

## **An Affirming Flame**

Bard College-Conservatory of Music Graduate Vocal Arts Program

Degree Recital

László Z. Bitó '60 Conservatory Building

May 8<sup>th</sup>, 2021 at 7pm

**Maximillian Jansen, Tenor**

**Ryan McCullough, Piano**

open your heart, *From Marion's Book* (1960)

**Marc Blitzstein**  
(1905-1964)

From *Folksong Arrangements, British Isles* (1961)

Sailor-boy

The Shooting of His Dear

**Benjamin Britten**  
(1913-1976)

From *The Holy Sonnets of John Donne* (1945)

Oh might those sighes and teares

Batter my heart

Death be not proud

*Tel jour, telle nuit* (1937)

Bonne journée

Une ruine coquille vide

Le front comme un drapeau perdu

Une roulotte couverte en tuiles

A toutes brides

Une herbe pauvre

Je n'ai envie que de t'aimer

Figure de force brûlante et farouche

Nous avons fait la nuit

**Francis Poulenc**  
(1899-1963)

-Intermission-

Christmas Morning in Dornach, *Geistliche Lieder* (1940)

Wie ist die Nacht..., *Sechs Lieder nach Gedichten von Albert Steffen* (1937)

Abendphantasie, *Hölderlin Lieder* (1943)

**Viktor Ullmann**  
(1898-1944)

September 1, 1939 (2001)

Berlin im Licht (1928)

Die Muschel von Margate (1928)

Schickelgruber (1942)

**William Bolcom**  
(b. 1938)

**Kurt Weill**  
(1900-1950)

Stay In my Arms (1936)

**Blitzstein**

## An Affirming Flame

### Notes

Even before I knew what repertoire I was going to program for this recital, I knew that anything that I performed would be in response to the COVID-19 epidemic and the untenable political climate in the United States and the world. I felt that it would be impossible to perform any music that didn't reference the anger and desperation that I and so many others had been feeling. This pandemic and the four years of Donald Trump's presidency have been the culmination of years of unchecked fascism, capitalism, and anti-intellectualism fueled by power-hungry politicians and lobbyists who have no regard for human beings. I, like many others, saw this slow build to a catastrophic eruption to be eerily similar to the rise of fascism and nationalism in the years leading up to World War II. While it was not my intention going into this recital to focus on the music and poetry of the interwar period and WWII, I found that the uncertainty those artists were feeling resonates deeply with me today. The disillusion I felt watching the events unfold at the Capitol on January 6th was all too similar to what Auden must have been feeling as he watched Hitler break the Munich Agreement and invade Poland.

Despite all of the dread and rage that I have felt as a result of the current political climate, I have tried, like many of the composers and poets featured on this program, to remain hopeful. This recital deals with difficult and painful subjects, but it does so with beauty that does not leave the audience bereft of hope. That is why I decided to present pieces like *Tel jour, telle nuit*, a radiant cycle about the deepest devotion to a loved one, as well as Kurt Weill's satirical songs, which prove that comedy can be the best weapon in times of extremis.

In "September 1st, 1939", Auden stated, "We must love one another or die." That may seem like too extreme of an ultimatum, and even Auden thought so after he published the poem, but we realize now that his words are all too true. Our society is on the brink of collapse and if we are to have any hope of surviving, we must end the cycle of police violence, we must dismantle the monopolies that seek to commoditize everything, even human life, and we must look beyond race, gender, sexuality, and any label that tries to keep us from loving one another. Making music can feel currently impossible right now, but just as Ullmann, and Weill, and Britten knew that hope survives, I know there is hope for the future and that I, like Auden, must carry "an affirming flame".

Born in Philadelphia, **Marc Blitzstein** (1905-1964) was best known for his pro-union, agitprop musical, *The Cradle Will Rock*. The musical is famous for its opening night when it was shut down by the Works Progress Administration. The production, directed by Orson Welles, had to be moved from Maxine Elliot's Theater to the Venice Theater, 21 blocks away, but due to union restrictions, the actors couldn't perform on stage. To get around this, the cast performed from the audience and Blitzstein sang and played from the piano onstage. Born into an affluent family, Blitzstein began studying music at a young age and went on to study composition at The Curtis Institute from 1924-26. He then went to Europe to study with Arnold Schoenberg and Nadia Boulanger. He returned to the US in 1927 and continued composing in a variety of styles. It wasn't until the 1930's, after his first wife died and he became more open about his homosexuality, that Blitzstein's work developed its signature political style. He joined the Composers Collective of New York, an

organization dedicated to developing working-class music in the vein of European composers Eichler, Brecht, and Weill. In 1964, Blitzstein was tragically murdered in Martinique by three sailors who accused him of propositioning them.

His connection with Brecht and Weill lasted throughout Blitzstein's career. *The Cradle Will Rock* is a Brecht-esque critique of corporate corruption and greed and was dedicated to Brecht; Blitzstein adapted Weill's *Threepenny Opera* for an American audience, which premiered in 1952 under the baton of Leonard Bernstein. While most of Blitzstein's fame came from his musical theatre work, his compositions spanned an array of genres including art song and opera. The two works in tonight's program represent vastly different styles and periods in his life. The first, "open your heart", comes from his art song settings of selections from E. E. Cummings' *From Marion's Book*; the songs were first composed in 1929 and then revisited in 1960. It is written in an archetypal art song form, with a through-composed and fully realized piano and vocal line. The final song, "Stay in My Arms", was written in 1936 and even though it is not from a musical, it is representative of his musical theatre language, where both the pianist and vocalist are expected to improvise to some extent.

