

HECTOR BERLIOZ *Les nuits d'été & La mort de Cléopâtre*

SCOTTISH CHAMBER ORCHESTRA

ROBIN TICCIAI CONDUCTOR KAREN CARGILL MEZZO-SOPRANO



HECTOR BERLIOZ

Les nuits d'été & La mort de Cléopâtre

Scottish Chamber Orchestra

Robin Ticciati *conductor*

Karen Cargill *mezzo-soprano*



Scottish
Chamber
Orchestra

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Total Time: **65:48**

Hector Berlioz

Hector Berlioz (1803–69) is still best known for his overtures and symphonic works: *Symphonie Fantastique*, *Harold en Italie*, and symphonic excerpts from *Roméo et Juliette*, the 'dramatic symphony' that also requires solo and choral voices for complete performance. But his total output is predominantly vocal; it includes sacred music, songs, secular cantatas, the dramatic cantata *La Damnation de Faust* (which is sometimes staged), and three complete operas.

As a boy growing up in provincial France, Berlioz could encounter very few kinds of music. Predominant among them was the commonest song form, the 'romance', usually clear-cut in melodic design and in a repetitive (strophic) form. Lacking a piano, Berlioz arranged the accompaniments of several romances for his own instrument, the guitar. His earliest surviving compositions are songs, and their simple piano accompaniments could often be effectively transcribed for guitar; the piano accompaniments were needed to attract the attention of publishers. When Berlioz moved to Paris to study medicine (1821), he published several songs, but his musical ambitions quickly developed in the direction of large-scale works, as he was inspired by the operas of Gluck, Weber, and others, and the symphonies of Beethoven. But lyrical forms remained a vital ingredient of his major works; the *Symphonie Fantastique* opens by quoting an early song, and he set poems translated from Goethe (*Huit Scènes de Faust*, 1829) and Moore (*Irlande*, 1830). After that he wrote only a few songs, including the six that make up his finest achievement in the genre, *Les nuits d'été*.

The poet and critic Théophile Gautier (1811–72) was a friend and colleague of Berlioz; it was he who dubbed the author Victor Hugo, the painter Eugène Delacroix, and Berlioz, a 'Trinity of French Romanticism'. Gautier's prolific output of lyrical poetry was not as widely adopted by composers as one might expect, although some of the poems, including three of those set by Berlioz, attracted settings from Bizet, Fauré, and Duparc. Berlioz selected them from lyrics published in 1838 with a longer poem, *La comédie de la mort*. Berlioz altered some of Gautier's titles and called the whole set 'Summer Nights', although the most seasonally specific, No. 1 ('Villanelle'), is clearly a spring song. Poet and composer shared an interest in death and sexual longing, but also a gently ironic sense of humour, most in evidence in the first and last songs of *Les nuits d'été*; the central four are slow, and three of them are dark in tone, with two entitled by Gautier 'Lamento'. But Berlioz's music achieves more than sufficient variation in character and form for this not to be a problem, at least for the listener.

Les nuits d'été

Les nuits d'été was published in 1841, 'for mezzo-soprano or tenor', and at this stage with piano accompaniment. In 1843 Berlioz orchestrated 'Absence' for the mezzo-soprano Marie Recio, with whom he had become entangled; she later became his second wife. Although she had taken solo roles at the Paris Opéra, it seems likely that her vocal abilities soon declined, for Berlioz complained when she insisted on singing in his concerts.

He might have preferred to hear these songs from Rosine Stoltz, the mezzo-soprano who played the trouser-role of Ascanio in his 1838 opera *Benvenuto Cellini*. But there are few records of any performances of the remaining five songs, which were not orchestrated until 1855–6; for this reason Berlioz's virtual inauguration of the genre of orchestral song is not always recognized. The orchestral version was published in Germany with separate dedications to singers he met touring there, or in Weimar where Liszt organized Berlioz festivals in the early 1850s. For the orchestral version, Berlioz transposed the second and third songs to lower keys, but this makes little difference to the integrity of *Les nuits d'été* as a cycle. Although the poetic voices are evidently male, Berlioz clearly allowed for performance by women, even though the fifth song is designated for tenor. Occasionally three or four singers are used, but performance by a single voice is fully compatible with the composer's probable intentions and lends unity to the cycle.

No. 1: 'Villanelle'. Gautier called the poem 'Villanelle rythmique', offering Berlioz a hint he had no difficulty in taking. His first draft was strophic, the music identical for the three poetic stanzas, but he changed his mind and introduced delicate melodic changes for the voice, and subtly expressive string counterpoints into the accompaniment; the bassoon solo at the end of each stanza is a step higher each time. These variations add to the sense of the natural variety and freshness of spring.

No. 2: 'Le spectre de la rose'. The speaker, the rose, addresses the sleeping girl who wore it at last night's ball. It is dead, but

has ascended to paradise; such a death would be envied by a king. The languid compound metre, the richly textured accompaniment, and the expansive modulations to remote harmonic areas, recall the orchestral 'love scene' in Berlioz's recently premiered *Roméo et Juliette*. The three stanzas begin in the same way, but diverge harmonically, the last climaxing in a glowing dominant key – withheld until this point as it is in the symphonic love scene.

No. 3: 'Sur les lagunes', originally entitled 'Lamento'. Fauré's later setting evokes the Venetian lagoons, but Berlioz focuses on the poet's grief, placing the sighing figure that opens the song in a remarkable variety of harmonic contexts to evoke past happiness and present misery. The climactic exclamation 'Ah, to go to sea without love' is echoed in a deeper register by the woodwinds, and the song ends by reverting to its opening sigh, the harmony daringly unresolved.

