

TEXTS AND TRANSLATIONS

Non so più cosa son, cosa faccio (Mozart)

Non so più cosa son, cosa faccio,
or di foco, ora sono di ghiaccio,
ogni donna cangiar di colore,
ogni donna mi fa palpitar.
Solo ai nomi d'amor, di diletto,
mi si turba, mi s'altera il petto
e a parlare mi sforza d'amore
un desio ch'io non posso spiegar.
Parlo d'amor vegliando,
parlo d'amor sognando,
all'acque, all'ombre, ai monti,
ai fiori, all'erbe, ai fonti,
all'eco, all'aria, ai venti,
che il suon de' vani accenti
portano via con sé.
E se non ho chi mi oda,
parlo d'amor con me.

I no longer know what I am or what I'm doing,
Now I'm burning, now I'm made of ice ...
Every woman makes me change colour,
Every woman makes me tremble.
At the very word love or beloved
My heart leaps and pounds,
And to speak of it fills me
With a longing I can't explain!
I speak of love when I'm awake,
I speak of it in my dreams,
To the stream, the shade, the mountains,
To the flowers, the grass, the fountains,
To the echo, the air, the breezes,
Which carry away with them
The sound of my fond words ...
And if I've none to hear me
I speak of love to myself.

Translation by Jane Bishop

Voi che sapete (Mozart)

Voi che sapete, che cosa e amor,
Donne, vedete s'io l'ho nel cor!
Quello ch'io provo vi ridiro;
e per me nuovo, capir nol' so.
Sento un affetto pien di desir,
ch'ora e diletto, ch'ora e martir.
Gelo, e poi sento l'alma avvampar,
e in un momento torno a gelar.
Ricerco un bene fuori di me,
Non so chi il tiene, non so cos'e.
Sospiro e gemo, senza voler,
Palpito e tremo, senza saper.
Non trovo pace, notte, ne di,
Ma pur mi piace languir cosi.
Voi, che sapete che cosa e amor,
Donne, vedete s'io l'ho nel cor!

You are who know what real love is like
Ladies, see whether love is in my heart!
What I've been feeling I will express
It's so new to me, I have no rest
I feel affections full of desire
Which now elate me, now agonize
Chill in my poor soul, next it's ablaze
Then in just one single moment back to ice it gets
I look for better things inside of me
Whose soul I don't know they are within
I sigh and moan I - unwillingly
I throb and tremble I - unknowingly
I find no comfort by night or day
Yet all my pleasure rests in this way
You are who know what real love is like
Ladies, see whether love is in my heart!

Translation by Jane Bishop

À Chloris (Hahn)

S'il est vrai, Chloris, que tu m'aimes,
Mais j'entends, que tu m'aimes bien,
Je ne crois point que les rois mêmes
Aient un bonheur pareil au mien.
Que la mort serait importune
De venir changer ma fortune
A la félicité des cieux!
Tout ce qu'on dit de l'ambroisie
Ne touche point ma fantaisie
Au prix des grâces de tes yeux.

If it be true, Chloris, that you love me,
(And I'm told you love me dearly),
I do not believe that even kings
Can match the happiness I know.
Even death would be powerless
To alter my fortune
With the promise of heavenly bliss!
All that they say of ambrosia
Does not stir my imagination
Like the favour of your eyes!

Translation by Richard Stokes

Quand la nuit n'est pas étoilée (Hahn)

Quand la nuit n'est pas étoilée,
Viens te bercer aux flots des mers ;
Comme la mort elle est voilée,
Comme la vie ils sont amers.
L'ombre et l'abîme ont un mystère
Que nul mortel ne pénétra ;
C'est Dieu qui leur dit de se taire
Jusqu'au jour où tout parlera!
D'autres yeux de ces flots sans nombre
Ont vainement cherché le fond ;
D'autres yeux se sont emplis d'ombre
A contempler ce ciel profond.
Toi, demande au monde nocturne
De la paix pour ton cœur désert !
Demande une goutte à cette urne !
Demande un chant à ce concert !
Plane au-dessus des autres femmes,
Et laisse errer tes yeux si beaux
Entre le ciel où sont les âmes
Et la terre où sont les tombeaux !

