

# Chrystal E. Williams

Mezzo-Soprano

## Ronaldo Rolim

Piano

- I. *Frauen-Liebe und Leben* Robert Schumann (1810-1856)  
Seit ich ihn gesehen  
Er, der Herrlichste von allen  
Du Ring an meinem Finger  
Helft mir, ihr Schwestern  
Süßer Freund, du blickest mich verwundert an  
An meinem Herzen, an meiner Brust  
Nun hast du mir den ersten Schmerz getan
- II. *A Charm of Lullabies* Benjamin Britten (1913-1976)  
A Cradle Song  
A Highland Balou  
Sephestia's Lullaby  
A Charm  
The Nurse's Song
- III. *Spirituals*  
Ev'ry time I feel de Spirit Harry T. Burleigh (1866-1949)  
Amazing Grace Traditional  
Ride on, King Jesus! Hall Johnson (1888-1970)
- IV. *Summertime* George Gershwin (1898-1937)

## Program Notes and Translations

*Frauenliebe und Leben* is one of Robert Schumann's greatest works, though a bit controversial in today's society. It tells the story, through a female's perspective, of a woman's journey through love, marriage, childbirth, loss of her husband, and the resulting effects of said loss. I believe Schumann based his protagonist on himself, or rather his ideal self. He was madly in love with Clara Schumann at the time, and I think he was trying to imbue the depth of his feelings for Clara, and the hopes of her feelings for all of time, in his music. The German romantics of this period were not overwrought or outwardly expressive in their emotions. Given this, *Frauenliebe und Leben* comes pretty close to an outright declaration, in my opinion. Schumann expressed as much as he could, given his limitations. The performer has to be careful not to luxuriate too much and remember that she starts out a young girl. This is actually one of the difficulties in performing this piece – again with each song in the cycle. Or, perhaps, she is only remembering the myriad of emotions, thus beginning the cycle older, with a more wistful, bittersweet glint in her eye...

***Frauenliebe und Leben***

***Women – Love and Life***

Text: Adelbert von Chamisso

**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.

**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,  
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 tausend Mal.

**Since I saw him**

I believe myself to be blind;  
where I but cast my gaze,  
I see him alone;  
as in waking dreams,  
his image floats before me,  
dipped from deepest darkness,  
brighter in ascent.

All else is dark and colorless,  
everywhere around me,  
for the games of my sisters  
I no longer yearn,  
I would rather weep,  
silently in my little chamber,  
since I saw him,  
I believe myself to be blind.

**He, the most glorious of all,**

O how mild, so good!  
lovely lips, clear eyes,  
bright mind and steadfast courage.

Just as yonder in the blue depths,  
bright and glorious, that star,  
so he is in my heavens,  
bright and glorious, lofty and distant.

Meander, meander thy paths,  
but to observe thy gleam,  
but to observe in meekness,  
but to be blissful and sad!

Hear not my silent prayer,  
consecrated only to thy happiness,  
thou may'st not know me, lowly maid,  
lofty star of glory!

Only the worthiest of all  
may make happy thy choice,  
and I will bless her, the lofty one,  
many thousand times.

Will mich freuen dann und weinen,  
Selig, selig bin ich dann,  
Sollte mir das Herz auch brechen,  
Brich, o Herz, was liegt daran.

**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.

**Du Ring an meinem Finger,**  
Mein goldenes Ringlein,  
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 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 Ringlein,  
Ich drücke dich fromm an die Lippen,  
Dich fromm an das Herze mein.

I will rejoice then and weep,  
blissful, blissful I'll be then;  
if my heart should also break,  
break, O heart, what of it?

**I can't grasp it, nor believe it,**  
a dream has bewitched me,  
how should he, among all the others,  
lift up and make happy poor me?

It seemed to me, as if he spoke,  
"I am thine eternally",  
It seemed - I dream on and on,  
It could never be so.

O let me die in this dream,  
cradled on his breast,  
let the most blessed death drink me up  
in tears of infinite bliss.

**Thou ring on my finger,**  
my little golden ring,  
I press thee piously upon my lips  
piously upon my heart.

I had dreamt it,  
the tranquil, lovely dream of childhood,  
I found myself alone and lost  
in barren, infinite space.

Thou ring on my finger,  
thou hast taught me for the first time,  
hast opened my gaze unto  
the endless, deep value of life.

I want to serve him, live for him,  
belong to him entire,  
Give myself and find myself  
transfigured in his radiance.

Thou ring on my finger,  
my little golden ring,  
I press thee piously upon lips,  
piously upon my heart.