No. 4: 'Absence' is the only poem that Berlioz did not set in its entirety. Instead he selected the first three of its seven stanzas and repeated the first as a refrain after the second and third. This rondo-like pattern (with only slight additional orchestral touches for the third statement) was probably chosen because Berlioz was using music conceived for an earlier abandoned project, the 'antique intermezzo' *Érigone*, embarked on a couple of years earlier. Verses survive for a solo for *Érigone* ('Reviens, reviens, sublime Orphée') that correspond closely in sentiment and exactly in metre to Gautier's poem; 'Absence' is the deeply affecting result.

No. 5: 'Au cimetière', originally entitled 'Lamento'. Duparc's melancholy setting uses only half the poem; Berlioz grouped the six stanzas in pairs for a three-part musical form. The middle section, from 'On dirait que l'âme éveillée', reduces the texture almost to nothing, but it flowers as the poet invokes the 'wings of song' ('les ailes de la musique'); the opening returns at 'Les belles de nuit'. This is the strangest of the laments, melodically taut and harmonically insecure, as if searching for something in the dark graveyard. The mournful calling of doves echoes through the final bars, the clarinet grating softly against the dying flute line and the string harmony.

No. 6: 'L'Île inconnue', which Gautier called 'Barcarolle', ends the cycle on a lighter note: these lovers are together, though not, perhaps, for eternity, since the land where love lasts forever does not exist. Berlioz illustrates the poet's invitation with many deft orchestral touches, but melodic similarities with 'Sur les lagunes' may point ironically to a less contented future. The cycle ends quietly and almost on a musical question-mark, as Berlioz takes a minor liberty with the poem by repeating the lover's 'Where do you want to go?'.

'Scène d'amour' ('Love Scene') from *Roméo et Juliette*

Berlioz called his *Roméo et Juliette* (1839) a 'dramatic symphony'. Besides a large orchestra, it requires three soloists, small choral groups, and a full chorus for the finale, and is ninety minutes long. Although he also called it a 'choral symphony', much of

it is purely orchestral, including the energetic ball scene, the fantastical scherzo ('Queen Mab'), and the heart of the work, the 'Love Scene'. So it is not surprising that Berlioz himself initiated the practice of extracting individual movements, rather than insisting on performing the whole work or nothing.

Berlioz justified his preference for instrumental representation of Shakespeare's balcony scene by reminding us that the work is a symphony, not an opera. *'The greatest composers have produced thousands of vocal duets; it seemed prudent as well as original to do it some other way.'* The sublime quality of this love makes musical depiction perilous; the composer needs freedom of invention without the limitation of sung words and, Berlioz concludes, in such circumstances *'instrumental music is richer, more varied, less restricted, and thanks to its very vagueness, incomparably more powerful.'* Elsewhere Berlioz wrote with some distaste of an Italian opera in which Romeo was sung by a woman, but his views on tenors, the obvious voice type for a Romeo, had been coloured by the inadequate performance of the title-role in his opera *Benvenuto Cellini*.

That opera's failure in 1838 seems an obvious cause for Berlioz's decision to resort to symphonic treatment, because rather than depending on the resources of the theatre, he could arrange performances himself. But there is evidence that he thought of a *Roméo* symphony many years earlier, in 1827, when a troupe of actors came to Paris and performed *Hamlet* and *Romeo and Juliet* in English. Berlioz instantly fell in love with Harriet Smithson, who played Ophelia and Juliet. By 1839, when he composed his own *Roméo et Juliette*, they were married, and dependent on Berlioz's

journalism for a living. The symphony might never have been composed but for a generous gift from Paganini which allowed Berlioz enough peace of mind and financial flexibility to tackle it and mount three performances. It was one of his greatest artistic triumphs but not very profitable (*'large-scale music is ruining me'*).

The 'Love Scene' comes third, after a prologue and the ball where Romeo and Juliet meet and fall in love. Berlioz offered no detailed programme, but headed the movement 'Serene night: Capulet's garden, silent and deserted'. In a short choral section, normally omitted in performances of the scene on its own, young (male) revellers going home sing the praises of Veronese women. The supremely beautiful orchestral '*adagio*' is sub-headed 'Juliet on her balcony and Romeo in the shadow'. The prologue tells us a little more: Juliet confides her love to the night, Romeo reveals himself, and the flame of their love blazes forth. The '*adagio*' begins as a dialogue. Murmuring strings suggest nocturnal rustling; a line for clarinet and cor anglais is added, hesitant at first; then a yearning phrase (cellos and horns) emerges in the tenor register an operatic Romeo would have used, with a cadence that recurs throughout the movement. Juliet's soliloquy resumes and Romeo's melody emerges more ardently, in fuller harmony; Juliet's response is an agitated variation of her melody (*allegro*), soothed by Romeo in a cello recitative.

After this Berlioz may have followed Shakespeare's scene as he composed, but he revised the movement thoroughly, for musical reasons, and its original form is lost. We can hear the rest as expressing the essence of the lovers' feelings, rather than the practical matters they also discuss (such as how to meet again

and get married). The '*adagio*' resumes with a long-breathed melody on flute and cor anglais, at first a little sombre, anxious, but succeeded by a new phrase (violins) that culminates in Romeo's cadence. The remainder of the movement consists of departures from and returns to this phrase, exploring a rich variety of tonal areas, instrumental colours, and, surely, the lovers' feelings. When the main theme is transferred to the clarinets there are abrupt interruptions from the violins. This could represent a surge of eroticism, but some have suggested that it is Juliet's nurse calling from within: '*Madam!*'; Juliet responds '*I come anon ...*'. She goes inside and re-emerges: '*Hist, Romeo, hist! ... I have forgot why I did call thee back*'. Perhaps some of this is reflected in a complete bar of silence, followed by the most passionate, daring, change of key, and a final upsurge of the main melody and its cadence. But the lovers must part, so Berlioz breaks his musical ideas into wistful fragments and a lingering close mainly from clarinets and cellos.