**Benjamin Britten** (1913-1976) was born in Lowestoft on the Suffolk coast of England. He is one of the preeminent British composers of the 20<sup>th</sup> century responsible for developing a distinctly British sound separate from that of his contemporaries, Vaughan Williams and Elgar. Like Weill and Blitzstein, Britten was dedicated to making music that was respected by professionals and still accessible to both the amateur performer and the audience. His musical output is immense and varied, but some of his most significant works include his operas, most importantly *Peter Grimes*, which helped bring about the revival of English opera, and his art songs, most of which were written for his life-long partner, tenor Peter Pears. A great deal of Britten's artistic and philosophical development came through his relationship with W. H. Auden, who helped Britten embrace his homosexuality and exposed him to a community of like-minded pacifists and anti-establishment artists.

In 1939, following Auden and their other colleagues, Britten and Pears left the UK for America to escape the growing threat of fascism and the impending war. While in the United States Britten became very homesick and turned to the music of his homeland, but grew frustrated by the cavalier treatment of folksongs by his contemporaries. He felt that composers such as Vaughan Williams and Elgar sacrificed rhythmic or melodic intricacies in an effort to make their settings bucolic and pastoral. Britten always held the text in the highest regard and that is clear in his folksong settings. He had a deep respect for the musical tradition of folk songs and was not carelessly setting the same old familiar tune; he wanted to create new, unique art songs that were complex and nuanced and could stand on their own as works of art. The two folksongs on this recital come from his last volume, published in 1976 and originally written for voice and guitar. In this final volume, Britten sets folksongs not only from the UK ("The Shooting of His Dear"), but also from Appalachia ("Sailor-boy").

The *Holy Sonnets* were composed in 1945 in the aftermath of a concert tour in Europe by Britten and Yehudi Menuhin. In August of that year, they visited the Bergen-Belsen concentration camp which had only been liberated in April, and where Britten saw first-hand the horrors of the Reich. Once Britten returned home, he fell ill from a typhoid vaccination given to him at the camp, and in a feverish haze wrote these songs. In these pieces Britten struggles to reconcile his faith with the atrocities he witnessed while at Bergen-Belsen, in the way John Donne struggled with his own personal tragedies, including the early death of his wife and son.

**Francis Poulenc** (1899-1963), through his operas and songs, has become one of the most well-loved members of Les Six. Poulenc's immediate and honest sound, which combines aspects of popular and art song, has made his art song some of the most widely performed of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Poulenc was born into an affluent Catholic family and showed a talent for music at a young age. His father discouraged his musical studies, but his teacher and mentor, Ricardo Viñes, cemented in him his passion for music. It would be his childhood friend, Raymonde Linossier, who would bring him to Adrienne Monnier's bookstore and introduce him to many of the poets he would set to music, such as Apollinaire, Aragon, and Éluard. Poulenc became one of the most successful musical interpreters of Surrealist poets and really the only composer up to the task. Surrealist poetry, with its obtuse language and contradictory images, does not lend itself to musical settings, but rather than shy away from them Poulenc leaned into the idiosyncrasies of this poetry in his settings. Heavily influenced by the Dada art movement as well as Freudian psychoanalysis, the tenants of Surrealism were outlined in André Breton's Surrealist Manifesto. Breton, Éluard, and their fellow Surrealist poets (Baudelaire, Rimbaud, and Apollinaire to name a few), wanted to release the creative potential of the unconscious mind. They did so with the technique of automatic writing, which was used frequently by visual artists of the time such as Juan Miró.

Completed in 1937, *Tel jour, telle nuit*, is inarguably one of Poulenc's most sublime masterpieces and a tentpole of French mélodie. Éluard's dense and sometimes inscrutable, but still devotional and ecstatic poetry, paired with Poulenc's often astringently dry accompaniment and kaleidoscopic vocal line combine to create a rich and nuanced depiction of love. Poulenc avoids sentimentality, and in doing so creates a realistic and immediate picture of love, one that continually adapts and evolves.

**Viktor Ullmann** (1898-1944) was born in Teschen, Czech Republic, which at the time of his birth was part of the Austro-Hungarian Empire. While Ullmann's father was of Jewish descent, he renounced his faith and converted to Catholicism. Ullmann studied with Arnold Schoenberg in Vienna, but ultimately went to Prague where he was mentored by Alexander von Zemlinsky. He, along with Zemlinsky, conducted at the New German Theatre of Prague. He also went on to conduct in Zürich, but as he struggled to reckon with his Jewish heritage, he had a crisis of self and left the position to run an anthroposophical bookstore in Stuttgart. Through his interest in Anthroposophy, a humanist movement from the early 20<sup>th</sup> century that attempted to make the spiritual world one that was comprehensible and could be rationally explained, Ullmann became acquainted with the work of Albert Steffen. He set his poems and eventually wrote an opera based on his work (*Der Sturz des Antichrist*). After the bookstore proved unsuccessful, in 1933 he returned to Prague and to his musical career. The next nine years would prove to be a very fruitful time for Ullmann, but in 1942, his Jewish heritage was uncovered by the Reich, and he was deported to the Theresienstadt concentration camp, where despite the horrific conditions he continued to compose and organize performances. He was deported to Auschwitz in October of 1944 and was murdered only two days after arriving. Even though his compositional output had reached 41 opus numbers, most were destroyed and only thirteen survived, which were given to his friends for safekeeping.

