken schneien  
Sachte stimmen ihre leiden künden.  
Fabeltiere aus den braunen schlünden  
Strahlen in die marmorbecken speien.  
Draus die kleinen bäche klägend eilen:  
Kamen kerzen das gesträuch entzündend  
Weisse formen das gewässer teilen.

2.  
Hain in diesen paradiesen  
Wechselt ab mit blütenwiesen,  
Hallen, buntbemalten fliesen.  
Schlanker störche schnäbel kräuseln  
Teiche, die von fischen schillern.  
Vögel-reihen matten scheines  
Auf den schiefen firsten trillern  
Und die goldnen binsen säuseln –  
Doch mein traum verfolgt nur eines.

3.  
Als neuling trat ich ein in dein gehege  
Kein staunen war vorher in meinen mienen  
Kein wunsch in mir, eh ich dich blickte rege.  
Der jungen hände faltung sieh mit huld.  
Erwähle mich zu denen, die dir dienen  
Und schone mit erbarmender geduld  
Den, der noch strauchelt auf so fremdem stege.

4.  
Da meine lippen reglos sind und brennen  
Beacht ich erst, wohin mein fuss geriet:  
In andrer herren prächtiges gebiet.  
Noch war vielleicht mir möglich, mich zu trennen;  
Da schien es, dass durch hohe gitterstäbe  
Der blick, vor dem ich ohne lass gekniet  
Mich fragend suchte oder zeichen gäbe.

7-21.  
Das Buch der hängenden Gärten Op.15  
(The Book of the Hanging Gardens)  
15 Poems by Stefan George (1868-1933)  
Translation by Richard Stokes

1.  
Protected by dense leafy thicket  
Where fine flakes snow from stars.  
Where gentle voices proclaim their agonies.  
Where fabled creatures from brown jaws  
Spew jets of water into marble basins.  
From which lamenting the little brooks rush:  
Candles came to illuminate the bushes.  
White forms divide the waters.

2.  
Groves in these paradises  
Alternate with flowery meadows  
Porticos and coloured tiles.  
Beaks of slender storks ruffle  
Pools that iridesce with fish.  
Rows of faintly gleaming birds  
Trill on the sloping gables  
And the golden rushes murmur –  
But my dream pursues one thing alone.

3.  
As a novice I entered your preserve  
Before no wonder showed in my face.  
No wish stirred in me before I saw you.  
Look with favour on these young folded hands.  
Choose me to be among your servants  
And spare with merciful patience  
One who still stumbles on so strange a path.

4.  
Only now that my lips are motionless and burning  
Do I notice where my steps have strayed:  
Into the sumptuous realm of other masters.  
Still I might have broken free.  
Then it seemed that through high trellises  
The glance before which I had ceaselessly knelt  
Looked quizzically at me or gave me a sign.

5.  
Saget mir auf welchem pfade  
Heute sie vorüberschreite –  
Dass ich aus der reichsten lade  
Zarte seidenweben hole  
Rose pflücke und viole.  
Dass ich meine wange breite.  
Schemel unter ihrer sohle.

6.  
Jedem werke bin ich fürder tot.  
Dich mir nahzurufen mit den sinnen.  
Neue reden mit dir auszuspinnen.  
Dienst und lohn, gewährung und verbot.  
Von allen dingen ist nur dieses not  
Und weinen dass die bilder immer fliehen  
Die in schöner finsternis gediehen –  
Wann der kalte klare morgen droht.

7.  
Angst und hoffen wechselnd mich beklemmen.  
Meine worte sich in seufzer dehnen.  
Mich bedrängt so ungestümes sehnen  
Dass ich mich an rast und schlaf nicht kehre  
Dass mein lager tränen schwemmen  
Dass ich jede freude von mir wehre  
Dass ich keines freundes trost begehre.

8.  
Wenn ich heut nicht deinen leib berühre,  
Wird der faden meiner seele reissen  
Wie zu sehr gespannte sehne.  
Liebe zeichen seien trauerflöre  
Mir der leidet, seit ich dir gehöre.  
Richte ob mir solche qual gebühre  
Kühlung sprengt mir dem heiberheissen  
Der ich wankend draussen lehne.

9.  
Strengt ist uns das glück und spröde  
Was vermocht ein kurzer kuss?  
Eines regentropfens guss  
Auf gesengter bleicher öde  
Die ihn ungenossen schlingt  
Neue labung missen muss  
Und vor neuen glutten springt.

5.  
Tell me on which path  
She will pass today –  
That I from the richest shrine  
Might fetch finely woven silks.  
Might gather roses and violets.  
That I might fashion from my cheek.  
A stool for her feet.

6.  
To all labours I am henceforth lost.  
To summon you to me with all my senses.  
To devise new discourses with you,  
Service and reward permission and denial.  
This alone is needful.  
And to weep because images always take flight  
That flourished in fair darkness –  
When the cold clear morning looms.

7.  
Fear and hope in turn depress me.  
My words lengthen into sighs.  
Such violent yearning besets me  
That I turn no more to rest and sleep  
That tears drench my couch  
That I repel every pleasure  
That I crave no friend's comfort.

