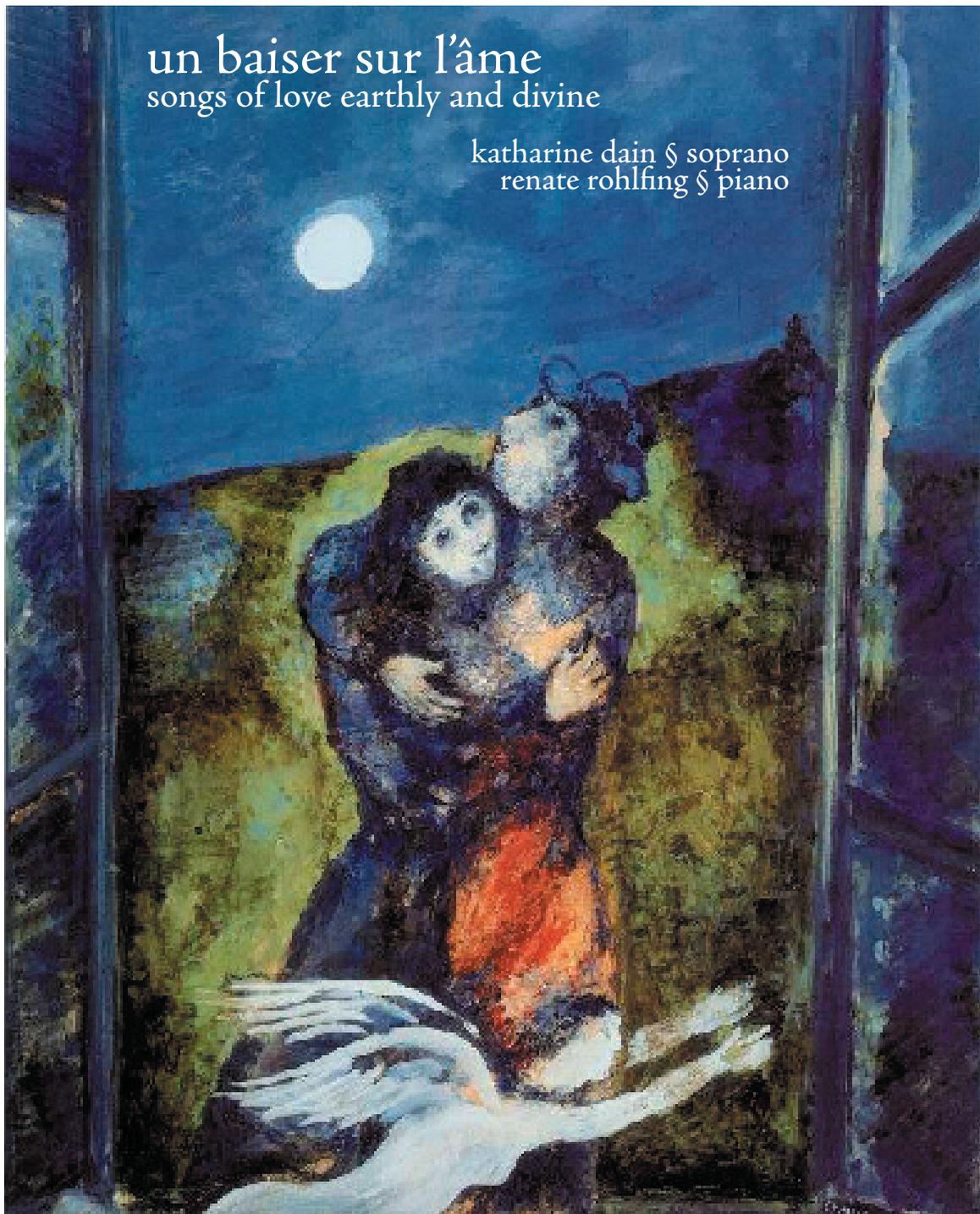


un baiser sur l'âme
songs of love earthly and divine

katharine dain § soprano
renate rohlfing § piano



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Renate Rohlfing, piano

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Wednesday 14 April 2010
8.00 p.m.
Christ and St. Stephen's Church
New York