The works presented on this recital represent his work before and during his time at Theresienstadt and show his deep connection to Anthroposophy (which was in contrast to the ideals of Surrealist poets, whose only hope of understanding an ever-incomprehensible world was to break down the boundaries of reality and venture into the unconscious mind). Despite the

tragedies in Ullmann's life, he still held out hope for a better future, if not for himself, then for his children, two of whom survived the war. "Christmas Morning in Dornach" was dedicated to his oldest son, Johannes who, along with his sister Felecia, Ullmann was able to save by sending to England under the sponsorship of the British Committee for Children in Prague.

**William Bolcom** (b. 1938) was born in Seattle, Washington and began studying composition at age 11 with George Frederick McKay and John Verrall. He would go on to study with Darius Milhaud at Mills College, Leland Smith at Stanford, and Olivier Messiaen and Milhaud at the Paris Conservatoire. In Bolcom's music you can hear a combination of influences from the 20th century French composers with whom he studied as well as jazz and ragtime music. Bolcom won four Grammy awards in 2005 for the recording of his setting of *Songs of Innocence and Experience*. He frequently collaborates with his wife, mezzo-soprano Joan Morris. Bolcom also taught at the University of Michigan for 35 years.

W.H. Auden wrote "September 1st, 1939" while in New York with his colleague Christopher Isherwood, where later that year he met Chester Kallman, who would become his lifelong partner. The title of the poem refers to Hitler's invasion of Poland and thus the beginning of WWII. Auden became self-conscious of this work soon after publishing it and feared it would be misinterpreted and used as a political tool by the wrong people. However, Bolcom, like many other artists, could sense a dark turn in the leadup to the attacks on 9/11 and was drawn to the immediacy of Auden's poem. The unease felt by Auden was felt by Bolcom in 2000 and I feel it today as well.

**Kurt Weill** (1900-1950) was a German composer best known for his work with the German playwright Bertolt Brecht. Born in Dessau, he was the son of a cantor and showed a talent for music at a young age. His earliest known piece was written in 1913. He found great success writing in Berlin between the wars but was forced to flee Germany in 1933 because of his Jewish heritage and never returned. While in the US, he began to study American popular music and would go on to collaborate with lyricists such as Ira Gershwin and Oscar Hammerstein. Throughout his career he held the belief that music should have a socially useful purpose, which can be seen very clearly in the works he wrote for "Lunch Time Follies", a series of concerts performed in factories and union houses presented by the War Effort with the intention of making art available to the masses. I chose to present pieces on this recital that represent Weill's more commercial and political music from before WWII, and his later musical theatre work composed in the United States. Not without his signature wit, "Berlin im Licht", written in 1928 for a festival of the same name, was an ode to the modern metropolis that was Berlin. This was a time of hope in Germany when Hitler's NSDAP was still an insignificant fringe movement. Sunny optimism was never Weill's style though, and composed that same year, "Muschel von Margate", tells a very different story. Written as the finale for Léo Lania's play, *Konjunktur (The Oil Boom)*, "Muschel" recaps the plot: a beautiful seaside town, sitting on a trove of oil, is destroyed as three oil companies battle over control of its assets. While Margate is a fictional town, the song makes reference to very real places and people involved in the burgeoning oil industry in the Middle East. Finally, "Schickelgruber", with text by Howard Dietz and written for the "Lunch Time Follies", is a quintessential Weill patter song, lampooning the Führer. Schickelgruber was the family name of Adolf Hitler's father Alois, who changed it to Hitler, and Schickelgruber became a dirty word synonymous with Hitler and the Reich. Weill leans into Hitler's past as a failed artist and the fact that he was a son of an illegitimate child and likely had a Jewish grandfather.

Maximillian Jansen  
April, 2021

## Performer Biographies

Tenor **MAXIMILLIAN JANSEN**, known for “his confident timbre and pleasing voice” (*Millbrook Independent*), is a versatile performer who is comfortable performing works from the Renaissance to the present day. He is committed to elevating works of silenced and underrepresented artists and strives to build a musical landscape that is inclusive for all.

In 2021 Maximillian premiered a setting of the Yiddish Folksong *Die Alte Kasche* by David Serkin Ludwig in a concert presented by the Yiddish Institute for Research. The new works performed on this concert carry forward a trend which began with Joel Engel's 1909 set of folksong arrangements and includes many works by composers of the Society for Jewish Folk Music as well as composers such as Maurice Ravel, Sergei Prokofiev, Stefan Wolpe, Frederic Rzewski, Julia Wolfe, and others.

This fall, along with colleagues Jardena Gertler-Jaffe, Louis Tiemann, and Diana Borshcheva, Maximillian presented *Wherever the Road May Lead*, a “walking recital” featuring music of Hudson Valley poets and composers. The recital encourages listeners to explore nature, escaping from the anxieties of work and school and inviting them to have a meditative musical experience. For more information, visit [walkingrecital.com](http://walkingrecital.com)

In 2020, Maximillian, and his fellow artists in the Bard College Conservatory of Music Graduate Vocal Arts Program, worked with actor and writer John Jarboe, mezzo-soprano Stephanie Blythe, and conductor James Bagwell to create *Rest in Pieces*. This devised opera celebrated the tribulations, glories, and loves of this tempestuous art form, featuring the music of Mozart, Strauss, Bizet, Copland, and Puccini. With this work, the artists sought to address the difficult truths of opera's history of racism, sexism, and underrepresentation.

Maximillian was scheduled to cover the role of Don José in *Carmen* at Hogfish Opera's inaugural 2020 season in Portland, Maine. He was also scheduled to perform Mozart operatic excerpts with The Broad Street Orchestra and to appear as the tenor soloist in the Bach Magnificat, Mozart's *Regina Coeli* K. 127, and *Vesperae Solennes* with The Orchestra Now, which were all postponed due to COVID-19.