Roméo et Juliette is a tragedy, no less poignant when represented by the delicacy and passion that inform Berlioz's music. Perhaps this is why he modified Shakespeare's final scene by emerging from the 'vagueness' of instrumental sounds into a frankly operatic treatment of the reconciliation of the warring families, brought about not by the worldly power of the prince of Verona (as in Shakespeare), but by the eloquence of Friar Lawrence and the power of the Catholic Church. Berlioz matched that splendid finale in his other choral and dramatic works; but within his output, indeed within the whole of 19th-century music, his orchestral 'Love Scene' stands alone.

La mort de Cléopâtre

That *Cléopâtre* should be performed nearly two centuries after its composition (or indeed that it should be performed at all) would have surprised Berlioz. It was composed with considerable fervour, even feverishness, but then in effect withdrawn; several musical ideas appear in later works that Berlioz performed and published. Berlioz's recycling of musical ideas has sometimes been perceived as a problem, but if we accept similar procedures in Handel, Bach, and Mozart, there is no need to apologise on his behalf, especially when he made no attempt to perform or even keep a copy of the earlier work, as is the case here.

Berlioz entered five times for the Prix de Rome awarded by the French Institute, for which the reward was a period in the eternal city and financial support for five years. At the third attempt, in 1828, he was awarded second prize, and recent precedent meant that he could reasonably expect to win in 1829. So confident, indeed, was he, that he wrote too well for his own good. The final stage of the competition required candidates to be locked away, to produce a dramatic cantata on a text prepared for the occasion. In 1829 the author was one Pierre-Ange Vieillard de Boismartin (1778–1862); so by 1829, aged over 50, and expressing himself in fustian verse, he may have seemed to the candidates to live up to his name (Vieillard: old man). Berlioz, however, set to work with the intention of creating a piece of truly dramatic music, and to modern ears he succeeded. Unfortunately the Institute's jury did not possess such ears.

The judgement was based on a performance with piano accompaniment, hardly ideal for a composer with Berlioz's colourful orchestral imagination. Stage one was a jury of musicians; in 1828 they had not wanted to give Berlioz even the second prize for his fine cantata *Herminie*. But the second stage was a jury representing all the arts, and though Berlioz was later to mock this system, it was this larger jury of poets, painters, sculptors and engravers that insisted on awarding him second prize in 1828. In 1829 the musicians were no less alarmed by Berlioz's music, and this time the larger jury did not overrule their verdict. A contributory factor was the performance. In 1828 Berlioz had succeeded in engaging a singer from the Paris Opéra, Louise-Zelmé Dabadie. She agreed to sing again in 1829, and did so before the music jury. But the Opéra's rehearsal schedule unexpectedly prevented her from singing before the larger jury, and instead she sent her sister, Clara Leroux, then a student, lacking experience, and with little time to learn music which, it must be said, she could be excused for finding difficult. One cannot help wondering what might have happened if Mme Dabadie had delivered a performance of *Cléopâtre* of comparable dramatic splendour to those we hear today. Berlioz would have gone to Rome later in 1829, and quite possibly he would never have embarked on his next big project, none other than the *Symphonie Fantastique*. Mercifully for the reputation of the Institute, Berlioz finally won the prize in 1830. The Institute kept copies of *Herminie* and *Cléopâtre*, but Berlioz took away his 1830 cantata, *Sardanapale*, and only a fragment survives.

Cléopâtre follows a pattern traditional in Prix de Rome cantatas based on the operatic pairing of recitative and aria. In *Herminie* there were three arias, but in *Cléopâtre* only two, which did not prevent Berlioz taking liberties with the text. The first recitative outlines the protagonist's situation; the aria looks back to happier times. The second recitative points ahead to the protagonist's next action, and the final aria should have brought the cantata to a brilliant conclusion, displaying the virtuosity of the singer with passage-work and a well-placed high note near the end. That at least was the understanding of the other candidates; Berlioz had other ideas. The Queen of Egypt has lost her lover Mark Anthony and been unable to seduce the conquering Octavius Caesar (later the Emperor Augustus); she is haunted by a sense of her own unworthiness in the eyes of her ancestors, and resolves on suicide. Berlioz's artistic integrity, as well as over-confidence (everyone assumed he would win the first prize), demanded that he take this tragedy seriously; and the result is a composition fully worthy of a budding master of dramatic music.

The instrumental introduction grabs our attention with disjointed gestures from the strings and dark-hued wind chords, building to a brief climax cut off for a plaintive wail from an oboe. The main motive of the introduction punctuates the first recitative, which moves rapidly through the spectrum of tonalities; and when she describes herself as the daughter of all the Ptolemies, the Queen ascends majestically to a high note, the final bars of the recitative covering a range of two octaves. In the intense introduction to the first aria, an aspiring violin figure melts into a beautiful melodic sequence suggestive of the nostalgia Cleopatra feels for her days

of glory and of love; this also figures in the aria. Berlioz later used it in *Benvenuto Cellini* (it is most familiar today from the overture *Le carnaval Romain*). But the aria's opening phrase breaches decorum, plunging from a clear E-flat Major to the unrelated D-flat of 'tourment de ma mémoire'. The aria is in ternary form, the middle section recalling her humiliation in and after the battle of Actium, and the reprise of the first section rising to an expanded and magnificent climax.