PROGRAM

Songs, op. 13 (1941) A Nun Takes the Veil The Secrets of the Old Sure on this shining night Nocturne	Samuel Barber (1910-1981)
Trois mélodies (1930) Pourquoi? Le sourire La fiancée perdue	Olivier Messiaen (1908-1992)
Clair de lune (first version, 1882) Coquetterie posthume (1883) Regret (1884) Apparition (1884)	Claude Debussy (1862-1918)
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Piesni muezina szalonego, op. 42 (1918) Allah Akbar, Allah! O ukochana ma! Ledwie blask słońca W południe O tej godzinie Odeszłaś w pustynię	Karol Szymanowski (1882-1937)
Songs from op. 46 (1922-4) Praeludium Serenade Winternacht	Nikolai Medtner (1880-1951)

NOTES ON THE PROGRAM

Samuel Barber is one of the most beloved vocal composers in the twentieth century: his music is lyrical, expertly crafted, highly responsive to the singer's needs and to the subtleties of the text, and, most of all, unabashedly romantic—a trait that did not endear him to the musical avant-garde of his time, but that has ensured his enduring popularity with performers and audiences since his death. Each of the songs in his relatively early opus 13 is a world unto itself. *A Nun Takes the Veil*, a setting of a poem by the great Victorian innovator Gerard Manley Hopkins, is a broad, devout declaration of commitment to a life free from worldly distractions. Hopkins, himself a Jesuit, was famous for the extraordinary music of his poetry, the unexpected and beautiful ways he combined sounds; Barber intuitively understands this, and with his relatively spare musical treatment, he allows the alliteration and lilt of the words free rein. The second song in the group brings us abruptly back to earth: *The Secrets of the Old* takes a conspiratorial delight in the rich shared experiences of a trio of old women. The jaunty accompaniment provides a wink here, a nudge there, while the speaker hints at “stories of the bed of straw, or the bed of down.” Again, Barber has perfectly captured the specific colors and shifts in Yeats's poetry to create a vivid character piece.

Sure on this shining night, Barber's best-known song, has become such an icon of American art music that it's almost startling to hear it in context of the other songs in the opus. The pairing of his music with the words of James Agee (the author of *A Death in the Family*, from which Barber drew his text for his *Knoxville: Summer of 1915*) is an almost alchemical one: the poet and the composer share a yearning nostalgia, a bittersweet lyricism, and a deep desire for individual connectedness with one's surroundings, fellow-creatures, and a higher power. This song, one of Barber's most sublime, expresses this spiritual longing in lines as soaring as the heavens into which the speaker gazes, as unbroken as our “hearts all whole.”

All this longing for connectedness finally reaches resolution in *Nocturne*, a sensual and complex lullaby. The lilting, luxurious cross-rhythms beautifully distill the sense of profound satisfaction that comes from reuniting with a (perhaps forbidden) lover after the rest of the world has gone to sleep. Oblique cues in the poetry tell us that the action is probably taking place in some exotic southeast Asian locale; Frederic Prokosch, an intellectual American who never traveled farther than Europe, was clearly fascinated by the “Eastern” melding of sensuality and worship which captivated the imagination of so many artists and composers in the first half of the twentieth century, and which, in this program, is epitomized in the Szymanowski song cycle.

A composer even more removed from the musical trends of his time than Barber was Olivier Messiaen, who developed his own highly unique sound-world when very young. The *Trois mélodies* were his first published songs, and they already contain elements of the musical language that would later make his music instantly recognizable: crystalline chordal sequences, evocations of birdsong, and an exalted spirituality. These songs were written as a memorial to his mother, whose death three

years earlier had devastated the young man. The first, *Pourquoi?*, is an expression of quiet desolation that gradually builds to a grief-stricken climax. Messiaen himself wrote the text, which asks, over and over again, Why? The middle song is a setting of a brief poem by Messiaen's mother, and is the source of the title of this program: "un baiser sur l'âme," or a kiss on the soul. It portrays an intimacy so deeply felt as to be almost inexpressible. The setting is one of Messiaen's shortest and loveliest songs. The final song is an outpouring of adoration for the memory of *La fiancée perdue*, the departed bride of Christ. The speaker compares her ("Elle!") to everything good, generous, and graceful, and finally begs for God's particular care of her spirit in Heaven. The short group ends with an almost whispered address to Jesus. Of all the composers on this program, Messiaen is the one who most entirely epitomizes the duality between spiritual and earthly love: his deep faith ran parallel to his devotion to his wife, Mi, and to his fascination with earth's creatures and structure. These preoccupations would influence all his later work and are already beautifully encapsulated in this early cycle.

