

MUSIC
FOR VOICES
& INSTRUMENTS



PRESENT A CONCERT OF
TWENTIETH CENTURY
VOCAL CHAMBER MUSIC

DELAGÉ
BERIO
RAVEL
CRUMB

ANTONY WALKER
CONDUCTOR

ALISON MORGAN
SOPRANO

JENNY DUCK-CHONG
MEZZO-SOPRANO

SYDNEY ALPHA ENSEMBLE

SATURDAY 14TH FEBRUARY 1998 7.30 PM
SCEGGS' GREAT HALL ST PETERS ST DARLINGHURST

PROGRAMME

DELAGE

M A U R I C E

Quatres Poèmes hindous

1. Madras
2. Lahore
3. Bénarès
4. Jeypur

BERIO

L U C I A N O

Folksongs

1. Black is the colour...
2. I wonder as I wander...
3. Loosin yelav...
4. Rossignolet du bois
5. A la femminisca
6. La donna ideale
7. Ballo
8. Mottetu de tristura
9. Malurous qu'o uno fenno
10. Lo fiolaire
11. Azerbaijan love song

• I N T E R V A L •

RAVEL

M A U R I C E

Trois Poèmes de Stephane Mallarmé

1. Soupir
2. Placet futile
3. Surgi de la croupe et du bond

CRUMB

G E O R G E

Ancient Voices of Children

1. El niño busca su voz.
2. Me he perdido muchas veces por el mar
3. ¿De dónde vienes, amor, mi niño?
4. Todas las tardes en Granada, todas las tardes se muere un niño.
5. Se ha llendado de luces mi corazón de seda



MUSIC FOR VOICES AND INSTRUMENTS

MUSIC FOR VOICES AND INSTRUMENTS is dedicated to the performance of vocal chamber music spanning the twentieth century. The distinctive combination of voice and instruments has inspired some of the richest and most diverse music of our time. Composers have fully exploited instruments for their vast collective array of colour and effect. The addition of voice, able to express language, to this equation creates a powerful alloy of poetry and music which is highly compelling.

Tonight's programme gives us an insight into the impact of foreign cultures on twentieth century Western composers, from the sensual expressions of the early French composers to the more integrated approach of later composers.

MUSIC FOR VOICES AND INSTRUMENTS envisages this as the first of a series of concerts which will provide the opportunity to perform a broad spectrum of works rarely heard in Australia, ranging from earlier in the century to new commissions.



SYDNEY ALPHA ENSEMBLE

SYDNEY ALPHA ENSEMBLE brings together some of Australia's finest contemporary music specialists to create an ensemble dedicated to the performance of the virtuosic large chamber music of the 20th Century.

It began life as the Alpha Centauri Ensemble under the direction of Roger Woodward and released its first CD, toured Europe and performed with the Sydney Dance Company in its first two years of life before reforming with new artistic management as the Sydney Alpha Ensemble in 1993.

The ensemble has brought to Australian audiences rare opportunities to hear live, the best of the large chamber music of the 20th century, presenting acclaimed performances of classic twentieth century works by Xenakis, Ligeti, Boulez, Messiaen, Kagel, Webern and Stockhausen. The ensemble has also developed its own repertoire of new and extant Australian works by composers including Kats-Chernin, Lumsdaine, Lim, Smetanin, Butterley, Finsterer, Henderson, Sutherland and Gifford.

Recent highlights include: selection for two years in a row as Australian entry in the Paris Rostrum, resulting in the broadcast in over 30 countries of recordings of the world premiere performances of *Death Stench* by young composer Matthew Hindson and *Cadences, Deviations and Scarlatti* by Elena Kats-Chernin; a season that saw Michael Finnissy's *Shameful Vice* presented in collaboration with the Gay and Lesbian Mardi Gras in the presence of the composer; the ensemble recorded a film score by Elena Kats-Chernin for the restored silent film *The Phantom Chariot* for ZDF Television (Germany) and ARTE; the music theatre work *Black River* by Andrew Schultz was presented with Maroochy Baramba and Theatre Sydney to a full house at the Concert Hall of the Sydney Opera House for the Festival of Dreaming, the first of the Olympic Cultural Festivals; *Strange Attractions*, the ensemble's first CD was released by ABC Classics and received excellent reviews; the Ensemble was awarded the Sounds Australian Award 1997 (NSW) for the most distinguished contribution by an organisation to the performance of new music; a second CD release, also through ABC Classics, *Clocks*, the first CD of music by Elena Kats-Chernin was released to widespread public acclaim; in January this year, Sydney Alpha Ensemble performed for the Sydney Festival for the first time as part of the Town Hall Proms series presenting 8 songs for a Mad King by Maxwell Davies and Gruber's *Frankenstein!!* with baritone Lyndon Terracini.