At least Berlioz had so far followed the expected form, however bold the content. But now he curtailed the second recitative by taking some of its text ('Grands Pharaons ...') as a 'Méditation', better described, perhaps, as an invocation. He also, cheekily, placed a quotation from Shakespeare (in English) at its head: 'How if when I am laid into the tomb...': words of Juliet when she contemplates waking from a death-like sleep in the family vault. There is an evident parallel with Cleopatra's situation, and it has been suggested that Berlioz had already written this music, perhaps with a setting of *Romeo and Juliet* in mind. It was probably this superb passage, with its groping harmonies and throbbing rhythm, that most upset the musician-jurors. Berlioz used it almost unchanged in *Lélio*, his sequel to the *Symphonie Fantastique*, associating it there with the ghost's speech in *Hamlet*.

The following allegro comes closer to what the judges expected, especially when its agitated opening gives way to gentler thoughts at 'Du destin qui m'accable' – this to a melody Berlioz recycled the following year in his orchestral fantasy on *The Tempest*. The mood of agitation returns as Cleopatra

contemplates the ruin of her empire, and Berlioz might have pulled it together musically, if not dramatically, with the obligatory top note. Instead, as a realist and fanatical admirer of Shakespeare, he shatters classical decorum once and for all; growling double basses just about hold together disjointed gasps from Cleopatra and serpent-bites represented by the violins. Like the protagonist, the music seems to die in agony, a gesture of tragic nihilism surely suggested more by Shakespeare than by Vieillard.

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Text & Translation

Les nuits d'été

Text by Théophile Gautier

1. Villanelle

Quand viendra la saison nouvelle,
Quand auront disparu les froids,
Tous les deux nous irons, ma belle,
Pour cueillir le muguet aux bois;
Sous nos pieds égrenant les perles
Que l'on voit au matin trembler,
Nous irons écouter les merles
Siffler!

Le printemps est venu, ma belle;
C'est le mois des amants béni,
Et l'oiseau, satinant son aile,
Dit ses vers au rebord du nid.
Oh! Viens donc sur ce banc de mousse,
Pour parler de nos beaux amours,
Et dis-moi de ta voix si douce:
Toujours!

Loin, bien loin, égarant nos courses,
Faisons fuir le lapin cache,
Et le daim au miroir des sources
Admirant son grand bois penché;
Puis, chez nous, tout heureux, tout aises,
En paniers enlaçant nos doigts,
Revenons rapportant des fraises
Des bois!

Summer Nights

Translation by Richard Stokes

Villanelle

When the new season comes,
When the cold has gone,
We two will go, my sweet,
To gather lilies-of-the-valley in the woods;
Scattering as we tread the pearls of dew
We see quivering each morn,
We'll go and hear the blackbirds
Sing!

Spring has come, my sweet;
It is the season lovers bless,
And the birds, preening their wings,
Sing songs from the edge of their nests.
Ah! Come, then, to this mossy bank
To talk of our beautiful love,
And tell me in your gentle voice:
Forever!

Far, far away we'll stray from our path,
Startling the rabbit from his hiding-place
And the deer reflected in the spring,
Admiring his great lowered antlers;
Then home we'll go, serene and at ease,
And entwining our fingers basket-like,
We'll bring back home wild
Strawberries!

2. Le spectre de la rose

Soulève ta paupière close
Qu'effleure un songe virginal;
Je suis le spectre d'une rose
Que tu portais hier au bal.
Tu me pris encore emperlée
Des pleurs d'argent de l'arrosoir,
Et parmi le fête étoilée
Tu me promenas tout le soir.

O toi, qui de ma mort fus cause,
Sans que tu puisses le chasser,
Toutes les nuits mon spectre rose
À ton chevet viendra danser.

Mais ne crains rien, je ne réclame
Ni messe ni De Profundis;
Ce léger parfum est mon âme,
Et j'arrive du paradis.

Mon destin fut digne d'envie:
Et pour avoir un sort si beau,
Plus d'un aurait donné sa vie,
Car sur ton sein j'ai mon tombeau,
Et sur l'albâtre où je repose
Un poète avec un baiser
Écrivit: Ci-gît une rose
Que tous les rois vont jalouser.

3. Sur les lagunes

Ma belle amie est morte:
Je pleurerai toujours;
Sous la tombe elle emporte
Mon âme et mes amours.
Dans le ciel, sans m'attendre,
Elle s'en retourna;

The spectre of the rose

Open your eyelids,
Brushed by a virginal dream;
I am the spectre of a rose
That yesterday you wore at the dance.
You plucked me still sprinkled
With silver tears of dew,
And amid the glittering feast
You wore me all evening long.

O you who brought about my death,
You shall be powerless to banish me:
The rosy spectre which every night
Will come to dance at your bedside.

But be not afraid – I demand
Neither Mass nor De Profundis;
This faint perfume is my soul,
And I come from Paradise.

My destiny was worthy of envy;
And for such a beautiful fate,
Many would have given their lives –
For my tomb is on your breast,
And on the alabaster where I lie,
A poet with a kiss
Has written: Here lies a rose
Which every king will envy.