Claude Debussy was in certain respects a much more earth-bound composer than Messiaen, but his music is best-loved for a dreamlike quality that hints at divine inspiration—or intervention. Many of his early songs were written for Blanche Vasnier, a soprano he met while playing for voice lessons to bring in extra money. He was in love with her for years, and these four songs make clear the reverence he felt for her voice and capabilities, which must have been considerable: they are passionate, supple, overtly operatic pieces that belong more to the traditions of opera composers in the previous generation than to Debussy's later style. *Clair de lune* is one of Paul Verlaine's most famous poems, and nearly every French song composer of the time made a setting of it: Debussy made two, and this early version is possibly even lovelier than the later and more famous one, a member of the first group of *Fêtes galantes*. It paradoxically describes the spiritual emptiness of the French upper class with the most elegant and beautiful musical language. The people dancing and playing music in the evening don't seem to recognize their good fortune, although the birds and the fountains sob with ecstasy at the beauty of the moonlight. On the other hand, the speaker of *Coquetterie posthume* is so aware of the joys of life that she wants to extend them as long as she can—for all eternity, if possible. She imagines how gorgeous she'll look in her coffin, her face made up, her hair flowing over her favorite lace pillow. All her love has been for earthly things, and even when she invokes religious symbols—the rosary, which she will elegantly twist in her grave, or the chanted prayers Ave Maria and Pater Noster, which his (her lover's?) lips imparted unto hers—she views them unblushingly as mere extensions of her current life of fashion and pleasure. Debussy brings the speaker's archness and vanity to vivid life in this (uncharacteristically) humorous setting.

Regret and *Apparition* are both small masterpieces that anticipate some of Debussy's mature achievements. The first is a song of pervasive melancholy underpinned by a haunting piano texture. If it had been a later song, Debussy would have liberated the text from the lilting meter to remain truer to speech rhythms, and probably would have avoided the dramatic climax this setting reaches, but already we can hear his unique grasp of the sound-world of depression that would make his later

songs and *Pelléas et Mélisande*, his only opera, so rich and evocative. *Apparition* is his most celebrated early song, a setting of a poem by the great French Symbolist Stéphane Mallarmé. Debussy finds an enormous variety of textures and affects to paint the fluctuations in the text, which veers between solitary melancholy and the transformative memory of a past love. Once again, as in so much music and poetry of this period, a very human love is compared to a spiritual awakening: upon seeing the beloved with sun-flecked hair, the speaker is reminded of the goddess-like fairy who used to visit his childhood dreams. The song ends with the gorgeous image of the fairy allowing white bouquets of perfumed stars to fall from her half-closed hands. Debussy deftly paints this image with sparkling descending arpeggios in the right hand of the piano, countered by a soaring arpeggiated line in the last vocal phrase: the arch of human longing ascending into the firmament of the spiritual.

Nowhere is the joining of sensual and spiritual love so evident as in Karol Szymanowski's beautiful *Songs of an Infatuated Muezzin*. Szymanowski was the great Polish pianist/composer of the early twentieth century, a worthy successor to Chopin, but his music remains relatively little-known in Europe and America, for several reasons: the music is complex, subtle, and very difficult; much of the vocal music is in Polish, a language infrequently encountered in Western art music and thus absent from the pedagogical literature; and finally, Szymanowski's style and influences differed so widely from the beginning to the end of his compositional career that generalizations about his music are difficult to make. But it is music of extraordinary beauty, craftsmanship, and color, and highly worth the effort. He wrote his opus 42 songs while still a relatively young man. After early training in Warsaw, he traveled extensively through Europe, where he was exposed to the great musical and artistic innovators of the first decades of the century, and subsequently to the Middle East, where he became intoxicated with the colors, sounds, sensuality, and spirituality of the Persian "exotic." This preoccupation is at the heart of the Muezzin songs. Szymanowski collaborated with his cousin, the Polish poet Jarosław Iwazkiewicz, to create texts as perfumed, erotic, and colorful as any he ever set.