Maximillian has performed such roles as Acis in *Acis and Galatea*, Ferrando in *Così fan tutte*, the titular role in *Albert Herring*, and Monastatos in *Die Zauberflöte*. He has appeared as a soloist with the Battenkill Chorale, Concerts in the Village, Cincinnati Fusion Ensemble, and the Victoria Civic Orchestra. Maximillian has worked with Libby Larsen, Jake Heggie and John Musto in masterclasses on their own compositions. For more information, visit his website, [jansentenor.com](http://jansentenor.com).

Born in Boston and raised behind the “Redwood Curtain” of northern California, pianist **Ryan MacEvoy McCullough** has developed a diverse career as soloist, vocal and instrumental collaborator, composer, recording artist, and pedagogue. Ryan's music-making encompasses work with historical keyboards, electro-acoustic tools and instruments, and close collaborations with some of today's foremost composers. His long standing collaborative (and life) partnership with soprano Lucy Fitz Gibbon has yielded a substantial crop of new art song repertoire, as well as his

work in contemporary ensemble and commissioning project *HereNowHear*, 2017 recipient of a Fromm Foundation award.

Ryan's growing discography features many world premiere recordings, including solo piano works of Milosz Magin (*Acte Preamble*), Andrew McPherson (*Secrets of Antikythera*, Innova), John Liberatore (*Line Drawings*, Albany), Nicholas Vines (*Hipster Zombies from Mars*, Navona), art song and solo piano music of John Harbison and James Primosch with Ms. Fitz Gibbon (*Descent/Return*, Albany), and forthcoming albums of art song by Sheila Silver (Albany, also with Ms. Fitz Gibbon) and electroacoustic music by Christopher Stark (New Focus). He has also appeared on PBS's Great Performances (*Now Hear This*, "The Schubert Generation") and is an alumnus of NPR's *From the Top*.

Ryan has been featured as concerto soloist with major orchestras including the Los Angeles Philharmonic and Toronto Symphony, and has appeared at major festivals and concert halls around the world. He holds his Bachelor of Music from Humboldt State University (studying with Deborah Clasquin), Artist Diplomas from the Colburn Conservatory and the Glenn Gould School at the Royal Conservatory in Toronto (John Perry and David Louie), a Masters in Music from University of Southern California (John Perry), and Master of Fine Arts and Doctor of Musical Arts from Cornell University (Xak Bjerken). He currently lives in Kingston, New York, and is a collaborative piano fellow in the Bard College-Conservatory of Music, and visiting lecturer at Cornell University.

**open your heart** – E. E. Cummings (1894-1962)

open your heart:  
i'll give you a treasure  
of tiniest world  
a piece of forever with

summitless younger than  
angels are mountains  
rivery forests  
towerful towns (queen

poet king float  
sprout heroes of moonstar  
flutter to and  
swim blossoms of person)through

musical shadows while hunted  
by daemons  
seethe luminous  
leopards(on wingfeet of thingfear)

come ships go  
snowily sailing  
perfect silence.  
Absolute ocean

**Sailor-Boy**

We go walking on the green grass  
Thus, thus, thus,  
Come all you pretty fair maids,  
Come walk along, with us.  
So Pretty and so fair  
As you take yourself to be,  
I'll choose you for a partner,  
Come walk along with me.

We go walking on the green grass  
Thus, thus, thus.

I would not be a blacksmith  
that smuts his nose and chin,  
I'd rather be a sailor-boy  
That sails through the wind.  
Sailor-boy, sailor-boy,  
Sailor-boy for me,  
If ever I get married  
A sailor's wife she'll be.

**The Shooting of His Dear**

O come all you young fellows that carry a gun,  
I'd have you get home by the light of the sun,  
For young Jimmy was a fowler and fowling alone,  
When he shot his own true love in the room of a swan.

Then home went young Jimmy with his dog and his gun,  
Saying, "Uncle, dear uncle, have you heard what I've done?"



Cursed be that old gun smith that made my old gun,  
For I've shot my own true love in the room of a swan."

Then out came bold uncle with his locks hanging grey,  
Saying, "Jimmy, dear Jimmy, don't you go away  
Don't you leave your own country till the trial come on,  
For you never will be hanged for the shooting a swan."

So the trial came on and pretty Polly did appear,  
Saying, "Uncle, dear uncle, let Jimmy go clear,  
For my apron was bound round me and he took me for a swan,  
And his poor heart lay bleeding for Polly his own."

**O might those sighes and teares return again – John Donne (1572-1631)**

Oh might those sighes and teares return again  
Into my breast and eyes, which I have spent,  
That I might in my holy discontent  
Mourne with some fruit, as I have mourn'd in vaine;

In mine idolatry, what show'rs of rain  
Mine eyes did waste? What griefs my heart did rent?  
That sufferance was my sin now I repent  
'Cause I did suffer, I must suffer paine

Th'hydroptique drunkard, and night scouting thiefe,  
The itchy letcher and self-tickling proud  
Have the remembrance of past joyes, for reliefe  
of coming ills. To poore me is allow'd

No ease; for, long, yet vehement grieve hath been  
Th'effect and cause, the punishment and sin

**Batter my heart, three person'd God**

Batter my heart, three-person'd God, for you  
As yet but knock, breathe, shine, and seek to mend;  
That I may rise and stand, o'erthrow me, and bend  
Your force to break, blow, burn, and make me new.

I, like an usurp'd town to another due,  
Labor to admit you, but oh, to no end;  
Reason, your viceroy in me, me should defend,  
But is captiv'd, and proves weak or untrue.