On the lagoons

My dearest love is dead:
I shall weep for evermore;
To the tomb she takes with her
My soul and all my love.
Without waiting for me
She has returned to Heaven;

L'ange qui l'emmena
Ne voulut pas me prendre.
Que mon sort est amer!
Ah! sans amour, s'en aller sur la mer!

Le blanche créature
Est chouchée au cercueil.
Comme dans le nature
Tout me paraît en deuil!
La colombe oubliée
Pleure et songe à l'absent;
Mon âme pleure et sent
Qu'elle est dépareillée.
Que mon sort est amer!
Ah! sans amour, s'en aller sur la mer!

Sur moi la nuit immense
S'étend comme un linceul;
Je chante ma romance
Que le ciel entend seul.
Ah! comme elle était belle,
Et comme je l'aimais!
Je n'aimerai jamais
Une femme autant qu'elle.
Que mon sort est amer!
Ah! sans amour, s'en aller sur la mer!

4. Absence

Reviens, reviens, me bien-aimée;
Comme une fleur loin du soleil,
La fleur de ma vie est fermée
Loin de ton sourire vermeil.

Entre nos cœurs quelle distance.
Tant d'espace entre nos baisers.
O sort amer! O dure absence.
O grands désirs inapaisés.

The angel who took her away
Did not wish to take me.
How bitter is my fate!
Alas! to set sail loveless across the sea!

The pure white being
Lies in her coffin.
How everything in nature
Seems to mourn!
The forsaken dove
Weeps, dreaming of its absent mate;
My soul weeps and feels
Itself adrift.
How bitter is my fate!
Alas! to set sail loveless across the sea!

The immense night above me
Is spread like a shroud;
I sing my song
Which heaven alone can hear.
Ah! how beautiful she was,
And how I loved her!
I shall never love a woman
As I loved her.
How bitter is my fate!
Alas! to set sail loveless across the sea!

Absence

Return, return, my sweetest love.
Like a flower far from the sun,
The flower of my life is closed
Far from your crimson smile.

Such a distance between our hearts.
So great a gulf between our kisses.
O bitter fate! O harsh absence.
O great unassuaged desires.

Reviens, reviens, ma bien-aimée.
Comme une fleur loin du soleil,
La fleur de ma vie est fermée
Loin de ton sourire vermeil.
D'ici là-bas, que de campagnes,
Que de villes et de hameaux,
Que de vallons et de montagnes,
À lasser le pied des chevaux.

Reviens, reviens, ma bien-aimée.
Comme une fleur loin du soleil,
La fleur de ma vie est fermée
Loin de ton sourire vermeil.

5. Au cimetière

Connaissez-vous la blanche tombe
Où flotte avec un son plaintif
L'ombre d'un if?
Sur l'if, une pale colombe,
Triste et seule, au soleil couchant,
Chante son chant;

Un air maladivement tendre,
À la fois charmant et fatal,
Qui vous fait mal
Et qu'on voudrait toujours entendre,
Un air, comme en soupire aux cieus
L'ange amoureux.

On dirait que l'âme éveillée
Pleure sous terre à l'unisson
De la chanson,
Et du malheur d'être oubliée
Se plaint dans un roucoulement
Bien doucement.

Return, return, my sweetest love.
Like a flower far from the sun,
The flower of my life is closed
Far from your crimson smile.
So many intervening plains,
So many towns and hamlets,
So many valleys and mountains
To weary the horses' hooves.

Return, return my sweetest love.
Like a flower far from the sun,
The flower of my life is closed
Far from your crimson smile.

At the cemetery

Do you know the white tomb,
Where the shadow of a yew
Waves plaintively?
On that yew a pale dove,
Sad and solitary at sundown
Sings its song;

A melody of morbid sweetness,
Delightful and deathly at once,
Which wounds you
And which you'd like to hear forever,
A melody, such as in the heavens,
A lovesick angel sighs.

As if the awakened soul
Weeps beneath the earth together
With the song,
And at the sorrow of being forgotten
Murmurs its complaint
Most meltingly.

Sur les ailes de la musique
On sent lentement revenir
Un souvenir;
Une ombre, une forme angélique
Passe dans un rayon tremblant,
En voile blanc.

Les belles de nuit, demi-closes,
Jettent leur parfum faible et doux
Autour de vous,
Et le fantôme aux molles poses
Murmure, en vous tendant les bras:
Tu reviendras?

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

6. L'île inconnue

Dites, le jeune belle,
Où voulez-vous aller?
La voile enfle sonaile,
La brise va souffler.

L'aviron est d'ivoire,
Le pavillon de moire,
Le gouvernail d'or fin;
J'ai pour lest une orange,
Pour voile une aile d'ange,
Pour mousse un séraphin.

Dites, le jeune belle,
Où voulez-vous aller?

On the wings of music
You sense the slow return
Of a memory;
A shadow, an angelic form
Passes in a shimmering beam,
Veiled in white.

The Marvels of Peru, half-closed,
Shed their fragrance sweet and faint
About you,
And the phantom with its languid gestures
Murmurs, reaching out to you:
Will you return?

Ah! nevermore shall I approach that tomb,
When evening descends
In its black cloak,
To listen to the pale dove
From the top of a yew
Sing its plaintive song!

The unknown isle

Tell me, pretty young maid,
Where is it you would go?
The sail is billowing,
The breeze about to blow!

The oar is of ivory,
The pennant of watered silk,
The rudder of finest gold;
For ballast I've an orange,
For sail an angel's wing,
For cabin-boy a seraph.