The speaker is the Muezzin himself, or the man who stands in a minaret overlooking the city and calls the citizens to Islamic worship. The Muezzin's role in Islamic culture is both to summon the people and to act as their collective voice of praise; in Szymanowski's imagination, the Muezzin's devotion to Allah is inextricably linked to his desire for one of the women he observes daily from his high perch above the city. His utterances are a mix between traditional devotional calls and his own thoughts about his beloved, and each of the six songs in the cycle explores this duality in a different way. In the first, the mystical *Allah Akbar*, the Muezzin asserts that he knows Allah created the beloved in order to give him, the Muezzin, an object for worship and a reason to continue praying. The second, *O ukochana ma!*, is as playful and good-natured a love song as the Muezzin is capable of, although still punctuated by devout cries. *Ledwie blask* beautifully portrays a sunrise over the city; the Muezzin begs the beloved to send her first smiles of the morning to him with the first rays of the sun. In the fourth and most overtly erotic song, *W południe*, dripping with the languorous heat of midday,

the Muezzin says he raises the call to prayer just so that he'll get to see her undress to bathe for worship. The fifth is a gorgeous lullaby to the beloved; the Muezzin calls everyone else in the city to wake and praise Allah, but wants to let her sleep gently, curled like a lotus. Suddenly, in *Odeszłaś w pustynię*, the last song of the cycle, the Muezzin's sensual longing is replaced with grief. The beloved has left the city on a pilgrimage to the desert, and his cries to Allah become expressions of despair. Throughout the cycle, Szymanowski channels the transcendent melding of the spiritual/sensual that he read in Hafiz and in the mystic texts of Sufism; he writes highly expressive vocal lines and virtuosic piano parts that paint an extraordinary variety of colors and affects. Retrospectively, the unapologetic Orientalism, the glorification of the exotic "Other," might seem problematic to listeners and performers, but Szymanowski was not alone in these predilections—numerous artists, writers, and composers were contemporaneously discovering and using "Eastern" influences—and his musical language is so unique, and so beautiful, that it can truly be taken as a work of art on its own merits.

We close with several settings of German Romantic poetry by the Russian composer Nikolai Medtner. A virtuoso pianist whose quirky, highly expressive music often stands in the shadow of that of his more famous colleague Rachmaninoff, Medtner took the German Romantic aesthetic and made it absolutely his own in these late songs from his opus 46. *Praeludium* is a setting of no less a poet than Goethe, the towering father of nineteenth-century German literature. It is an abstract but ecstatic celebration of the connectedness of heaven and earth: almost a precursor to *Sure on this shining night*, albeit in a vastly different style. The left hand of the piano duets with the vocal line, while the right hand creates swirls of sound meant to evoke the "eternal flux" of the heavens. It ends with a rapturous Hallelujah—not part of Goethe's original poem, but absolutely necessary to the enormous momentum Medtner builds over the music's short duration. The second, *Serenade*, in a sunny C major, is a straightforward, unapologetically joyful love song. The sixth of seven songs in this opus, *Winternacht* is one of Medtner's most sophisticated and evocative, and a fitting way to end this program. It begins with a chilling prelude that invokes the despair of a still winter night, but it ends with a heart-stopping cascade of joyful sound that looks forward to the thaw of spring, when the tree, clothed in new leaves and blossoms, "will praise God with a roar." *Rauschen*, the final word in German, is almost untranslatable into English; it can mean a roar, a rustle of leaves, the flowing of water, a high (as from drugs), or a surge of sexual or other physical energy. Whatever the context, it always implies release and flux, and Medtner responds to all these impulses with some of his most exciting, life- and soul-affirming music. Encapsulated within the word itself is the ultimate conjoining of spiritual and physical love.

—Katharine Dain

TEXTS AND TRANSLATIONS

A Nun Takes the Veil (Heaven-Haven)

I have desired to go
Where springs not fail,
To fields where flies no sharp and sided hail
And a few lilies blow.

And I have asked to be
Where no storms come,
Where the green swell is in the havens dumb
And out of the swing of the sea.
–Gerard Manley Hopkins

Secrets of the Old

I have old women's secrets now
That had those of the young;
Madge tells me what I dared not think
When my blood was strong,
And what had drowned a lover once
Sounds like an old song.

Though Marg'ry is stricken dumb
If thrown in Madge's way,
We three make up a solitude;
For none alive today
Can know the stories that we know
Or say the things we say:

How such a man pleased women most
Of all that are gone,
How such a pair loved many years
And such a pair but one,
Stories of the bed of straw
Or the bed of down.
–William Butler Yeats

Sure on this Shining Night

Sure on this shining night
Of star-made shadows round,
Kindness must watch for me
This side the ground.

The late year lies down the north.
All is healed, all is health.
High summer holds the earth.
Hearts all whole.