Flutes	Geoff Collins, Emma Sholl
Oboe	Linda Walsh
Clarinets	Peter Jenkin, Philip Arkininstall
Violins	Tony Gault, Alexandra D'Elia
Viola	Esther van Strahlen
Cello	Zoltan Szabo
Percussion	Daryl Pratt, Phil South, Greg Sully
Harp	Jane Rosenson
Piano	Stephanie McCallum
Mandolin	Paul Hooper



ANTONY WALKER

ANTONY WALKER is at the forefront of a new generation of Australian musicians, having established a reputation for artistic excellence in direction and performance over the last decade. He has been residing in the United Kingdom as the inaugural recipient of the Sir Charles Mackerras/Australia-Britain Society Fellowship.

As Musical Director of Sydney Philharmonia Choirs (Motet and the 250 voice Symphonic Choir), The Contemporary Singers and specialist vocal groups, his skill in raising technical and artistic standards of performance to international levels is widely acknowledged.

Antony Walker's commitment to contemporary compositions and performance are evidenced by over 60 premieres of Australian works as well as first Australian performances of significant pieces such as Arvo Part's *St John Passion*, Poulenc's *Figure Humaine* and Iannis Xenakis' *Idmen A and B*. His recordings of contemporary Australian choral music and an innovative choral/instrumental CD of Australian Christmas Carols were reviewed as welcome contributions to the recorded repertoire.

He has worked as chorusmaster with conductors such as de Waart, Elder, Hogwood, Mackerras, Weil and John Nelson on pieces including Ravel's *L'Enfant et les Sortilèges*, Mahler Symphonies 2, 3 and 8 and the Berlioz *Requiem*.

Antony Walker has conducted Australia's leading symphony and chamber orchestras and instrumental ensembles. In 1996/7 he was a guest conductor for Opera Australia which has engaged him for productions including Gounod's *Faust*, Humperdinck's *Hansel & Gretel*. His conducting accomplishments include large scale performances (orchestra and 500 voice choir) and Festivals.

Career highlights are memorable performances of choral masterpieces; a successful tour to South Korea with the Philharmonia Motet Choir; his involvement as clinician, chorusmaster, conductor and artistic committee member for the Fourth World Choral Symposium (1996); and many national awards.

Engagements in 1997 included performances of Mozart's *Mitridate*, *Re di Ponto* for Wolf Trap Opera, Virginia (USA); Haydn's *Creation* with the Selangor Philharmonic & National Symphony Orchestra (Malaysia); and his Sydney Philharmonia finale, Berlioz' *Les Nuits d'Ete* and 500-voice performance of the Berlioz *Te Deum*.

In 1998 he will work with Opera Australia, Sydney Philharmonia Choirs, The Contemporary Singers, Rome Opera, the Philharmonic Chorus (London) and the City of Birmingham Symphony Chorus amongst others.

Future projects include plans to return to Wolf Trap Opera and Malaysia; and several CDs including one of Australian works for choir and percussion.



ALISON MORGAN

English born soprano ALISON MORGAN is establishing a solid reputation as an accomplished performer with a diverse repertoire. Her expertise in the area of vocal contemporary music has led to a wealth of experience as a soloist with ensembles such as The Contemporary Singers, Sydney Philharmonia Choirs and The Song Company, with whom she has performed numerous premieres by Australian composers and has featured at music festivals nationwide.

Notable engagements include Michael Finnissy's *Shameful Vice* for last year's Mardi Gras Arts Festival and the roles of First Witch and Second Woman in the Arts Management Production of Purcell's *Dido and Aeneas*. Radio broadcasts include Brahms' *Liebeslieder Walzer* for the Sydney Symphony Orchestra's Music for Spring Series and a Best of Sunday Live ABC concert with vocal quartet Scaramouche.

Alison has studied in London with Antony Rolfe Johnson and Dinah Harris and attended masterclasses with Diane Forlano at Gregynog in Wales. Since returning to Australia, she has continued her freelance career, recording incidental music for the Sydney Theatre Company's acclaimed production of Peter Whelan's *The Herbal Bed* and performing with the quartet Vocalise in a concert of Romantic music. Alison features as a soloist on The Contemporary Singers CD *Tongues, Swords, Keys* to be released later this year.