Tell me, pretty young maid,
Where is it you would go?

La voile enfile sonaile,
La brise va souffler.
Est-ce dans la Baltique
Dans la mer Pacifique,
Dans l'île de Java?
Ou bien est-ce en Norvège,
Cueillir la fleur de neige
Ou la fleur d'Angsoka?

Dites, le jeune belle,
Où voulez-vous aller?

Menez-moi, dit la belle,
À la rive fidèle
Où l'on aime toujours.
– Cette rive, ma chère,
On ne le connaît guère
Au pays des amours.

Où voulez-vous aller?
La brise va souffler.

The sail is billowing,
The breeze about to blow!
Perhaps the Baltic,
Or the Pacific
Or the Isle of Java?
Or else to Norway,
To pluck the snow flower
Or the flower of Angsoka?

Tell me, pretty young maid,
Where is it you would go?

Take me, said the pretty maid,
To the shore of faithfulness
Where love endures forever.
– That shore, my sweet,
Is scarce known
In the realm of love.

Where is it you would go?
The breeze is about to blow!

La mort de Cléopâtre

Text by Pierre-Ange Vieillard

8. Scène lyrique

C'en est donc fait! Ma honte est assurée.
Veuve d'Antoine et veuve de César,
Au pouvoir d'Octave livrée,
Je n'ai pu captiver son farouche regard.

J'étais vaincue et suis déshonorée.
En vain, pour ranimer l'éclat de mes attraits,
J'ai profané le deuil d'un funeste veuvage;
En vain, En vain, de l'art épuisant les secrets,
J'ai caché sous des fleurs les fers de l'esclavage;
Rien n'a pu du vainqueur désarmer les décrets.

À ses pieds j'ai traîné mes grandeurs opprimées.
Mes pleurs même ont coulé sur ses mains répandus,
Et la fille des Ptolémées
A subi l'affront des refus!

Ah! Qu'ils sont loin ces jours,
Ces jours, tourment de ma mémoire,
Où sur le sein des mers, comparable à Vénus,
D'Antoine et de César réfléchissant la gloire,

The Death of Cleopatre

Translation by Kevin Halliwell

8. Lyrical scene

So it is done! My shame is beyond doubt.
Widow of Antony and widow of Caesar,
Delivered into Octavius's power,
I have been unable to charm his fierce gaze.

I was conquered and am dishonoured.
In vain, to revive the splendour of my charms,
I have profaned the mourning of a wretched widowhood;
Vainly, exhausting the secrets of art,
I hid under flowers the chains of slavery;
Nothing has been able to soften the decrees of the conqueror.

I have dragged my crushed majesty at his feet.
My very tears have run flowing down his hands,
And the daughter of the Ptolemies
Has suffered the insult of being rejected.

Ah! How distant are those days,
The torment of my memory,
When on the bosom of the sea, like Venus,
Reflecting the glory of Antony and Caesar,

J'apparus triomphante aux rives du
Cydnus!

Actium m'a livrée, Actium m'a livrée au
vainqueur qui me brave;
Mon sceptre, mes trésors ont passé dans
ses mains;
Ma beauté me restait, ma beauté me
restait, et les mépris d'Octave
Pour me vaincre ont fait plus, pour me
vaincre ont fait plus que le fer des Romains.

Ah! Qu'ils sont loin ces jours,
Ces jours, tourment de ma mémoire,
Où sur le sein des mers, comparable à
Vénus,
D'Antoine et de César réfléchis sans la
gloire,
J'apparus triomphante aux rives du
Cydnus!

En vain de l'art épuisant les secrets,
J'ai caché sous des fleurs les fers de
l'esclavage;
Rien n'a pu du vainqueur désarmer les
décrets.

Mes pleurs même ont coulé sur ses
mains répandus.
J'ai subi l'affront des refus.

Moi! Qui du sein des mers, comparable
à Vénus,
M'élançai triomphante, m'élançai
triomphante aux rives du Cydnus!

I appeared in triumph on the banks of
the Cydnus!

Actium delivered me up to the
conqueror who now defies me;
My sceptre, my treasures passed into
his hands;
Only my beauty remained, and the
rebuffs of Octavius
Did more to vanquish me than the
Roman sword.

Ah! How distant are those days,
The torment of my memory,
When on the bosom of the sea, like
Venus,
Reflecting the glory of Antony and
Caesar,
I appeared in triumph on the banks of
the Cydnus!

Vainly, exhausting the secrets of art,
I hid under flowers the chains of
slavery;
Nothing has been able to soften the
decrees of the conqueror.

Even my tears have run flowing down
his hands.
I have suffered the insult of being rejected.

Who from the bosom of the sea, like
Venus,
Soared in triumph onto the banks of the
Cydnus!

Au comble des revers, qu'aurais-je encor
à craindre?
Reine coupable, que dis-tu?
Du destin qui m'accable est-ce à moi de
me plaindre?
Ai-je pour l'accuser les droits de
la vertu?
J'ai d'un époux déshonoré la vie.
C'est par moi qu'aux Romains l'Egypte
est asservie,
Et que d'Isis l'ancien culte est détruit.
Quel asile chercher! Sans parents!
Sans patrie!
Il n'en est plus pour moi que l'éternelle
nuit!

Grands Pharaons, nobles
Lagides,
Verrez-vous entrer sans courroux,
Pour dormir dans vos pyramides,
Une reine indigne de vous?

9. Méditation

Grands Pharaons, Verrez-vous entrer sans
courroux,
Pour dormir dans vos pyramides,
Une reine in digne de vous?