Sure on this shining night
I weep for wonder
Wand'ring far alone
Of shadows on the stars.
–James Agee

Nocturne

Close, my darling, both your eyes,
Let your arms lie still at last.
Calm the lake of falsehood lies
And the wind of lust has passed,
Waves across these hopeless sands
Fill my heart and end my day,
Underneath your moving hands
All my aching flows away.

Even the human pyramids
Blaze with such a longing now:
Close, my love, your trembling lids,
Let the midnight heal your brow.
Northward flames Orion's horn,
Westward th'Egyptian light.
None to watch us, none to warn
But the blind eternal night.
–Frederic Prokosch

Pourquoi?

Pourquoi les oiseaux de l'air,
Pourquoi les reflets de l'eau,
Pourquoi les nuages du ciel,
Pourquoi?
Pourquoi les feuilles de l'Automne,
Pourquoi les roses de l'Été,
Pourquoi les chansons du Printemps,
Pourquoi?
Pourquoi n'ont-ils pour moi de charmes,
Pourquoi?
Pourquoi, Ah! Pourquoi?
–Olivier Messiaen

Le sourire

Certain mot murmuré
Par vous est un baiser
Intime et prolongé
Comme un baiser sur l'âme.
Ma bouche veut sourire
Et mon sourire tremble.
–Cécile Sauvage

La fiancée perdue

C'est la douce fiancée,
C'est l'ange de la bonté,
C'est un après-midi ensoleillé,
C'est le vent sur les fleurs.
C'est un sourire pur comme un cœur d'enfant,
C'est un grand lys blanc comme une aile, très haut
dans une coupe d'or!
O Jésus, bénissez-la!
Elle!
Donnez-lui votre Grâce puissante!
Qu'elle ignore la souffrance, les larmes!
Donnez-lui le repos, Jésus!
–Olivier Messiaen

Why?

Why are the birds of the air,
Why are the gleaming waters,
Why are the clouds of heaven,
Why?
Why are the leaves of autumn,
Why are the roses of summer,
Why are the songs of spring,
Why?
Why for me are they devoid of charm,
Why?
Why? Ah, why?
–Graham Johnson

The smile

A certain word whispered
By you is a kiss,
Intimate and lingering,
Like a kiss on the soul.
My mouth wishes to smile
And my smile trembles.
–Graham Johnson

The lost fiancée

She is the gentle fiancée,
She is the angel of kindness,
She is a sun-drenched afternoon,
She is the wind on the flowers.
She is a smile as pure as a child's heart,
She is a tall lily, white as a wing, towering in a
gold vase!
O Jesus, bless her!
Her!
Bestow on her your powerful Grace!
May she never know pain and tears!
Bestow peace of mind on her, O Jesus!
–Graham Johnson

Clair de lune

Votre âme est un paysage choisi
Que vont charmant masques et bergamasques
Jouant du luth et dansant et quasi
Tristes sous leurs déguisements fantasques.

Tout en chantant sur le mode mineur
L'amour vainqueur et la vie opportune,
Ils n'ont pas l'air de croire à leur bonheur
Et leur chanson se mêle au clair de lune.

Au calme clair de lune triste et beau,
Qui fait rêver les oiseaux dans les arbres
Et sangloter d'extase les jets d'eau,
Les grands jets d'eau sveltes parmi les marbres.
–Paul Verlaine

Coquetterie posthume

Quand je mourrai, que l'on me mette,
Avant que de clouer mon cerceuil,
Un peu de rouge à la pommette,
Un peu de noir au bord de l'œil.
Car je veux, dans ma bière close,
Comme le soir de son aveu,
Rester éternellement rose
Avec du khol sous mon œil bleu.
Posez-moi sans jaune immortelle,
Sans coussin de larmes brodé,
Sur mon oreiller de dentelle
De ma chevelure inondé.
Cet oreiller, dans les nuits folles,
A vu dormir nos fronts unis,
Et sous le drap noir des gondoles
Compté nos baisers infinis.
Entre mes mains de cire pâle,
Que la prière réunit,
Tournez ce chapelet d'opale,
Par le pape à Rome béni:
Je l'égrénerai dans la couche
D'où nul encor ne s'est levé;
Sa bouche en a dit sur ma bouche

Moonlight

Your soul is a chosen landscape
Bewitched by masquers and bergamaskers,
Playing the lute and dancing and almost
Sad beneath their fanciful disguises.