JENNY DUCK-CHONG

Mezzo-soprano JENNY DUCK-CHONG is an active and versatile performer working particularly in the fields of oratorio, recital and contemporary chamber music. She has worked as a soloist with many leading ensembles including Sydney Philharmonia Choirs, Sydney Baroque, Sydney Chamber Choir, The Contemporary Singers and The Renaissance Players. Recent engagements have included Monteverdi's *Vespers of the Blessed Virgin* (1610) with Sydney Philharmonia Motet Choir, Bach's *Christmas Oratorio* with Willoughby Symphony Choir & Orchestra and performances for the Australian Women's Music Festival. Forthcoming performances include Bach's *Christmas Oratorio* with Sydney Philharmonia Motet Choir and a recital of French and Spanish song.

Jenny Duck-Chong has also worked with the Opera Australia chorus since 1991 in productions including *Mer de Glace*, *Simon Boccanegra*, *Hansel and Gretel*, Verdi's *Requiem*, *The Pearl Fishers*, *Turandot*, *The Trojans* and *The Cunning Little Vixen*. In 1998 she continues this association with Mozart's *Così fan tutte*.

Over the last five years she has recorded several concerts for broadcast by the ABC and 2MBS-FM. She has recorded six CDs of early music with the Renaissance Players which have been released under the Walsingham label; *The Muses Gift*, *Venus' Fire*, *The Ring of Creation*, *Songs for a Wise King*, *Maria Morning Star* and *Mirror of Light*.

JANE SHELDON

Fifteen year old JANE SHELDON is a student at North Sydney Girls' High School. She has been a member of the Sydney Children's Choir for seven years and was Head Chorister in 1997. Jane has also performed with the newly formed Gondwana Voices, a national children's choir directed by Lyn Williams, and this year she will travel to Finland as an exchange chorister with the Tapiola Choir.

DELAGE

Quatre Poèmes hindous

The rapid assimilation of non-European musical elements by French composers had its source in the International Exposition of 1889 in Paris, where Maurice Ravel, Claude Debussy and others delighted in exotic and colourful sounds such as those of the Javanese gamelan orchestras. The influence of these harmonies and timbres create descriptive musical impressions represented a radical departure from the nineteenth century German Romantic tradition. Debussy's opera *Pelleas et Melisande* (1902) epitomises this new language, with its subdued colours and restrained expressiveness. On hearing the opera's debut production, Maurice Delage was immediately compelled to study composition. Nurtured by his teacher and mentor Ravel, he sought to evoke the exoticism of the Far East with conventional Western instruments.

The *Quatre Poèmes hindous* (1913) are based on texts by Heinrich Heine and 9th century Indian poet Bhartrihari and were written during the composer's journey through India with his businessman father, each song named after the city in which it was composed. Indian influence pervades both the writing and the instrumental effects; the 'sitar' portrayed by the cello during the second song is an innovative gesture, at that time new and daring in its musical directness. In a concert programme including Ravel's *Trois Poèmes de Stephane Mallarmé* and Stravinsky's *Poèmes de la lyrique japonaise*, the work was premiered in 1914 and is dedicated to Ravel, Stravinsky and Florent Schmitt.

1. Madras

Une belle à la taille svelte
se promène sous les arbres de la forêt
En se reposant de temps en temps
Ayant relevé de la main
les trois voiles d'or
qui lui couvrent les seins,
elle renvoie à la lune
les rayons dont elle était baignée.

Madras

A beauty with a slender waist
strolls beneath the forest's trees
resting from time to time.
Having lifted with her hand
the three golden veils
that cover her breasts
she sends back to the moon
the beams by which she was bathed.

2. Lahore

Un sapin isolé
se dresse sur une montagne aride du Nord.
Il sommeille.
La glace et la neige l'environnent
d'un manteau blanc.
Il rêve d'un palmier
qui là-bas dans l'Orient lointain se désole,
solitaire et taciturne,
sur la pente de son rocher brûlant.

Lahore

A lone pine tree
stands on an arid mountain of the North.
It slumbers.
The ice and the snow surround it
with a white cloak.
It dreams of a palm
which off in the distant Orient stands desolate,
solitary and silent,
on the slope of its burning rock.

3. Benares

Naissance de Bouddha

En ce temps-là, fut annoncée
la venue de Bouddha sur la terre.
Il se fit dans le ciel un grand bruit de nuages.
Les Dieux agitant leurs éventails et leurs vêtements
répandirent d'innombrables fleurs merveilleuses.