8.  
Fortune is severe and coy with us  
What could one short kiss achieve?  
It is like a single drop of rain  
On a parched pale desert  
That swallows it unslaked.  
That lacking new refreshment  
Cracks with renewed heat.

9.  
Fortune is severe and coy with us  
What could one short kiss achieve?  
It is like a single drop of rain  
On a parched pale desert  
That swallows it unslaked.  
That lacking new refreshment  
Cracks with renewed heat.

10.  
Das schöne beet betracht ich mir im harren  
Es ist umzäunt mit purpurn-schwarzem dorne  
Drin ragen kelche mit geflecktem sporne  
Und sammtgefederte, geneigte farren  
Und flockenbüschel, wassergrün und rund  
Und in der mitte glocken, weiss und mild –  
Von einem odem ist ihr feuchter mund  
Wie süsse frucht vom himmlischen gefild.

11.  
Als wir hinter dem beblünten tore  
Endlich nur das eigne hauchen spürten  
Warden uns erdachte seligkeiten?  
Ich erinnere dass wie schwache rohre  
Beide stumm zu beben wir begannen  
Wenn wir leis nur an uns rührten  
Und dass unsre augen rannen –  
So verbliebest du mir lang zu seiten.

12.  
Wenn sich bei heilger ruh in tiefen matten  
Um unsre schlafen unsre hände schmiegen.  
Verehrung lindert unsrer glieder brand:  
So denke nicht der ungestalten schatten,  
Die an der wand sich auf und unter wiegen.  
Der wächter nicht, die rasch uns scheiden dürfen  
Und nicht, dass vor der stadt der weisse sand  
Bereit ist, unser warmes blut zu schlürfen.

13.  
Du lehnst wider eine silberweide  
Am ufer, mit des fächers starren spitzen  
Umschirmest du das haupt dir wie mit blitzten  
Und rollst als ob du spieltest dein geschmeide.  
Ich bin im boot, das laubgewölbe wahren  
In das ich dich vergeblich lud zu steigen.  
Die weiden seh ich, die sich tiefer neigen  
Und blumen die verstreut im wasser fahren.

10.  
I look at the lovely flower bed as I wait.  
It is hedged with purple-black thorn  
From which calyxes rise with speckled spurs  
And velvet-feathered inclining ferns  
And cornflower clusters water-green and round  
And in the middle bell-flowers white and gentle –  
Their moist mouths breathing fragrance  
Like sweet fruit from the fields of heaven.

11.  
When we beyond the garlanded gate  
Felt at last no breathing but our own  
Did we then sense imagined raptures?  
I recall that like fragile reeds  
We both began silently to tremble  
At the merest touch  
And that our eyes welled with tears –  
Long thus at my side you remained.

12.  
When in the blest repose of deep meadows  
Our hands twine round our temples.  
When reverence soothes the fire in our limbs:  
Do not then think of the misshapen shadows  
That move up and down on the wall.  
Nor of the guards who may swiftly part us  
And nor of the white sand beyond the town  
Ready to drink in our warm blood.

13.  
You lean against a sliver willow  
By the river bank, with your fan's stiff slats  
You shied your heads as if with lightning flashes  
And play with your jewels as if with toys.  
I am in the boat that leafy vaults conceal  
Into which I vainly bade you step.  
I see the willows bending lower  
And scattered flowers drifting on the waters.

14.  
Sprich nicht immer  
Von dem laub.  
Windes raub.  
Vom zerschellen  
Reifer quitten.  
Von den tritten  
Der vernichter  
Spät im jahr.  
Von dem zittern  
Der libellen  
In gewittern  
Und der lichter  
Deren flimmer  
Wandelbar.

15.  
Wir bevölkerten die abend-düstern  
Lauben, lichten tempel, pfad und beet  
Freudig - sie mit lächeln, ich mit flüstern –  
Nun ist wahr, dass sie für immer geht.  
Hohe blumen blassen oder brechen.  
Es erblasst und bricht der weier glas  
Und ich trete fehl im morschen gras.  
Palmen mit den spitzen fingern stechen.  
Mürber blätter zischendes gewühl  
Jagen ruckweis unsichtbare hände  
Draussen um des edens fahle wände.  
Die nacht ist überwölkt und schwül.

14.  
Speak not always  
Of the leaves.  
The wind's plunder.  
Of the dashing  
Of ripe quinces.  
Of the steps  
Of the destroyers  
Late in the year.  
Of the dragonflies  
Quivering  
In storms  
And of the lights  
Whose glimmer  
Is inconstant.

15.  
We peopled the evening-dusky  
Arbours, bright temples, paths and flower-beds  
Joyfully – she with a smile I with whispers –  
Now it is true she will leave forever.  
Tall flowers grow pale or break.  
Glassy ponds pale and break  
And I stumble in decaying grass.  
Palms prick with sharp fingers.  
Hissing throngs of brittle leaves  
Are gusted away by invisible hands  
Outside around Eden's ashen walls.  
The night is sultry and overcast.

*This recording is dedicated to the memory of violinist and conductor  
Paul Zukofsky (1943-2017).*

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