Singing as they go in a minor key
Of conquering love and life's favours,
They do not seem to believe in their fortune
And their song mingles with the light of the moon,

The calm light of the moon, sad and fair,
That sets the birds dreaming in the trees
And the fountains sobbing in their rapture,
Tall and svelte amid marble statues.
–Graham Johnson

Posthumous flirtation

When I die, I hope that someone,
Before nailing up my coffin,
Puts a little rouge on the apple of my cheeks,
A little black around the rim of my eye.
Because I'd want, in my closed casket,
Like the evening, bowed in confession,
To stay always flushed pink
With khol under my blue eye.
Place me, without any immortal gold,
Without a cushion embroidered with tears,
On my own little lace pillow,
My hair cascading over it.
That pillow, during wild nights,
Saw our two brows sleeping as one,
And under the black drape of gondolas
Counted our infinite kisses.
Between my pale waxy hands
Reunited in prayer,
Wind this rosary of opals,
Blessed by the Pope in Rome.
I will turn my prayer-beads in the sleep
From which no one has yet risen.
His lips said unto my lips

Chaque Pater et chaque Avé.
Quand je mourrai, que l'on me mette,
Avant que de clouer mon cercueil,
Un peu de rouge à la pommette,
Un peu de noir au bord de l'œil.
—Théophile Gautier

Regret

Devant le ciel d'été, tiède et calmé,
Je me souviens de toi comme d'un songe.
Et mon regret fidèle aime et prolonge
Les heures où j'étais aimé, où j'étais aimé.
Les astres brilleront dans la nuit noire;
Le soleil brillera dans le jour clair.
Quelque chose de toi flotte dans l'air,
Qui me pénètre la mémoire.
Quelque chose de toi qui fut à moi:
Car j'ai possédé tout de ta pensée,
Et mon âme, trahie et délaissée,
Est encore tout entière à toi.
—Paul Bourget

Apparition

La lune s'attristait. Des séraphins en pleurs
Rêvant, l'archet aux doigts, dans le calme des fleurs
Vapoureuses, tiraient de mourantes violes
De blancs sanglots glissants sur l'azur des corolles.
—C'était le jour béni de ton premier baiser.
Ma songerie aimant à me martyriser
S'enivrait savamment du parfum de tristesse
Que même sans regret et sans déboire laisse
La cueillaison d'un Rêve au cœur qui l'a cueilli.
J'errais donc, l'œil rivé sur le pavé vieilli
Quand avec du soleil aux cheveux, dans la rue
Et dans le soir, tu m'es en riant apparue
Et j'ai cru voir la fée au chapeau de clarté
Qui jadis sur mes beaux sommeils d'enfant gâté
Passait, laissant toujours de ses mains mal fermées
Neiger de blanc bouquets d'étoiles parfumées.
—Stéphane Mallarmé

Each Pater Noster and each Ave Maria.
When I die, I hope that someone,
Before nailing up my coffin,
Puts a little rouge on the apple of my cheeks,
A little black around the rim of my eye.
—Katharine Dain

Regret

Before the summer sky, soft and calm,
I remember you like a dream.
And my faithful regret cherishes and lingers over
The hours when I was loved, when I was loved.
The asters will shine in the black night;
The sun will shine in the clear day.
Something of you floats in the air,
Penetrating my memory.
Something of you that was mine:
For I possessed all your thoughts,
And my soul, betrayed and abandoned,
Is still entirely yours.
—Katharine Dain

Apparition

The moon grew sad. Weeping seraphim,
Dreaming, bows in hand, in the calm of hazy
Flowers, drew from dying violets
White sobs that glided over the corollas' blue.
—It was the blessed day of your first kiss.
My dreaming, glad to torment me,
Grew skillfully drunk on the perfumed sadness
That—without regret or bitter aftertaste—
The harvest of a Dream leaves in the reaper's heart.
And so I wandered, eyes fixed on the old paving stones,
When with sun-flecked hair, in the street
And in the evening, you appeared laughing before me
And I thought I glimpsed the fairy with her cap of light
Who long ago crossed my lovely spoilt child's slumbers,
Always allowing from her half-closed hands
White bouquets of scented flowers to snow.
—Graham Johnson

Piesni muezina szalonego

Songs of an Infatuated Muezzin

1.

Allah, Allah Akbar, Allah!
Ja wiem, ja dobrze wiem, że ciebie stworzył
Allah, bym jego chwalił, bo czyż nie mając ciebie
byłbym szalonym muezinem?