Benares

Birth of Buddha

In those days was announced
the coming of Buddha to earth.
It was heard in the sky a great noise of clouds.
The gods, shaking their fans and their garments
sprinkled with countless marvellous flowers

Des parfums mystérieux et doux
se croisèrent comme des lianes
dans le souffle tiède de cette nuit de printemps.
La perle divine de la pleine lune
s'arrêta sur le palais de marbre
gardé par vingt mille éléphants
pareils à des collines grises
de la couleur des nuages.

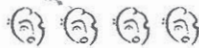
Mysterious and sweet perfumes
tangled about each other like vines
in the warm breath of this spring night.
The sacred pearl of the full moon
stopped above the marble palace
guarded by twenty thousand elephants
seeming like grey hills,
the colour of clouds.

4. Jeypur

Si vous pensez à elle, vous éprouvez un douloureux
torment.
Si vous la voyez, votre esprit se trouble.
Si vous la touchez, vous perdez la raison.
Comment peut-on l'appeler bien aimée?

Jaipur

If you think of her, you suffer painful torment.
If you see her, your spirit falters.
If you touch her, you lose your reason.
How can anyone call her beloved?



BERIO

Folksongs

Folksong has been of long-standing interest to Berio. Since university he has studied their idioms closely, describing his interest as "not as an ethnomusicologist but as a pragmatic egoist: so I tend to be interested only in those folk techniques... that I can in one way or another assimilate". He wrote his first 'folk songs', *Tre canzoni popolari*, in 1946-7 (two of which, *La donna ideale* and *Ballo*, he used almost twenty years later in this piece). He has continued to use folk music and related techniques in his work but he has said: "it is not my intention to preserve the authenticity of a folk song. My transcriptions are analyses of folk songs and at the same time convey the flavour of the music as I see it...I return again and again to folk music because...I would like to create a unity between folk music and our music - a real, perceptible, understandable continuity between ancient, popular music-making which is so close to everyday work and our music".

Folksongs explores an unusually wide range of vocal techniques and colourings. It was written as "a tribute to the extraordinary artistry" of Cathy Berberian, his first wife and the dedicatee and chosen interpreter of many of his most famous vocal pieces. This collection of eleven 'folk songs' is in fact seven arrangements, two compositions and an aural transcription. *Black is the colour and I wonder as I wander* are not traditional folksongs, but were composed by American John Jacob Niles in Elizabethan modes. The Armenian song *Loosin yelav* describes the rising of the moon. *Rossignolet du bois* is an old French song relating the conversation between a lover and a nightingale. The Sicilian folk song, *A la femminisca*, was sung by fishermen's wives as they waited at the docks. *La donna ideale* and *Ballo* are Berio's original compositions. In the first he creates an air of simplicity as he light-heartedly describes the four qualities to seek in the perfect woman. The second has a feeling of wild and frenzied activity, perfectly illustrating the turmoil and fever which love can incite. *Motettu di tristura*, a Sardinian song, depicts the sadness of a girl mourning with a nightingale. *Malurous qu'ò uno fenno* and *La fiolaire* are folksongs from Auvergne, France. The light-hearted and exuberant final piece was transcribed by Cathy Berberian from an old Azerbaijan record syllable by syllable, but has remained largely untranslatable!

NOTES AND TRANSLATIONS

1. Black is the colour... (America)

Black is the colour of my true love's hair
his lips are something rosy fair
the sweetest smile and the kindest hands
I love the grass whereon he stands

I love my love and well he knows
I love the grass whereon he goes
if he no more on earth will be
't will surely be the end of me

2. I wonder as I wander... (America)

I wonder as I wander out under the sky
how Jesus our Saviour did come for to die
for poor orn'ry people like you and like I
I wonder as I wander out under the sky
when Mary birthed Jesus 'twas in a cow stall
with wise man and farmers and shepherds and all
but high from the Heavens a star's light did fall
the promise of ages it then did recall
if Jesus had wanted of any wee thing
a star in the sky or a bird on the wing
or all of God's angels in Heav'n for to sing
he surely could have had it 'cause he was the king

3. Loosin yelav (Armenia)

Loosin yelav en sareetz
saree partzər gadareetz
shegleeg megleeg yeresov
Pərvetz kedneen loosni dzov.
Jan a loosin
Jan ko loosin
Jan ko gəlor sheg yereseen.