Yet dearly I love you, and would be lov'd fain,  
But am betroth'd unto your enemy;  
Divorce me, untie or break that knot again,  
Take me to you, imprison me, for I,

Except you enthrall me, never shall be free,  
Nor ever chaste, except you ravish me.

**Death, be not proud**

Death be not proud, though some have called thee  
Mighty and dreadful, for, thou art not soe,  
For, those, whom thou think'st, thou dost over throw,

Die not, poore death, nor yet canst thou kill mee.

From rest and sleepe, which but thy pictures be  
Much pleasure, then from thee, much more must flow,  
And soonest our best men with thee do goe  
Rest of their bones, and souls deliverie.

Thou art slave to Fate, Chance, kings, and desperate men,  
And dost with poyson, warre, and sickness dwell  
And poppie, or charmes can make us sleepe as well  
And better than thy stroake: why swell'st thou then?

One short sleepe past, wee wake eternally,  
And death shall be no more; death thou shalt die.

**Tel jour, telle nuit** – Paul Éluard (1895-1952)

**1.**

Bonne journée j'ai revu qui je n'oublie pas  
Qui je n'oublierai jamais  
Et des femmes fugaces dont les yeux  
Me faisaient une haie d'honneur  
Elles s'enveloppèrent dans leurs sourires

Bonne journée j'ai vu mes amis sans soucis  
Les hommes ne pesaient pas lourd  
Un qui passait  
Son ombre changée en souris  
Fuyait dans le ruisseau

J'ai vu le ciel très grand  
Le beau regard des gens privés de tout  
Plage distant où personne n'aborde

Bonne journée qui commença mélancolique  
Noire sous les arbres verts  
Mais qui soudain trempée d'aurore  
M'entra dans le cœur par surprise.

**2.**

Une ruine coquille vide  
Pleure dans son tablier  
Les enfants qui jouent autour d'elle  
Font moins de bruit que des mouches

La ruine s'en va à tâtons  
Chercher ses vaches dans un pré  
J'ai vu le jour je vois cela  
Sans en avoir honte

Il est minuit comme une fleche  
Dans un cœur à la portée  
Des folâtres lueurs nocturnes  
Qui contredisent le sommeil.

**3.**

Le front comme un drapeau perdu

**1.**

A good day I have seen those I don't forget  
That I will never forget  
And the fleeting women whose eyes  
Form in me a line of honour  
They wrapped themselves in their smiles

A good day I saw my friends without worry  
The men didn't weigh much  
One who passed  
His shadow changed into a mouse  
Fled into the gutter

I've seen the vast sky  
The beautiful look of those deprived of everything  
Remote beaches where no one lands

A good day which started mournfully  
Black under the green trees  
But which suddenly drenched in gold  
Entered my unsuspecting heart.

**2.**

A ruined empty shell  
Weeps into her apron  
The children that play around her  
Make less noise than flies

The ruin is groping  
Searching for her cows in the pasture  
I have seen the day, I see it now  
Without any shame

It is midnight like an arrow  
In the heart that is opened  
To the wild evening nights  
That prevent sleep.

**3.**

My forehead like a surrendered flag

Je te traîne quand je suis seul  
Dans les rues froides  
Des chambres noires  
En criant misère

Je ne veux pas le lâcher  
Tes mains claires et compliquées  
Nées dans le miroir clos des miennes

Tout le reste est parfait  
Tout le reste est encore plus inutile  
Que la vie

Creuse la terre sous ton ombre

Une nappe d'eau près des seins  
Où se noyer  
Comme une pierre.

4.  
Une roulette couverte en tuiles  
Le cheval mort un enfant maître  
Pensant le front bleu de haine  
À deux seins s'abattant sur lui  
Comme deux poings

Ce mélodrame nous arrache  
La raison du cœur.

5.  
À toutes brides toi don't le fantôme  
Piaffe la nuit sur un violon  
Viens régner dans les bois

Les verges de l'ouragan  
Cherchent leur chemin par chez toi  
Tu n'es pas de celles  
Don't on invente les désirs

Viens boire un baiser par ici  
Cede au feu qui te désespère.

6.  
Une herbe pauvre  
Sauvage  
Apparat dans la neige  
C'était la santé  
Ma bouche fut émerveillée  
Du gout d'air pur qu'elle avait  
Elle était fanée.

7.  
Je n'ai envie que de t'aimer  
Un orage emplit la vallée  
Un poisson la rivière

I drag you only when I am alone  
In the cold streets  
Dark rooms  
Crying miserably

I don't want to let them go  
You clear and intricate hands  
Born in the darkened mirror of mine

Everything else is perfect  
Everything else is more useless  
Than life

Dig out the earth under your shadow

A sheet of water near your breasts  
To drown in  
Like a stone.

4.  
A wagon covered in tiles  
The horse dead a child master  
Thinking his forehead blue from hate  
For the two breasts beating down on him  
Like two fists

This melodrama tears away  
The heart's reason

5.  
At full speed you whose ghost  
Pawns at night on a violin  
Come and reign in the woods

The lashing of the hurricane  
Looks for its path by way of you  
You are not one of those  
Whose desires can be invented

Come drink a kiss over here  
Give in to the fire that makes you despair.

6.  
A small blade of grass  
Wild  
Appeared in the snow  
It was health  
My mouth marveled  
At the taste of pure air it had  
It was withered.

7.  
I've no desire but to love you  
A storm fills the valley  
A fish the river

Je t'ai faite à la taille de ma solitude  
Le monde entire pour se cacher  
Des jour des nuits pour se comprendre

Pour ne plus rien voir dans tes yeux  
Que ce que je pense de toi  
Et d'un monde à ton image

Et des jour et des nuits réglés par tes paupières.

