

Katherine Lindhart
The Humble Antiphon

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Accompanied by John Mueter, photo by Vale Rideout

The Humble (German)

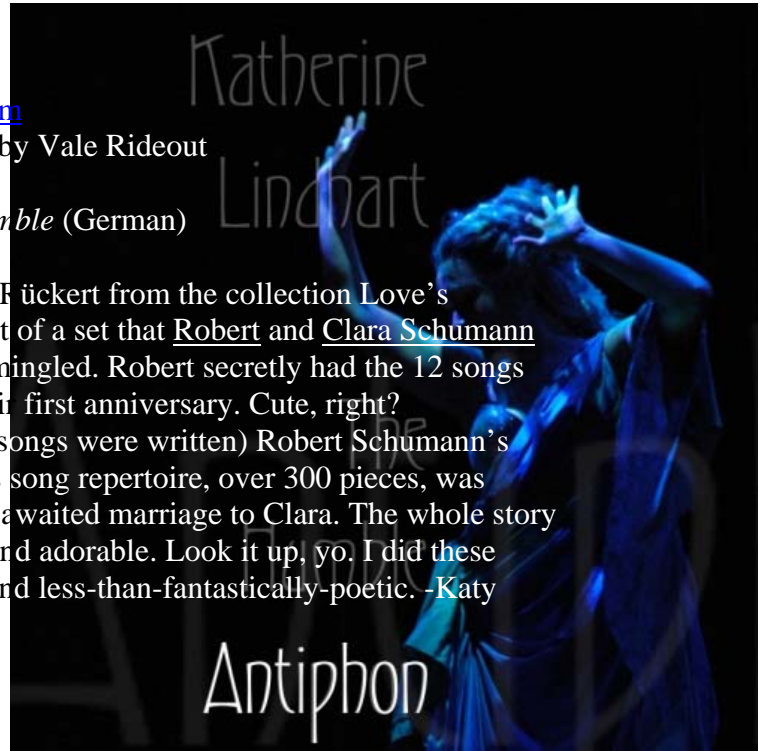
The poetry for this set is by Friedrich Rückert from the collection Love's Springtime. These were originally part of a set that Robert and Clara Schumann wrote together, with their songs intermingled. Robert secretly had the 12 songs printed and gave them to Clara on their first anniversary. Cute, right? Musicologists call 1840 (the year the songs were written) Robert Schumann's "year of song" because the bulk of his song repertoire, over 300 pieces, was written that year to celebrate his long-awaited marriage to Clara. The whole story of their romance is pretty wonderful and adorable. Look it up, yo. I did these translations, so they are super literal and less-than-fantastically-poetic. -Katy

Er ist gekommen

He came in storm and rain,
My anxious heart beat against him.
How could I have known that his path would unite him with me
He came in storm and rain,
He boldly stole my heart.
Did he steal mine? Did I steal his?
They came together.
He came in storm and rain, he came in storm and rain!
Now the blessings of spring have come.
My friend travels abroad.
I watch with cheer, for he remains mine on any road.

Liebst du um Schönheit

If you love for beauty,
Oh, do not love me!
Love the sun, she has golden hair.
If you love for youth,
Oh, do not love me!
Love the spring, it is young every year.
If you love for treasure,
Oh, do not love me!
Love a mermaid, she has many clear pearls.
If you love for love,
Oh, yes! Do love me!
Love me ever; I'll love you evermore.



Warum willst du And're fragen?

Why will you question others who are not faithful to you?

Believe nothing but what these eyes say!

Believe not strange people,

Believe not peculiar fantasies;

You should not even interpret my actions,

But look in these eyes!

Will lips silence your questions, or turn them against me?

Whatever my lips may say, see my eyes – I love you!