Xavarn arten tchəkatzav
oo el kedneen tchəgatzav
loosni loosov halatzvadz
moot amberi metch mənadz.
Jan a loosin....

4. Rossignolet du bois (France)

Rossignolet du bois,
rossignolet sauvage,
apprends-moi ton langage,
apprends-moi a parler,
apprends-moi la manière
comment il faut aimer.

Comment il faut aimer
je m'en vais vous le dire,
faut chanter des aubades
deux heures après minuit,
faut lui chanter: la belle
c'est pour vous réjouir.

3. The moon has risen

The moon has risen over the hill
over the top of the hill
its rosy red face
casting radiant light on the ground.
O dear moon
With your dear light
and your dear, round, rosy face!

Before the darkness lay
spread upon the earth,
moonlight has now chased it
into the dark clouds.
O dear moon...

4. Little nightingale of the woods

Little nightingale of the woods,
Little wild nightingale,
teach me your language,
teach me to speak like you,
teach me the way to woo.

The way to woo
I will tell you.
You must sing serenades
two hours after midnight,
You must sing: "Dear one,
this is to delight you."

On m'avait dit la belle
que vous avez des pommes,
des pommes de renettes
qui sont dans vot' jardin.
Permettez-moi la belle
que j'y mette la main.

Non, je ne permettrai pas
que vous touchiez mes pommes,
prenez d'abord la lune
et le soleil en main,
puis vous aurez les pommes
qui sont dans mon jardin.

I have been told, dear one,
that you have some apples,
some large green apples
in your garden.
Let me, dear one,
hold them in my hand.

No, I will not let you
touch my apples.
First hold the moon
and the sun in your hands
then you will have the apples
which are in my garden.

5. A la femminisca

(Sicily)

A la femminisca

E Signuruzzu miù faciti bon tempu
ha iu l'amanti miu 'mmezzu lu mari
l'arvuli d'oru e lintinni d'argentu
la Marunnuzza mi l'avaiutari,
chi pozzanu arrivdri 'nsarva mentu.
E comu arriva 'na littra ma fari
ci ha mittiri du duci paroli
comu ti l'ha passatu mari, mari.

May the Lord send fine weather,
My lover's out on the open sea;
The golden masts, the silver spars.
May Our Lady help him for me
so that they may come back safely.
And if a letter arrives may there be
two sweet words written
to tell me how it goes with you at sea.

6. La donna ideale

(Italy)

The ideal woman

L'omo chi mojer vor piar,
de quattro cosse de'espjar.
La primiera è com'el è naa,
l'altra è se l'è ben accostumaa,
l'altra è como el è forma,
la quarta è de quanto el è dotaa.
Se queste cosse ghe comprendi,
a lo nome de Dio la prendi

The man who wants to take a wife
hopes for four things:
the first is her family,
the second is her manners,
the third is her figure,
the fourth is the size of her dowry.
If you find these things,
In God's name, marry her!

7. Ballo

(Italy)

Dance

La la la la...
Amor fa disviare li più saggi
e chi più l'ama meno ha in sè misura.
Più folle è quello che più s'innamora.

Love divides the wisest men,
and he who loves most has the least judgement.
The greater lover is the greater fool.

La la la la...
Amor non cura di fare suoi dannaggi.
Co li suoi raggi mette tal calura
che non puo raffreddare per freddura

Love does not care what damage he causes.
His rays give so much heat
That not even coldness can cool it.

8. Motettu de tristura

(Sardinia)

Song of Sadness

Tristu passirillanti
comenti massimbillas.
Tristu passirillanti
e puita mi consillas
a prangi po s'amanti.

Sad nightingale,
how you resemble me.
Sad nightingale,
and console me
as I weep for my lover.

NOTES AND TRANSLATIONS

Tristu passirillanti
cand'happess interrada
tristu passirillanti
faimi custa cantada
cand'happess in terrada.

Sad nightingale,
when I am buried,
Sad nightingale,
sing this song
when I am buried.

9. Malurous qu'o uno fenno

(Auvergne)

Unhappy is he who has a wife

Malurous qu'o uno fenno
malurous qué n'o cat!
Qué n'o cat n'en bou uno
qué n'o uno n'en bou pas!
Tradèra ladérida rèro....

Unhappy is he who has a wife,
unhappy is he who has none!
He who has none wants one,
He who has one does not!

Urouzo lo fenno
qu'o l'omé qué li kau!
Urouz inquéro maito
o quèlo qué n'o cat!
Tradèra ladérida rèro....