**8.**  
Figure de force blûlante et farouche  
Cheveux noirs où l'or coule vers le sud  
Aux nuits corrompues  
Or engloutie étoile impure  
Dans un lit jamais partagé

Aux veines des tempes  
Comme aux bouts des seins  
La vie se refuse  
Les yeux nul ne peut les crever  
Boire leur éclat ni leur larmes  
Le sang au-dessus d'eux triomphe pour lui seul

Intraitable démesurée  
Inutile  
Cette santé bâtit une prison.

**9.**  
Nous avons fait la nuit je tiens ta main je veille  
Je te soutiens de toutes mes forces  
Je grave sur un roc l'étoile de tes forces  
Sillons profonds où la bonté de ton corps germera  
Je me répète ta voix cachée ta voix publique  
Je ris encore de l'orgueilleuse  
Que tu traites comme une mendiante  
Des fous que tu respectes des simples où tu te baignes

Et dans ma tête qui se met doucement d'accord avec la  
tienne avec la nuit  
Je m'émerveille de l'inconnue que tu deviens  
Une inconnue semblable à toi semblable à tout ce que  
j'aime  
Qui est toujours nouveau.

I've formed you to fit my solitude  
The whole world to hide in  
Of days of nights to understand each other

So as not to see anything in your eyes  
Other than what I think of you  
And a world in your image

And the days and the nights shaped by your eyelids

**8.**  
Figure of force fiery and wild  
Hair black in which gold flows to the south  
To corrupt nights  
Gold doused corrupted star  
In a bed never shared

To veins of temples  
As at tips of breasts  
Life is refused  
No one can blind the eyes  
Drink their brilliance nor their tears  
The blood above them triumphs for itself alone

Intractable enormous  
Pointless  
This health builds a prison

**9.**  
We have made the night I hold your hand I stay awake  
I support you with all of my force  
I engrave on a rock the star of your strength  
Deep furrows where your body's goodness germinates  
I repeat to myself your private voice your public voice  
I still laugh at the proud  
That you treat like a beggar  
The fools that you respect the simple ones in whom  
you steep yourself  
And in my head that gently begins to harmonize with  
yours with the night  
I marvel at the stranger you've become  
A stranger resembling you resembling everything I  
love  
Which is always new.

### **Christmas Morning in Dornach – Percy Mackaye (1875-1956)**

I met God walking leisurely.  
So calm the time, so keen the air.  
It seemed a simple thing to see  
Him walking there.

His little son was at his side.  
They held each other by the hand.

Under a shining cloud eyed  
The shadowy land.

The Cloud, the Father, and his Son,  
All moved with such melodious pace  
It was as if they went in one  
Encircling grace.

My heart, that beat so quick and wild,  
Right then I felt its fears allay.  
“Grüß Gott!” I said. The Three all smiled:  
“Grüß Gott!” said They.

**Wie ist die Nact... – Albert Steffen (1884-1963)**

“Wie ist die Nacht so weich und warm,  
wie sind die Seelen nah,

wie du so ruhst in meinem Arm,  
bist du schon nicht mehr da,

ich sehe dich am Himmelsdom  
von Stern zu Sternen ziehn,

ein bläulich schimmerndes Phantom,  
willst du die Liebe fliehn,

hinwandeln mit geschloßnem Lid,  
du Geisterkolonist,

bist du der dunklen Erde müd,  
weil du so heilg bist?

Du hast dich weit von mir gewandt.  
Jetzt trittst du in dem Mond – “

“Ich gehe nur in jenes Land,  
Wo deine seele wohnt.”

“O wie der wundersame Glanz  
gewaltiger erwacht!”

“Geliebter, ach, ich bin so ganz  
in deiner Liebesmacht.”

“Nun hebst du dich zum hehrsten Raum,  
wie bist du still un blaß.”

“Es trennt mich noch ein schmaler Saum  
vom seligsten Gelaß.”

“Du fliegst, du fliegst, du bist so fern.  
Ich sehe dich nicht mehr.”

“Ich habe dich für ewig gern,  
ach viel, ach viel zu sehr”

“How soft and warm is the night,  
how close the souls are,

as you rest in my arms,  
but you are no longer there,

I see you in the arc of the sky  
going from star to star,

a bluish shimmering phantom,  
do you wish to flee from love,

to wander with closed eyes  
you colonist of spirits

are your tired of the dark earth  
because you are so holy?

You have turned far away from me  
now you tread on the moon – “

“I walk only in the land  
where your soul dwells.”

“Oh how the wonderful splendour  
shines brightly!”

“Beloved, ah, I am so completely  
In the power of your love.”

“Now you rise to the loftiest realm  
how still and quiet you are.”

“A slender seam still separates me  
from the most blissful serenity.”

“You fly, you fly, you are too far.  
I can see you no longer.”

“I will love you forever,  
oh far, far too much.”

**Abendphantasie** - Friedrich Hölderlin (1770-1843)

Vor seiner Hütte ruhig im Schatten sitzt  
Der Pflüger, dem Genügsamen raucht sein Herd.  
Gastfreundlich tönt dem Wanderer im  
Friedlichen Dorfe die Abendglocke.

Wohl kehren itzt die Schiffer zum Hafen auch,  
In fernen Städten fröhlich verrauscht des Markts  
Geschäftger Lärm; in stiller Laube  
Glänzt das gesellige Mahl den Freunden.