Grands Pharaons, nobles
Lagides,
Verrez-vous entrer sans courroux,
Pour dormir dans vos pyramides,
Une reine in digne de vous,
Une reine in digne de vous?
Non! Non, de vos demeures funèbres
Je profanerais la splendeur!

In the depths of misfortune, what have I
left to fear?
Guilty queen, what do you have to say?
Can I complain of the fate that
overwhelms me?
Have I the right to point to my virtue as
an excuse?
I have dishonoured a husband's life.
Because of me Egypt is subservient to
the Romans,
And the ancient cult of Isis is destroyed.
What refuge can I find? Without family!
Withough homeland!
There is nothing left for me but eternal
night!

Great Pharaohs, noble descendants of
Lagos,
Will you see, without anger,
A queen unworthy of you enter
To sleep in your pyramids?

9. Meditation

Great Pharaohs, will you see, without
anger,
A queen unworthy of you enter
To sleep in your pyramids?

Great Pharaohs, noble descendants of
Lagos,
Will you see, without anger,
A queen unworthy of you enter
To sleep in your pyramids,
To sleep in your pyramids?
No! No, I should profane the magnificence
Of your funerary abodes!

Rois, encor au sein des ténèbres,
Vous me fuiriez avec horreur.
Vous me fuiriez avec horreur.

Du destin qui m'accable est-ce à moi de
me plaindre?
Ai-je pour l'accuser; ai-je le droit de
la vertu?
Par moi nos dieux ont fui
d'Alexandrie,
D'Isis le culte est détruit.
Grands Pharaons, nobles
Lagides,
Vous me fuiriez avec horreur!

Du destin qui m'accable est-ce à moi de
me plaindre?
Ai-je pour l'accuser; ai-je le droit de
la vertu?
Grands Pharaons, nobles
Lagides,
Verrez-vous entrer sans courroux,
Pour dormir dans vos pyramides,
Une reine indigne de vous?
Non, j'ai d'un époux dés honoré la vie.
Sa cendre est sous mes yeux, son ombre
me poursuit.
C'est par moi qu'aux Romains l'Egypte
est asservie.
Par moi nos Dieux ont fui
les murs d'Alexandrie,
Et d'Isis le culte est détruit.

Osiris proscriit ma couronne.
À Typhon je livre mes jours!
Contre l'horreur qui m'environne
Un vil reptile est mon recours.

Kings, already in the depths of darkness,
You would shun me in horror.
You would shun me in horror.

Can I complain of the fate that
overwhelms me?
Have I the right to point to my virtue, to
accuse it?
Because of me our gods have fled from
Alexandria,
The cult of Isis is destroyed.
Great Pharaohs, noble descendants of
Lagos,
you would shun me in horror!

Can I complain of the fate that
overwhelms me?
Have I the right to point to my virtue, to
accuse it?
Great Pharaohs, noble descendants of
Lagos,
Will you see, without anger,
A queen unworthy of you enter
To sleep in your pyramids?
No, I have dishonoured a husband's life.
His ashes are before my eyes, his shade
pursues me.
Because of me Egypt is subservient to
the Romans.
Because of me our gods have fled the
walls of Alexandria,
And the cult of Isis is destroyed.

Osiris forbids me my crown.
I deliver my life to Typhon!
A vile reptile is my recourse
Against the horrors that engulf me.

Dieux du Nil, vous m'avez trahie!
Octave m'attend à son char.
Cléopâtre en quittant la vie
Redevient digne de César!

Gods of the Nile, you have betrayed me!
Octavius is waiting for me at his chariot.
In departing from life, Cleopatra
Becomes once more worthy of Caesar!



Scottish Chamber Orchestra

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Scottish
Chamber
Orchestra



Photography by Marco Borggreve

The Scottish Chamber Orchestra (SCO) was formed in 1974 with a commitment to serve the Scottish community, and is amongst Scotland's foremost cultural ambassadors. One of Scotland's five National Performing Arts Companies, it is internationally recognized as one of the finest chamber orchestras in the world.

The Orchestra performs throughout Scotland, including annual tours of the Highlands and Islands and South of Scotland, and appears regularly at the Edinburgh, East Neuk, St Magnus and Aldeburgh Festivals and the BBC Proms. Its busy international touring schedule, supported by the Scottish Government, has recently included many European countries as well as India and the USA.

The Orchestra appointed Robin Ticciati to the post of Principal Conductor from the 2009/10 Season. Since then, Ticciati and the Orchestra have appeared together at the Edinburgh International Festival, have toured throughout Europe and released their first recording – Berlioz's *Symphonie Fantastique* (Linn). They have received considerable acclaim for their programming and performances together:

'The Scottish Chamber Orchestra and its Principal Conductor, Robin Ticciati, have already become one of the great partnerships in British music.'

Daily Telegraph

The SCO's long-standing relationship with its Conductor Laureate, the late Sir Charles Mackerras, resulted in many exceptional performances and recordings, including two multi award-winning sets of Mozart symphonies (Linn).

The SCO works regularly with many eminent guest conductors including Conductor Emeritus Joseph Swensen, Associate Artist Richard Egarr, Olari Elts, John Storgårds, Thierry Fischer, Louis Langrée, Oliver Knussen and Nicholas McGegan; regular soloists/directors include Christian Zacharias, Piotr Anderszewski and Associate Artist Alexander Janiczek.