Happy the woman
who has the man she needs!
Happier still is she
who has none!

10. Lo fiolaire

(Auvergne)

The spinner

Ton qu'èrè pitchounèlo
Gordavè loui moutous.
Lirou lirou lirou...

When I was a little girl
I used to tend the sheep.

Obio 'no counoulhèto
è n'ai près un postrou.
Lirou lirou lirou...

I had a little staff
and I caught a shepherd.

Per fa lo biroudèto
mè domond'un poutou.
Lirou lirou lirou...

To look after my sheep
he asked me for a kiss.

E ièu soui pas ingrato:
en lièt d'un nin fau dous!
Lirou lirou lirou...

And I was not ungrateful:
instead of one, I gave him two!

11. Azerbaijan love song

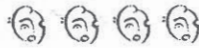
(Azerbaijan)

da mäs den bil de mäs näs
di di lam na nai ai na ni nai
go shadämä hey ma nāmäs yar
go shadämä hey ma nāmäs
sen ordan chəxman boordan hey

This song was transcribed syllable by syllable from an old 78 rpm recording by Cathy Berberian, Berio's first wife and interpreter of many of his vocal works. Apart from one verse in Russian which compares love to a stove the text has remained untranslatable.

tcholoᵡ mā dish ma nāmās yar
 tcholoᵡ mā dish ma nāmās
 kəz be li nin tché di ra i nin tché
 lebleri gon tchə de ra i gontchə
 kəz be li ni ni je deri nin tché
 lebleri gon tcha de le gontcha

na plitye korshis sva doi
 ax kroo gomshoo nyaka mā shi
 ax pastoi xanəm pastoi
 jar doo shi ma nie patooshi
 go shadāmə hey ma nāmās yar
 go shadāmə hey ma nāmās
 sen ordan chəxman boordan hey
 tcholoᵡ mā dish ma nāmās yar
 tcholoᵡ mā dish ma nāmās
 kəz be li nin tché di ra i nin tché
 lebleri gon tchə de ra i gontchə
 nie didj dom ik di ri dit
 boost ni dietz stayoo zaxa dit
 ootch to boo dit ai palam
 syora die lim tché sti snova papalam



RAVEL

Trois Poemes de Stephane Mallarme

The poetry of Stéphane Mallarmé is complex, symbolic and intellectual. It has been described as “untranslatable, even into French”. His influence on Ravel was profound: “I consider Mallarmé not merely the greatest French poet, but the *only* French poet, since he made the French language, not designed for poetry, poetical...(he) exorcised the language, magician that he was. He released winged thoughts, subconscious reveries, from their prisons.” Of these three poems he has said: “Useless to explain. The poetry speaks to you or it does not. It is very obscure, and if once it seizes you - marvellous!”

The restrained, visionary and difficult language is masterfully evoked in the restrained elegance and tender sensuousness of these settings. *Soupir*, described by Mallarmé as “an autumnal reverie”, evokes the upward curves of a fountain and a sigh in long sustained arches of sound and rippling and still images of water. *Placet futile* is a gentle love poem which Mallarmé saw as an evocation of a painting by Watteau. Ravel constructed his setting carefully: “It was necessary that the melodic contour, the modulations, and the rhythms be as precious, as properly contoured as the sentiment and the images of the text. In spite of that, it was necessary to maintain the elegant deportment of the poem. Above all, it was necessary to maintain the profound and exquisite tenderness which suffuses all of this.” The final poem, *Surgi de la croupe et du bond*, is a difficult depiction of an empty vase. Noted Mallarmé scholar Wallace Fowlie has given the following interpretation: The poet, alone, looks down on the empty vase, which seems to be dying from its emptiness. The vase waiting for water is like the poet waiting for inspiration. A rose in the opening of the vase would have fulfilled its reason for being, just as a poem would have justified the poet’s vigil.

The work of Stravinsky and Schoenberg were also catalysts for Ravel’s *Trois Poemes de Stephane Mallarmé*. In early 1913 they were jointly commissioned to reorchestrate an incomplete Mussorgsky opera. While together Stravinsky showed Ravel a manuscript of his *Poèmes de la lyrique japonaise* for voice and chamber ensemble and explained that the instrumentation had been derived from Schoenberg’s *Pierrot Lunaire*, which

Schoenberg had shown him recently. Ravel was so taken with the colouristic possibilities of this combination that he immediately began work on *Soupir*. He then began organising a 'scandalous concert' in which he wanted to present Schoenberg's *Pierrot Lunaire*, Stravinsky's *Poèmes de la lyrique japonaise* and his own Mallarmé poems. This concert eventually took place in early 1914 but with Delage's *Quatre Poèmes hindous* replacing *Pierrot Lunaire*.