Bo czyżbym wysyłał w niebo głos
wychwalający Allaha nie myśląc,
że dźwięk jego zbudzi ciebie?
Allah Akbar, Allah!

2.

O, ukochana ma!
Allah Bismillah, Allah!
Do ciebie modli się mój głos pięciorako,
Allah Bismillah, Allah!

Bo wiem, że w nocy i w czas południa
i czasu gwiazdy porannej
czekasz na mój stęskniony zew!
Allah Bismillah, Allah!

3.

Ledwie blask słońca złoci dachy wież,
mój głos posyłam tobie.
Wiem, że w poranku spokoju
ufasz w jego srebrny ton!

Zbudź się, zbudź
i przyślij wraz ze słońkiem
twój pierwszy uśmiech, o luba!
Allah, Allah!

Allah, Allah Akbar, Allah!
I know, yes I know Allah created you
so that I could praise him, for without
you would I be the Infatuated Muezzin?

Would I send my voice towards the heavens
praising Allah without thinking
its sound would somehow awaken you!
Allah, Akbar, Allah!

O my beloved!
Allah Bismillah, Allah!
My voice prays to you fivefold,
Allah Bismillah, Allah!

I know that you await my languishing call at night,
in the morning after the stars shine,
and in the afternoon also!
Allah Bismillah, Allah!

The barely golden sun shines on the roofs of the towers
and I send my voice to you.
I know that in the quiet of dawn
you take comfort in its silvery tones!

Awaken, awake,
and send me your first smile
as the sun rises, o my beloved!
Allah, Allah!

4.

W południe miasto białe od gorąca,
baseny płuszczą wilgotną zielenią.
Wzywam na chwałbę Allaha po to jedynie,
byś do kąpieli zdziała szaty barwne.
Wezwanie moje codzien' sprawia cud,
cud twej nagości!

At noon the city is white with heat,
the pools ripple with wet green.
I raise the call to glorify Allah only so
you'll take off your colorful robes to bathe.
My call every day brings a miracle,
the miracle of your nakedness!

5.

O tej godzinie, w której miasto śpi,
o olali! o olali!
zbudźcie się chwalic' Allaha!

At this hour when the city sleeps,
O olali! O olali!
Awaken thus to praise Allah!

Wstan' stary kupcze,
by chwalic' Allaha!
licząc swe perły.

Rise, old merchant,
to praise Allah!
counting your pearls.

Wstan' ty, niewiasto,
by chwalic' Allaha
czekając na junaka.

Rise, maiden,
to praise Allah,
awaiting your young lover.

Tylko ty, o luba, utulona snem,
o olali! o olali!
jak lotus śpij skulona.

Only you, beloved, nestled in dreams,
O olali! O olali!
Sleep, curled like a lotus flower.

6.

O olio! O olio!
Odeszłaś w pustynię zachodnią!
O olio!
O tej godzinie już tve białe ciało
niezna kroperek srebrnych wód.
Wsuchych piaskach swe ciało
w zachodniej nurzasz pustyni
i serce moje piasek rozłąki
miast wody słodkiej kochania pije!
O olio! O olio!
–Jarosław Iwazkiewicz

O olio! O olio!
You departed for the western deserts!
O olio!
At this hour your white body no longer
knows the drops of silver waters.
In dry sands of the western desert
you bathe your body,
and my heart drinks desert sand
instead of my sweet water of loving!
O olio! O olio!
–Dorota Gostyn'ska

Praeludium

Wenn im Unendlichen das selbe
Sich wiederholend ewig fließt,
Das tausend fältige Gewölbe
Sich kräftig ineinander schließt!
Strömt Lebenslust aus allen Dingen
Dem kleinsten wie dem größten Stern
Und alles Drängen, alles Ringen
ist ewige Ruh in Gott dem Herrn.
–Johann Wolfgang von Goethe

Serenade

Komm zum Garten, denn, du Holde!
In den warmen, schönen Tagen
sollst du Blumen Kränze tragen.
Und vom kühl kristallinen Golde
mit den frischen roten Lippen
eh' ich trinke lächelnd nippen.
Ohne Maß dann, ohne Richter
küssend, trinkend singt der Dichter
Lieder, die von selbst entschweben,
wunderschön ist doch das Leben!
–Joseph Freiherr von Eichendorff

Winternacht

Verschneit liegt rings die ganze Welt.
Ich hab' nichts was mich freuet,
verlassen steht der Baum im Feld,
hat längst sein Laub zerstreuet.