The Orchestra has commissioned more than a hundred new works, including pieces by Composer Laureate Sir Peter Maxwell Davies, Martin Suckling, Mark-Anthony Turnage, Judith Weir, Sally Beamish, Karin Rehnqvist, Lyell Cresswell, Hafliði Hallgrímsson, Einojuhani Rautavaara, Stuart MacRae and the late Edward Harper.

The SCO has led the way in music education with a unique programme of projects. SCO Connect provides workshops for children and adults across Scotland and has attracted interest and invitations from overseas. The Orchestra broadcasts regularly and has a discography now exceeding 150 recordings.

The Scottish Chamber Orchestra receives funding from the Scottish Government.

This album is the seventeenth in a series of recordings which the SCO is producing in partnership with Linn.



Scottish Chamber Orchestra

1st Violin

Markus Daunert

Ruth Crouch

Lise Aferiat

Aisling O'Dea

Lorna McLaren

Fiona Alexander

Sijie Chen

Carole Howat

2nd Violin

Clara Biss

Rosenna East

Liza Johnson

Robert McFall

Niamh Lyons

David Chadwick

Viola

Simon Rawson

Brian Schiele

Steve King

Rebecca Wexler

Cello

David Watkin

Su-a Lee

Donald Gillan

Eric de Wit

Bass

Nikita Naumov

Adrian Borneo

Flute

Jane Mitchell

Yvonne Paterson

Oboe

Robin Williams
Rosie Staniforth

Clarinet

Maximilliano Martín
William Stafford

Bassoon

Peter Whelan
Alison Green
Anthea Wood
Graeme Brown

Horn

Alec Frank-Gemmill
Harry Johnstone
Andy Saunders
Jamie Shield

Trumpet

Peter Franks
Shaun Harrold

Trombone

Matt Knight
Neil Gallie
Rob Collinson

Timpani

Martin Piechotta



Photography by Marco Borggreve

Robin Ticciati

conductor

Robin Ticciati is Principal Conductor of the Scottish Chamber Orchestra, Principal Guest Conductor of the Bamberger Symphoniker and Music Director Designate of Glyndebourne Festival Opera.

As guest conductor, he works with world class orchestras on both sides of the Atlantic, including the Royal Concertgebouw Orchestra, the London Symphony Orchestra, the Swedish Radio Symphony Orchestra, the Rotterdam Philharmonic, the Filarmonica della Scala, the Symphonieorchester des Bayerischen Rundfunks Munich, the Gewandhaus Orchestra Leipzig, the Cleveland Orchestra, the Los Angeles Philharmonic and the Philadelphia Orchestra.

Robin Ticciati balances orchestral engagements with extensive work in some of the world's most prestigious opera houses and festivals, including Glyndebourne Festival Opera, the Salzburg Festival, the Metropolitan Opera, the Royal Opera House, Teatro alla Scala, and Opernhaus Zürich. In July 2011, he was appointed Music Director of Glyndebourne Festival Opera from January 2014.

Born in London, Robin Ticciati is a violinist, pianist and percussionist by training. He was a member of the National Youth Orchestra of Great Britain when he turned to conducting, aged 15, under the guidance of Sir Colin Davis and Sir Simon Rattle.

Following a conducting debut in Brussels in 2004, aged just 19, Robin Ticciati's career developed rapidly. In June 2005, he became the youngest conductor to appear at La Scala, Milan, and his 2006 appearance at the Salzburg Festival, conducting Mozart's *Il Sogno di Scipione*, saw him become the youngest conductor in the history of the festival. That performance was later released worldwide on DVD by Deutsche Grammophon. He was then appointed Chief Conductor of the Gävle Symphony Orchestra (2005-2009) and Music Director of Glyndebourne on Tour (2007-2009).

Robin Ticciati's discography includes his first recording with the Scottish Chamber Orchestra, Berlioz's *Symphonie Fantastique*, (Linn) released to unanimous critical acclaim in 2012, a disc with Brahms's *Haydn Variations and Serenade No. 1* recorded with the Bamberger Symphoniker, and an album of choral works by Brahms (*Nänie, Gesang der Parzen, Alto Rhapsody, Schicksalslied*) with the Bavarian Radio Chorus and Bamberger Symphoniker, which attracted Germany's coveted ECHO Klassik award.



Photography by Marco Borggreve



Photography by Ken Dundas

Karen Cargill

mezzo-soprano

Scottish mezzo-soprano Karen Cargill has established an international career in concert, opera and recital, and regularly sings with Boston, Rotterdam, Seoul and Berlin Philharmonic Orchestras, the Chamber Orchestra of Europe, London Symphony and Philharmonic Orchestras and BBC Symphony and Scottish Symphony Orchestras with conductors including James Levine, Yannick Nézet-Séguin, Myung Whun Chung, Bernard Haitink, Sir Simon Rattle, Donald Runnicles and Sir Colin Davis.

In the 2009/10 season she was Artist in Association of the Scottish Chamber Orchestra.

In opera, she has appeared at the Metropolitan Opera, New York, Deutsche Oper, Berlin, as well as Royal Opera House, Covent Garden, English National Opera and Scottish Opera. As a recitalist Karen Cargill has appeared throughout Europe with highlights including recitals with Simon Lepper at Wigmore Hall, London, the Concertgebouw, Amsterdam, and live on BBC Radio 3.

Karen Cargill studied at the Royal Scottish Academy of Music and Drama, Glasgow, the University of Toronto and the National Opera Studio in London and was the joint winner of the 2002 Kathleen Ferrier Award.



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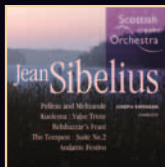
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