1. *Soupir*

Mon ame vers ton front où rêve, ô calme soeur,
Un automne jonché de taches de rousseur
Et vers le ciel errant de ton oeil angélique
Monte, comme dans un jardin mélancolique,
Fidèle, un blanc jet d'eau soupire vers l'Azur!
Vers l'Azur attendri d'Octobre pâle et pur
Qui mire aux grands bassins sa langueur infinie
Et laisse, sur l'eau morte où la fauve agonie
Des feuilles erre au vent
et creuse un froid sillon,
Se traîner le soleil jaune d'un long rayon.

2. *Placet futile*

Princesse! à jalouser le destin d'une Hébée
Qui poind sur cette tasse au baiser de vos lèvres
J'use mes feux mais n'ai rang discret que d'abbé

et ne figurerai même nu sur le Sèvres
Comme je ne suis pas ton bichon embarbé,
Ni la pastille, ni du rouge, ni jeux mièvres
Et que sur moi je sais ton regard clos tombé,
Blonde dont les coiffeurs divins sont des orfèvres!
Nommez-nous... toi de qui tant de ris framboisés
Se joignent en troupeaux d'agneaux apprivoisés
Chez tous broutant les voeux et bêlant aux délires,
Nommez-nous... pour qu'Amour ailé d'un éventail
M'y peigne flûte aux doigts endormant ce bercail
Princesse, nommez-nous berger de vos sourires.

3. *Surgi de la croupe et du bond*

Surgi de la croupe et du bond
D'une verrerie éphémère
Sans fleurir la veillée amère
Le col ignoré s'interrompt.
Je crois bien que seux bouches n'ont
Bu, ni son amant ni ma mère
Jamais à la même chimère
Moi, sylphe de ce froid plafond!
Le pur vase d'aucun breuvage
Que l'inexhaustible veuvage
Agonise mais ne consent,
Naïf baiser des plus funèbres!
A rien expirer annonçant
Une rose dans les ténèbres.

1. *Sigh*

My soul rises up towards your brow, o calm sister,
where there lies dreaming, an autumn strewn with freckles
And rises up towards the wandering sky of your angelic eye,
Just as in a melancholy garden,
Faithful, a white fountain sighs towards the azure sky!
Towards the tender azure sky of a pale and pure October
that mirrors in the great pools its infinite langour
And allows, on the stagnant water where the leaves
in their tawny death throes wander in the wind
and trace a cold furrow,
the yellow sunlight to drag itself out in a long ray.

2. *Futile Petition*

Princess! in envy of the fate of a Hebe
who appears on this cup at the kiss of your lips,
I exhaust my ardour, yet I hold only the discreet rank
of abbot,
and would never appear, even naked, on the Sèvres porcelain.
Since I am not your bewhiskered lap-dog
Nor your pastille, nor your rouge, nor your affected games,
and since I know you look on me with indifferent eyes,
Fair one whose heavenly hairdressers are goldsmiths!
Appoint us... you whose countless raspberried laughs
Are gathered in flocks of tame lambs
grazing upon the vows of all and bleating deliriously
Appoint us...so that Cupid, winged with a fan,
may paint me, flute in hand, lulling this flock to sleep,
Princess, appoint us shepherd of your smiles.

3. *Arising from the curve and the leap*

Arising from the curve and the leap
of an ephemeral glass ornament
without adorning the bitter vigil with flowers
the ignored neck stops short.
I truly believe that two mouths have never
drunk, neither her lover or my mother
from the same chimera,
I, sylph of this cold ceiling!
The vase innocent of any draught
except inexhaustible widowhood,
Is dying but does not consent,
naive, most funereal kiss!
exhaling, to announce
a rose in the darkness.

CRUMB

Ancient Voices of Children

Spanish poet and playwright Federico Garcia Lorca (1898-1936) felt a deep attachment to the city of Granada, the provincial capital of Andalusia, where he was born and where he returned prior to his capture and premature death at the hands of rebel authorities. Lorca came to identify the essence of Granadine art as what he called 'the aesthetic of the diminutive' - the love of small things, the exquisite attention to detail. His own writing is rich with finely-wrought impressions of rural life in this region. For Lorca, the essence of his poetry and prose concerns the fundamental forces that determine the existence of life. In a lecture he commented, "all that has dark sounds...this 'mysterious power that everyone feels but that no philosopher has explained' is in fact the spirit of the earth...all one knows is that it burns the blood like powdered glass, that it exhausts, that it rejects all the sweet geometry one has learned..."