Wohin denn ich? Es leben die Sterblichen  
Von Lohn und Arbeit; wechselnd in Müh und Ruh  
Ist alles freudig; warum schläft den  
Nimmer nur mir der Brust der Stachel?

Am Abendhimmel blühet ein Frühling auf;  
Unzählig blühen die Rosen, und ruhig scheint  
Die goldne Welt; o! dorthin nimmt mich,  
Purpurne Wolken! und möge droben

In Licht und Luft zerrinnen mir Lieb' und Leid! –  
Doch wie verscheucht von töriger Bitte, flieht  
Der Zauber; dunkel wird's und einsam  
Unter dem Himmel, wie immer bin ich –

Komm du nun, sanfter Schlummer! zu viel begehrt  
Das Herz; doch endlich, Jugend! verglühst du ja,  
Du ruhelose träumerische!  
Friedlich und heiter ist dann das Alter

In the shade of his cottage, quietly  
sits the modest plowman, his hearth smoking.  
Hospitably, the bells ring  
in the peaceful village for the wanderers.

Now too, the boatmen return to port,  
in distant busy cities the sound of the markets  
was joyful; in the quiet arbor  
a generous meal shines for friends.

Where am I going? Long live mortals  
on wages and work; alternating work and rest  
all is joyful; why then, in my breast,  
does this pain never rest?

Spring blossoms in the evening sky;  
Countless roses bloom, and the golden world  
seems calm; oh take me there,  
crimson clouds! and up there

in light and air let my love and sorrow melt away! –  
But as if scared away from my foolish pleas,  
the spell disappears; dark and lonely it is  
under the sky, as I always am –

Come now, you sweet slumber, the heart desires  
too much; at last youth, you burn up,  
you restless dreamer!  
Old age is peaceful and cheerful.

**September 1, 1939** – W. H. Auden (1907-1973)

I sit in one of the dives  
On Fifty-second Street  
Uncertain and afraid  
As the clever hopes expire  
Of a low dishonest decade:  
Waves of anger and fear  
Circulate over the bright  
And darkened lands of the earth,  
Obsessing our private lives;  
The unmentionable odour of death  
Offends the September night.  
Accurate scholarship can  
Unearth the whole offence  
From Luther until now  
That has driven a culture mad,  
Find out what occurred at Linz  
What huge imago made  
A psychopathic god:  
I and the public know  
What all schoolchildren learn,  
Those to whom evil is done  
Do evil in return.

Exiled Thucydides knew  
All that a speech can say  
About Democracy,  
And what dictators do,  
The elderly rubbish they talk  
To an apathetic grave;  
Analysed in his book,  
The enlightenment driven away,  
The habit-forming pain  
Mismanagement and grief:  
We must suffer them all again

Faces along the bar  
Cling to their average day  
The lights must never go out,  
The music must always play,  
All the conventions conspire  
To make this fort assume  
The furniture of home;  
Lest we should see where we are,  
Lost in a haunted wood,  
Children afraid of the night  
Who have never been happy or good.

All I have is a voice  
To undo the folded lie,  
The romantic lie in the brain  
Of the sensual man-in-the-street  
And the lie of Authority  
Whose buildings grope the sky:  
There is no such thing as the State  
And no one exists alone;  
Hunger allows no choice  
To the citizen or the police;  
We must love one another or die.

Defenseless under the night  
Our world in stupor lies;  
Yet, dotted everywhere,  
Ironic points of light  
Flash out wherever the Just  
Exchange their messages:  
May I, composed like them  
Of Eros and of dust,  
Beleaguered by the same  
Negation and despair,  
Show an affirming flame.

**Berlin im Licht** – Kurt Weill (1900-1950)

Und zum Spaziergehn  
genügt das Sonnenlicht.  
Doch um die Stadt Berlin zu sehn,  
genügt die Sonne nicht.  
Das ist kein lauschiges Plätzchen,  
das ist 'ne ziemliche Stadt.  
Damit man da alles gut sehen kann,  
da braucht man schon einige Watt.  
Na wat denn? Na wat denn?  
Was ist das für 'ne Stadt denn?

Komm, mach mal Licht,  
damit man sehn kann, ob was da ist,  
Komm, mach mal Licht,  
und rede nun mal nicht.  
Komm, mach mal Licht,  
dann wollen wir doch auch mal sehen,  
Ob das 'ne Sache ist: Berlin im Licht.

**Muschel von Margate** – Felix Gasbarra (1895-1985)

In Margate auf der Promenade  
hing ein blechernes Ladenschild  
vor einer Bude mit Souvenirs  
eine große Muschel im Bild.  
Da bot ein alter Mann  
bemalte Muscheln an.  
Ganz Margate kannte sein Gebell:  
Shell! Shell! Shell!

Muschel von Margate bringt Ihnen Glück,  
Muschel im goldenen Grunde,  
Muschel von Margate, fällt auf sie Ihr Blick  
denken Sie zurück an manche unvergeßliche Stunde.

In Margate auf der Promenade  
erhob sich ein Gestank.  
Wo einst die Bude mit Muscheln stand,  
steht ein Petroleum Tank.  
Der Sohn von jenem alten Mann  
fing einen andern Laden an:  
ein Naphta und Benzin Kartell:  
Shell! Shell! Shell!

Muschel von Margate brachte ihm Glück,  
Muschel in goldenen Grunde,  
Muschel von Margate, fällt auf sie ein Blick  
denkt er gern zurück an manche unvergeßliche Funde.