Der Wind nur geht bei stiller Nacht
und rüttelt mit dem Baume.
Da rührt er seine Wipfel sacht
und redet wie im Traume.

Er träumt von künft'ger Frühlingszeit,
vom Grün und Quellenrauschen,
wo er im neuen Blütenkleid
zu Gottes Lob wird rauschen!
–Joseph Freiherr von Eichendorff

Prelude

In the infinite, the same events
repeat themselves in eternal flux,
and the thousandfold vault of the heavens
powerfully conjoins with itself.
Then the joy of life streams out from all things,
from the smallest and from the greatest of stars,
and all urgency, all conflict
is eternal rest in God the Lord.
–David Luke

Serenade

Come into the garden then, my darling!
In these warm, beautiful days
you should be crowned with flowers.
And from the cool crystalline gold
with fresh red lips
I'll drink, laughing, sipping!
Without care, then, without judgment,
kissing, drinking, the poet sings
songs that then waft away.
Life is magnificent indeed!
–Katharine Dain

Winter Night

The whole world lies blanketed in snow.
I have nothing that brings me joy.
A tree stands abandoned in the field;
he shed his leaves long ago.

Now a wind steals through the silent night
and whispers in the tree.
It gently stirs his highest branches
and speaks as though in a dream.

The tree dreams of the coming springtime,
of green, the rushing of the stream,
when he, newly clothed in blossoms,
will praise God with a roar!
–Katharine Dain

ABOUT THE PERFORMERS

Soprano **Katharine Dain** has been praised by the New York Times for her “rich tone,” “deep emotion,” and “lovely, passionate” performances. Equally at home in concert, opera, and recital, she has sung soprano roles in the oratorios of Bach, Handel, Mozart, Purcell, Haydn, Mendelssohn, Britten and Stravinsky as well as Mozart’s *Così fan tutte* (Fiordiligi), Cavalli’s *La Calisto* (Calisto), and several premieres of contemporary operas. She has been a soloist with the Collegiate Chorale, Mark Morris Dance Group, New York City Ballet, New York Virtuoso Singers, Choir of Trinity Wall Street, Parley of Instruments, and New England Baroque Soloists in venues ranging from Carnegie Hall and Lincoln Center to the Stone, the French Consulate, and the Austrian Cultural Forum. She has co-founded two critically acclaimed chamber groups in New York: Callisto Ascending, a period-instrument ensemble, and Lunatics at Large, a group with a focus on contemporary music lauded by senior Times critic Allan Kozinn as “young, energetic and highly polished.” Last summer she was a Steans Fellow at the Ravinia Festival, and this summer she will be covering Donna Elvira as a member of the Ash Lawn Opera Young Artist Program. She holds degrees from Harvard University, the Guildhall School of Music and Drama, and Mannes College of Music. www.katharinedain.com

Pianist **Renate Rohlfing** is active as a solo and chamber recitalist throughout North America, Europe, and Asia. She began her piano studies with Professor Peter Coraggio and Elizabeth Coraggio in Honolulu, Hawaii. At the age of 15, Ms. Rohlfing gave her orchestral debut after winning the New Orleans International Concerto Competition, and that same year toured Japan, to critical acclaim. As a winner of the American Music Teacher’s Association music award, she performed in Carnegie Hall at age 17. She has also participated in festivals in Canada, France, Spain, and Austria. Ms. Rohlfing is the winner of numerous honors, including the Presser Scholarship and Avenir Foundation Research Grant. Through the Avenir Foundation, she consulted the Arnold Schoenberg’s manuscripts and researched the performance practice of his music at the Schoenberg Center in Vienna, Austria. Ms. Rohlfing recently attended the International Ensemble Modern Akademie, where she worked intensively with composer Wolfgang Rihm. Her teachers have included Solomon Mikowsky and Daniel Epstein. She is currently a graduate student of Margo Garrett, Jonathan Feldman, and J.J. Penna at the Juilliard School in Collaborative Piano.



The performers would like to express their heartfelt gratitude to the teachers and coaches who helped bring this program to life.

Amy Burton Margo Garrett
Lucy Arner J.J. Penna
Jeff Morrissey Jonathan Feldman

Frontpiece: Marc Chagall, *Lovers in Moonlight* (1938)