Fêtes galantes (Hahn)

Les donneurs de sérénades
Et les belles écouteuses
Échangent des propos fades
Sous les ramures chanteuses.
C'est Tircis et c'est Aminte,
Et c'est l'éternel Clitandre,
Et c'est Damis qui pour mainte
Cruelle, fait maint vers tendre.
Leurs courtes vestes de soie,
Leurs longues robes à queues,
Leur élégance, leur joie
Et leur molles ombres bleues
Tourbillonnent dans l'extase
D'une lune rose et grise,
Et la mandoline jase
Parmi les frissons de brise.

When the night is not studded with stars
Come rock yourself on the waves of the sea;
Like death, night is veiled,
Like life, waves are bitter.
The dark and abyss have a deep mystery
That no mortal has penetrated;
It is God who tells them to be quiet
Until the day when all shall speak!
Other eyes have, of these uncountable waves,
in vain sought to plumb their depths;
Other eyes filled with shadows,
contemplating the deep sky.
You, ask the nocturnal world
for peace to your desert heart!
Request a drop in the urn!
Request a song to this concert!
Soar above the other women,
And let your beautiful eyes wander
Between heaven, where souls are,
And earth, where there are tombs!

Translation by Albert Combrink

The serenading swans
And the lovely ladies listening
Exchange insipid remarks
Under the singing boughs.
There is Tircis and there is Aminta,
And there is the eternal Clitander,
And there is Damis, who for many cruel ladies
Fashions many tender verses.
Their short silken vests,
Their long dresses with trains,
Their elegance, their joy,
And their soft blue shadows
Whirl madly in the ecstasy
Of a moon rose and gray,
And the mandolin thrills
Amidst the quivering of the wind.

Translation by Christopher Goldsack

L'Heure exquise (Hahn)

La lune blanche
Luit dans les bois;
De chaque branche
Part une voix
Sous la ramée...
Ô bien aimée.
L'étang reflète,
Profond miroir,
La silhouette
Du saule noir
Où le vent pleure...
Rêvons, c'est l'heure.
Un vaste et tendre
Apaisement
Semble descendre
Du firmament
Que l'astre irise...
C'est l'heure exquise.

The white moon
Gleams in the woods;
From every branch
There comes a voice
Beneath the boughs...
O my beloved.
The pool reflects,
Deep mirror,
The silhouette
Of the black willow
Where the wind is weeping...
Let us dream, it is the hour.
A vast and tender
Consolation
Seems to fall
From the sky
The moon illumines...
Exquisite hour.

Translation by Richard Stokes

Frauenliebe und leben (Schumann)

1. Seit ich in gesehen

Seit ich ihn gesehen,
Glaub ich blind zu sein;
Wo ich hin nur blicke,
Seh ich ihn allein;
Wie im wachen Traume
Schwebt sein Bild mir vor,
Taucht aus tiefstem Dunkel,
Heller nur empor.
Sonst ist licht- und farblos
Alles um mich her,
Nach der Schwestern Spiele
Nicht begehrt ich mehr,
Möchte lieber weinen,
Still im Kämmerlein;
Seit ich ihn gesehen,
Glaub ich blind zu sein.

Since first seeing him,
I think I am blind,
Wherever I look,
Him only I see;
As in a waking dream
His image hovers before me,
Rising out of deepest darkness
Ever more brightly.
All else is dark and pale
Around me,
My sisters' games
I no more long to share,
I would rather weep
Quietly in my room;
Since first seeing him,
I think I am blind.

2. Er, der herrlichste von allen

Er, der Herrlichste von allen,
Wie so milde, wie so gut!
Holde Lippen, klares Auge,
Heller Sinn und fester Mut.
So wie dort in blauer Tiefe,
Hell und herrlich, jener Stern,
Also er an meinem Himmel,
Hell und herrlich, hehr und fern.
Wandle, wandle deine Bahnen;
Nur betrachten deinen Schein,
Nur in Demut ihn betrachten,

He, the most wonderful of all,
How gentle and loving he is!
Sweet lips, bright eyes,
A clear mind and firm resolve.
Just as there in the deep-blue distance
That star gleams bright and brilliant,
So does he shine in my sky,
Bright and brilliant, distant and sublime.
Wander, wander on your way,
Just to gaze on your radiance,
Just to gaze on in humility,

Selig nur und traurig sein!
Höre nicht mein stilles Beten,
Deinem Glücke nur geweiht;
Darfst mich niedre Magd nicht kennen,
Hoher Stern der Herrlichkeit!
Nur die Würdigste von allen
Darf beglücken deine Wahl,
Und ich will die Hohe segnen,
Viele tausendmal.
Will mich freuen dann und weinen,
Selig, selig bin ich dann;
Sollte mir das Herz auch brechen,
Brich, o Herz, was liegt daran?