For American composer George Crumb (b. 1929) the discovery of Lorca's work and philosophy was of immense significance. He saw his own artistic aims and urge to constantly push the limits of his music reflected in Lorca's words and searched for musical images that could represent the poet's symbolic portrayal of the primal forces of life: love, death, the smell of the sea, the bond between mother and child. To this end, Crumb has been amongst the most imaginative of composers in seeking out unorthodox sounds on conventional instruments. This is nowhere more evident than in *Ancient Voices of Children* (1970), where the performers are called upon to bend the pitch of the piano by applying a chisel to the strings, tune the mandolin a quarter-tone under, thread the harp strings with paper, vocalise into the amplified piano. Each effect has a carefully planned and highly specific role within the unfolding piece, creating an acoustic soundscape at once highly structured and unpredictable in style. Crumb's use of the microtonal systems of Indian music serves to further enhance the sense of intrigue and ritual that characterises the music.

I

El niño busca su voz.
(La tenía el rey de los grillos.)
En una gota de agua
buscaba su voz el niño.

No la quiero para hablar;
me haré con ella un anillo
que llevará mi silencio
en su dedo pequeñito.

II

Me he perdido muchas veces por el mar
con el oído lleno de flores recién cortadas,
con la lengua llena de amor y de agonía.
Muchas veces me he perdido por el mar,
como me pierdo en el corazón de algunos niños.

I

The little boy was looking for his voice.
(The king of the crickets had it.)
In a drop of water
the little boy was looking for his voice.

I do not want it for speaking with;
I will make a ring of it
so that he may wear my silence
on his little finger.

II

I have lost myself in the sea many times
with my ear full of freshly cut flowers,
with my tongue full of love and agony.
I have lost myself in the sea many times
as I lose myself in the heart of certain children.

III

¿De dónde vienes, amor, mi niño?
 De la crestra del duro frío.
 ¿Qué necesitas, amor, mi niño?
 La tibia tela de tu vestido.
 ¡Que se agiten las ramas al sol
 y salten las fuentes alrededor!
 En el patio ladra el perro,
 en los árboles canta el viento.
 Los bueyes mugen al boyero
 y la luna me riza los cabellos.
 ¿Qué pides, niño, desde tan lejos?
 Los blancos montes que hay en tu pecho.
 ¡Que se agiten las ramas al sol
 y salten las fuentes alrededor!
 Te diré, niño mío, que sí,
 tronchada y rota soy para ti.
 ¡Cómo me duele esta cintura
 donde tendrás primera cuna!
 ¿Cuando tu carne huele a jazmín.
 ¡Que se agiten las ramas al sol
 y salten las fuentes alrededor!

IV

Todas las tardes en Granada,
 todas las tardes se muere un niño.

V

Se ha llenado de luces
 mi corazón de seda,
 de campanas perdidas,
 de lirios y de abejas.
 Y yo me iré muy lejos,
 más allá de esas sierras,
 más allá de los mares,
 cerca de las estrellas,
 para pedirle a Cristo Señor
 Señor que me devuelva
 mi alma antigua de niño.

III

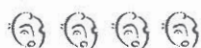
From where do you come, my love, my child?
 From the ridge of hard frost.
 What do you need, my love, my child?
 the warm cloth of your dress.
 Let the branches ruffle in the sun
 and the fountains leap all around!
 In the courtyard a dog barks,
 in the trees the wind sings.
 The oxen low to the ox-herd
 and the moon curls my hair.
 What do you ask for, my child, from so far away?
 the white mountains of your breast.
 Let the branches ruffle in the sun
 and the fountains leap all around!
 I'll tell you, my child, yes,
 I am torn and broken for you.
 How painful is this waist
 where you will have your first cradle!
 When, my child, will you come?
 When your flesh smells of jasmine-flowers.
 Let the branches ruffle in the sun
 and the fountains leap all around!

IV

Each afternoon in Granada,
 a child dies each afternoon.

V

My heart of silk
 is filled with lights,
 with lost bells,
 with lilies, and with bees,
 and I will go very far,
 farther than those hills,
 farther than the seas,
 close to the stars,
 to ask Christ the Lord
 to give me back
 my ancient soul of a child.





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