<p><b>Helft mir, ihr Schwestern,</b>  Freundlich mich schmücken,  Dient der Glücklichen heute mir.  Windet geschäftig  Mir um die Stirne  Noch der blühenden Myrte Zier.</p> <p>Als ich befriedigt,  Freudigen Herzens,  Sonst dem Geliebten im Arme lag,  Immer noch rief er,  Sehnsucht im Herzen,  Ungeduldig den heutigen Tag.</p> <p>Helft mir, ihr Schwestern,  Helft mir verscheuchen  Eine törichte Bangigkeit;  Daß ich mit klarem  Aug' ihn empfangen,  Ihn, die Quelle der Freudigkeit.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>Streuet ihm, Schwestern,  Streuet ihm Blumen,  Bringet ihm knospende Rosen dar.  Aber euch, Schwestern,  Grüß' ich mit Wehmut,  Freudig scheidend aus eurer Schar.</p> <p><b>Süßer Freund, du blickest</b>  Mich verwundert an,  Kannst es nicht begreifen,  Wie ich weinen kann;  Laß der feuchten Perlen  Ungewohnte Zier  Freudig hell erzittern  In dem Auge mir.</p> <p>Wie so bang mein Busen,  Wie so wonnevoll!</p>	<p><b>Help me, ye sisters,</b>  friendly, adorn me,  serve me, today's fortunate one,  busily wind  about my brow  the adornment of blooming myrtle.</p> <p>Otherwise, gratified,  of joyful heart,  I would have lain in the arms of the beloved,  so he called ever out,  yearning in his heart,  impatient for the present day.</p> <p>Help me, ye sisters,  help me to banish  a foolish anxiety,  so that I may with clear  eyes receive him,  him, the source of joyfulness.</p> <p>Dost, my beloved,  thou appear to me,  givest thou, sun, thy shine to me?  Let me with devotion,  let me in meekness,  let me curtsy before my lord.</p> <p>Strew him, sisters,  strew him with flowers,  bring him budding roses,  but ye, sisters,  I greet with melancholy,  joyfully departing from your midst.</p> <p><b>Sweet friend, thou gazest</b>  upon me in wonderment,  thou canst not grasp it,  why I can weep;  Let the moist pearls'  unaccustomed adornment  tremble, joyful-bright,  in my eyes.</p> <p>How anxious my bosom,  how rapturous!</p>
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<p>Wüßt' ich nur mit Worten, Wie ich's sagen soll; Komm und birg dein Antlitz Hier an meiner Brust, Will in's Ohr dir flüstern Alle meine Lust.</p> <p>Weisst du nun die Tränen, Die ich weinen kann, Sollst du nicht sie sehen, Du geliebter Mann? Bleib' an meinem Herzen, Fühle dessen Schlag, Dass ich fest und fester Nur dich drücken mag.</p> <p>Hier an meinem Bette Hat die Wiege Raum, Wo sie still verberge Meinen holden Traum; Kommen wird der Morgen, Wo der Traum erwacht, Und daraus dein Bildnis Mir entgegen lacht.</p> <p><b>An meinem Herzen, an meiner Brust,</b> Du meine Wonne, du meine Lust!</p> <p>Das Glück ist die Liebe, die Lieb' ist das Glück, Ich hab's gesagt und nehm's nicht zurück.</p> <p>Hab' überschwenglich mich geschätzt Bin übergücklich aber jetzt. Nur die da säugt, nur die da liebt Das Kind, dem sie die Nahrung gibt;</p> <p>Nur eine Mutter weiß allein, Was lieben heißt und glücklich sein.</p> <p>O wie bedaur' ich doch den Mann, Der Mutterglück nicht fühlen kann!</p> <p>Du lieber, lieber Engel, du, Du schauest mich an und lächelst dazu,</p>	<p>If I only knew, with words, how I should say it; come and bury thy visage here in my breast, I want to whisper in thy ear all my happiness.</p> <p>Knowest thou the tears, that I can weep? Shouldst thou not see them, thou beloved man? Stay by my heart, feel its beat, that I may, fast and faster, hold thee.</p> <p>Here, at my bed, the cradle shall have room, where it silently conceals my lovely dream; the morning will come where the dream awakes, and from there thy image shall smile at me.</p> <p><b>At my heart, at my breast,</b> thou my rapture, my happiness!</p> <p>The joy is the love, the love is the joy, I have said it, and won't take it back.</p> <p>I've thought myself rapturous, but now I'm happy beyond that. Only she that suckles, only she that loves the child, to whom she gives nourishment;</p> <p>Only a mother knows alone what it is to love and be happy.</p> <p>O how I pity then the man who cannot feel a mother's joy!</p> <p>Thou lookst at me and smiles, Thou dear, dear angel thou,</p>
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An meinem Herzen, an meiner Brust, Du meine Wonne, du meine Lust!	At my heart, at my breast, thou my rapture, my happiness!
<b>Nun hast du mir den ersten Schmerz getan,</b> Der aber traf. Du schläfst, du harter, unbarmherz'ger Mann, Den Todesschlaf.	<b>Now thou hast given me, for the first time, pain,</b> how it struck me. Thou sleepest, thou hard, merciless man, the sleep of death.
Es blicket die Verlass'ne vor sich hin, Die Welt ist leer. Geliebet hab' ich und gelebt, Ich bin nicht lebend mehr.	The abandoned one gazes straight ahead, the world is void. I have loved and lived, I am no longer living.
Ich zieh' mich in mein Inn'res still zurück, Der Schleier fällt, Da hab' ich dich und mein verlornes Glück, Du meine Welt!	I withdraw silently into myself, the veil falls, there I have thee and my lost happiness, O thou my world!
	*English translation by Daniel Platt

**Benjamin Britten** was an English composer, conductor, and pianist. He is known for having created his own style of music, even within the contemporary 20th century classical music genre. His breadth of compositions include orchestral and chamber pieces, as well as opera and vocal selections. *Peter Grimes*, *The Rape of Lucretia*, *The Turn of the Screw*, the *War Requiem*, and *The Young Person's Guide to the Orchestra* are just a few of his most famed works.