3. Ich kann's nicht fassen, nicht glauben

Ich kann's nicht fassen, nicht glauben,
Es hat ein Traum mich berückt;
Wie hätt er doch unter allen
Mich Arme erhöht und beglückt?
Mir war's, er habe gesprochen:
„Ich bin auf ewig dein“—
Mir war's—ich träume noch immer,
Es kann ja nimmer so sein.
O lass im Traume mich sterben,
Gewieget an seiner Brust,
Den seligen Tod mich schlürfen
In Tränen unendlicher Lust.

4. Du Ring an meinem Finger

Du Ring an meinem Finger,
Mein goldenes Ringelein,
Ich drücke dich fromm an die Lippen,
Dich fromm an das Herze mein.
Ich hatt ihn ausgeträumet,
Der Kindheit friedlich schönen Traum,
Ich fand allein mich, verloren
Im öden, unendlichen Raum.
Du Ring an meinem Finger
Da hast du mich erst belehrt,
Hast meinem Blick erschlossen
Des Lebens unendlichen, tiefen Wert.
Ich will ihm dienen, ihm leben,
Ihm angehören ganz,
Hin selber mich geben und finden
Verklärt mich in seinem Glanz.
Du Ring an meinem Finger,
Mein goldenes Ringelein,
Ich drücke dich fromm an die Lippen,
Dich fromm an das Herze mein.

To be but blissful and sad!
Do not heed my silent prayer,
Uttered for your happiness alone,
You shall never know me, lowly as I am,
You noble star of splendour!
Only the worthiest woman of all
May your choice elate,
And I shall bless that exalted one
Many thousands of times.
Then shall I rejoice and weep,
Blissful, blissful shall I be,
Even if my heart should break,
Break, O heart, what does it matter?

I cannot grasp it, believe it,
A dream has beguiled me;
How, from all women, could he
Have exalted and favoured poor me?
He said, I thought,
'I am yours forever',
I was, I thought, still dreaming,
After all, it can never be.
O let me, dreaming, die,
Cradled on his breast;
Let me savour blissful death
In tears of endless joy.

You ring on my finger,
My golden little ring,
I press you devoutly to my lips,
To my heart.
I had finished dreaming
Childhood's peaceful dream,
I found myself alone, forlorn
In boundless desolation.
You ring on my finger,
You first taught me,
Opened my eyes
To life's deep eternal worth.
I shall serve him, live for him,
Belong to him wholly,
Yield to him and find
Myself transfigured in his light.
You ring on my finger,
My golden little ring,
I press you devoutly to my lips,
To my heart.

5. Helft mir, ihr Schwestern

Helft mir, ihr Schwestern,
Freundlich mich schmücken,
Dient der Glücklichen heute mir,
Windet geschäftig
Mir um die Stirne
Noch der blühenden Myrte Zier.
Als ich befriedigt,
Freudigen Herzens,
Sonst dem Geliebten im Arme lag,
Immer noch rief er,
Sehnsucht im Herzen,
Ungeduldig den heutigen Tag.
Helft mir, ihr Schwestern,
Helft mir verscheuchen
Eine törichte Bangigkeit,
Dass ich mit klarem
Aug ihn empfangen,
Ihn, die Quelle der Freudigkeit.
Bist, mein Geliebter,
Du mir erschienen,
Giebst du mir, Sonne, deinen Schein?
Lass mich in Andacht,
Lass mich in Demut,
Lass mich verneigen dem Herren mein.
Streuet ihm, Schwestern,
Streuet ihm Blumen,
Bringet ihm knospende Rosen dar,
Aber euch, Schwestern,
Grüss ich mit Wehmut,
Freudig scheidend aus eurer Schar.

Help me, my sisters,
With my bridal attire,
Serve me today in my joy,
Busily braid
About my brow
The wreath of blossoming myrtle.
When with contentment
And joy in my heart
I lay in my beloved's arms,
He still called,
With longing heart,
Impatiently for this day.
Help me, my sisters,
Help me banish
A foolish fearfulness;
So that I with bright eyes
May receive him,
The source of all my joy.
Have you, my love,
Really entered my life,
Do you, O sun, give me your glow?
Let me in reverence,
Let me in humility
Bow before my lord.
Scatter flowers, O sisters,
Scatter flowers before him,
Bring him budding roses.
But you, sisters,
I greet with sadness,
As I joyfully take leave of you.

Translation by Richard Stokes