Und als der Tank zu pumpen anfang  
in Margate auf der Promenade,  
ein Dutzend an jedem Bohrturm hing,  
der über Öl bei Baku steht.  
Koltschak und Denikin,  
da wurde aus Blut Benzin:  
aus tausend Hälsen sprang der Quell:

And to go for a walk  
you only need sunshine.  
But to see in the city of Berlin,  
the son is not enough.  
This isn't some secluded spot,  
this is quite a city.  
In order to see everything well,  
you need to bring a few watts.  
So what? So what?  
What kind of city is it then?

Come on, turn on the lights,  
so you can see what there is to see,  
Come on, turn on the lights,  
and don't say a word.  
Come on turn on the lights  
Then let's see  
what's the big deal: Berlin in lights.

In Margate on the promenade  
hung a tin shop sign  
outside a souvenir stand  
with a picture of a huge shell.  
An old man sold there  
painted shells.  
All of Margate knew his cry:  
Shell! Shell! Shell!

Shells from Margate brings him luck,  
shells made out of gold,  
shells from Margate, when you look upon them  
think back on that unforgettable time.

In Margate on the promenade  
a stench rose up.  
Where once the shell stand stood,  
there stood a petroleum tank.  
The son of that old Mann  
started up another business:  
A naphtha and benzine cartel:  
Shell! Shell! Shell!

Shells from Margate bring you luck,  
shells made out of gold,  
shells from Margate, when he looks upon them  
he thinks of that of that incredible discovery.

And as the tank started pumping  
in Margate on the promenade,  
a dozen hung on each derrick  
that stood over the oil in Baku.  
Koltschak and Denikin,  
turned their blood into benzine:  
Out of a thousand throats sprang the cry:



Shell! Shell! Shell!

Muschel von Margate bringt Ihnen Glück,  
Muschel im goldenen Grunde,  
Muschel von Margate, fällt auf sie Ihr Blick,  
denken sie zurück an manche Rede im Völkerbunde.

Und als die Sonne am höchsten stand  
in Margate auf der Promenade,  
da fing das Öl zu brennen an  
von Aserbeidschan bis Tibet,  
es steckte die Welt in Brand  
Petroleum heißt unser Vaterland,  
dafür zerlöchern wir uns das Fell:  
Shell! Shell! Shell!

Muschel von Margate bringt Ihnen Glück  
wir aber geh'n vor die Hunde!  
Muschel von Margate, fällt auf sie der Blick,  
zahlen wir zurück in letzter entscheidender Stunde.

Shell! Shell! Shell!

Shells from Margate bring you luck,  
shells made out of gold,  
shells from Margate, when you look upon them  
you will think back on some speech from the LON

And when the sun was at its highest point  
in Margate on the promenade,  
then the oil began to burn  
from Azerbaijan to Tibet,  
it set the whole world on fire  
petroleum is the name of our fatherland,  
for it we drill into our flesh:  
Shell! Shell! Shell!

Shells from Margate bring you luck  
but we're going to the dogs!  
Shells from Margate, when you we look upon you,  
we'll pay the price in the final decisive moment.

**Schickelgruber** – Howard Deitz (1896-1983)

In a hamlet in the Tyrol an old lady is not virile,  
She is languishing and heavy is her heart.  
For she thinks about her baby who, had he been christened Abie,  
Maybe might have never played the monster's part.  
If her son had only married,  
if her lust had not miscarried,  
Who can say for certain what might not have been.  
In her somber weeds of sorrow she is hopeful some tomorrow  
Will undo the passion that produced a sin.

Schickelgruber! Schickelgruber!  
You were born a child of shame.  
You have always been a bastard,  
Even though you changed your name.  
Came the headlines, then the breadlines,  
As your will to power grew.  
Schickelgruber, Schickelgruber!  
What a pretty how-dy-do.  
Though a mother, I can smother  
Mother love at thought of you.

In his youth his one obsession was to practice a profession,  
And he dabbled with the palette and the paint.  
But the art he couldn't master, so he went from paint to plaster,  
And today he calls himself a plaster saint.  
Is he good or evil fairy?  
All his pals have now grown wary,  
That is, those of them who didn't rate the purge.  
And the scent will ever linger, how he gave his friends the finger  
Just to gratify and culminate an urge.

Schickelgruber! Schickelgruber!  
Once the dew was on the rose.

Where you'll end up in the wind-up,  
Schickelgruber, Heaven knows.  
Ever ruthless, ever truthless,  
When the judgment day is due.  
Repercussions from the Russians,  
Schickelgruber, say you're through.  
Every village that you pillage  
In revenge will turn on you.

**Stay in My Arms** – Marc Blitzstein (1905-1964)

In this great city where will I find one peaceful, pretty spot where noise is not?  
A bit of quiet, untouched by all the hectic riot would help things a lot.  
Our temples automatic- science reveals.  
Our pace is acrobatic- life moves on wheels  
Here's my admission-  
I haven't very much ambition for the mad existence of our time.

Let's just be old fashioned.  
Let's just be lazy.  
The world's gone crazy  
so stay in my arms.

My most dear; come close dear.  
Don't be afraid to.  
My hands were made to shield you from alarm.

What's all the shooting for?  
Where are they rushing?  
Whom are they rooting for?  
Whom are they crushing?  
Forget them or let them grow dim and hazy.  
The world's gone crazy  
so stay in my arms.

Let's lie here  
year by year midfield and daisy.  
The world's gone crazy  
so stay in my arms.

While millions of millions go wildly prancing,  
I'll be romancing a song of your charms.  
They dance a dance that kills- mad and defenseless.  
Such jumping Jacks and Jills.  
It's all so senseless.

I love you.  
You love me.  
That much is plain, dear.  
The world's insane, dear:  
so stay in my arms.