His *A Charm of Lullabies* was written in 1947 for mezzo-soprano Nancy Evans, for whom he had written many operas already. This cycle is a brilliant twist on the idea of a "lullaby," composed on poems by poets William Blake, Robert Burns, Robert Greene, Thomas Randolph, and John Phillip-respectively. It takes the audience, as well as the performer, on a journey through the many facets of lulling someone to sleep: the joy and excitement, the hope for their future, the pleading and frustration, the anger, and the ever-present love. And don't worry! No one will know if you fall asleep except you 😊.

### *A Charm of Lullabies*

**A Cradle Song**                      Text: William Blake

Sleep, sleep, beauty bright,  
Dreaming o'er the joys of night;  
Sleep, sleep, in thy sleep  
Little sorrows sit and weep.

Sweet babe, in thy face  
Soft desires I can trace,  
Secret joys and secret smiles,  
Little pretty infant wiles.

O! the cunning wiles that creep  
In thy little heart asleep.  
Leeze me on thy bonnie craigie!  
And thou live, thou'll steal a naigie,  
Travel the country thro' and thro' ,  
and bring hame a Carlisle cow!

Thro' the Lawlands, o'er the Border,  
Weel, my babie, may thou funder!  
Herry the louns o' the laigh Countrie,  
Synne to the Highlands hame to me!

**Sephestia's Lullaby**           Text: Robert Greene

Weep not, my wanton, smile upon my knee;  
When thou art old there's grief enough for thee.

    Mother's wag, pretty boy,  
    Father's sorrow, father's joy;  
    When thy father first did see  
    Such a boy by [him]1 and me,  
    He was glad, I was woe;  
    Fortune changèd made him so,  
    When he left his pretty boy,  
    Last his sorrow, first his joy.

Weep not, my wanton, smile upon my knee;  
When thou art old there's grief enough for thee.

    The wanton smiled, father wept,  
    Mother cried, baby leapt;  
    More he crow'd, more we cried,  
    Nature could not sorrow hide:  
    He must go, he must kiss  
    Child and mother, baby bliss,  
    For he left his pretty boy,  
    Father's sorrow, father's joy.

Weep not, my wanton, smile upon my knee,  
When thou art old there 's grief enough for thee.

**A Charm**                       Text: Thomas Randolph

Quiet!  
Sleep! or I will make  
Erinnys whip thee with a snake,  
And cruel Rhadamanthus take  
Thy body to the boiling lake,  
Where fire and brimstones never slake;  
Thy heart shall burn, thy head shall ache,

And ev'ry joint about thee quake;  
When thy little heart does wake  
Then the dreadful lightnings break,

From thy cheek and from thy eye,  
O'er the youthful harvests nigh.  
Infant wiles and infant smiles  
Heaven and Earth of peace beguiles.

**A Highland Balou**                      Text: Robert Burns

Hee Balou, my sweet wee Donald,  
Picture o' the great Clanronald!  
Brawlie kens our wanton Chief  
What gat my young Highland thief.  
(Hee Balou!)  
And therefor dare not yet to wake!

Quiet, sleep!  
Quiet, sleep!  
Quiet!

Quiet!  
Sleep! or thou shalt see  
The horrid hags of Tartary,  
Whose tresses ugly serpents be,  
And Cerberus shall bark at thee,  
And all the Furies that are three  
The worst is called Tisiphone,  
Shall lash thee to eternity;  
And therefor sleep thou peacefully  
Quiet, sleep!  
Quiet, sleep!  
Quiet!

**The Nurse's Song**                      Text: John Phillip

Lullaby baby,  
Lullaby baby,  
Thy nurse will tend thee as duly as may be.  
Lullaby baby!

Be still, my sweett sweeting, no longer do cry;  
Sing lullaby baby, lullaby baby.  
Let dolours be fleeting, I fancy thee, I ...  
To rock and to lull thee I will not delay me.  
Lullaby baby,  
Lullabylabylaby baby,



Thy nurse will tend thee as duly as may be  
Lullabylabylaby baby

The gods be thy shield and comfort in need!  
The gods be thy shield and comfort in need!  
Sing Lullaby baby,  
Lullabylaby baby  
They give thee good fortune and well for to speed,  
And this to desire ... I will not delay me.  
This to desire ... I will not delay me.

Lullaby baby,  
Lullabylaby baby,  
Thy nurse will tend thee as duly as may be.  
Lullabylabylabylaby baby.