Antiphon (French)

This set of [Debussy's](#) songs as a whole is called *Ariettes Oubliees* (Forgotten Melodies), with poetry by [Paul Verlaine](#). Verlaine was very closely associated with the [Symbolist movement](#) (They're pretty great and 100% French in style; all static and wordy and about capturing a moment. They also LOVE alliteration. Listen for it in the music). The first four songs have a quote from another poet included with the song. I'll italicize the quotes in French and English. Rad. -Katy

C'est l'extase langoureuse

Le vent dans la plaine

Suspend son haleine

The wind on the plain

Holds its breath

(Favart)

This is languorous ecstasy,

This is the fatigue of love,

This is all the trembling of the woods

In the embrace of the breezes,

It is, among the gray branches,

The choir of tiny voices.

O frail and fresh murmur,

It babbles and whispers!

It resembles the soft cry

That the stirring grass makes...

You would say it is, beneath the swirling water,

The muffled movement of the pebbles.

The soul that mourns

In this quiet plaint,

It is ours, isn't it?

Mine, say, and yours,

From which is breathed the humble antiphon

On this warm evening, so quietly?

Il pleure dans mon Coeur
Il pleut doucement sur la ville.

It is raining gently on the city.
(Arthur Rimbaud)

There is weeping in my heart
Just as the rain on the city,
What is this languor
That pierces my heart?

O soft sound of rain
On the ground and on the roofs!
For a heart that is weary,
O the sound of the rain!

There is weeping without reason
In the heart that is dejected.
What! No treason?
This sorrow is without reason.

Truly the worst pain
Is not to know why,
Without love and without hatred,
My heart has so much pain.

L'ombre des arbres
*Le rossignol qui du haut d'une
Branche se regarde dedans, croit
Etre tomb'e dans la riviere. Il est
au sommet d'un chene et toute fois
il a peur de se noyer.*

*The nightingale who from the top of a
branch sees himself below, believes
he has fallen into the river. He might be
at the very crest of an oak and yet
he fears being drowned.*
(Cyrano de Bergerac)

The shadow of trees on the hazy river
Fades away like smoke,
While in the air, among the real branches
The turtledoves lament.

How much, O traveler, this pallid landscape
Did mirror your own pallid self,
And how sadly among the high foliage
Did your drowned hopes weep!

Chevaux de bois

Par San Gille,

Viens-nous-en

Mon agile

Alezan!

By Saint Giles,

Let us go,

My agile,

Alezan!

(Victor Hugo)

Turn, turn, good wooden horses,
Turn a hundred times, turn a thousand times,
Turn often and turn forever,
Turn, turn to the sound of the oboes.

The red-faced child and the pale mother,
The fellow in black and the girl in pink,
One striking off and the other striking poses,
Each getting his Sunday penny's value.

Turn, turn horses of their hearts,
While all about your turning
Twinkles the eye of the sly pickpocket,
Turn to the sound of the splendid cornet!

It is amazing how that does drunken you
Turning around in this giddy circus!
The stomach empty and the head spinning
Masses of bad and good aplenty.

Turn, horses, with no need
For using spurs,
To control your round gallops
Turn, turn, with no hope of fodder.

And hurry, horses of their souls
Already the supper bell is sounding
Night falls and chases away the troupe
of merry drinkers made eager by their thirst.

Turn, turn! The velvet sky
With golden stars slowly adorns itself.
The church tolls a knell sadly.
Turn to the joyful sound of the drums! Turn...

Green

Here are fruits, flowers, leaves, and branches,
And here too is my heart that beats only for you.
Do not rent it with your two white hands,
And let the humble gift find favor in your beautiful eyes.

I come to you still covered with dew
That the morning wind has just frozen on my brow.
Let my fatigue, laid to rest at your feet,
Dream of the dear moments that will refresh it,

On your young breast, let my head roll
Still resounding with your last kisses;
Let it rest from that good storm,
And let me sleep a little as you too sleep.

Spleen

The roses were completely red,
And the ivy was all black.

Dear, even by your slightest stir,
All my despair is reborn.

The sky was too blue, too tender,
The sea too green and the air too mild.

I fear always, – how it is to be expected! –
Some hateful flight by you away from me.

Of the holly and its lustrous leaf
And of the shiny boxwood I am weary,

And of the vast countryside,
And of everything, except you, alas!