

Four Song Cycles

for soprano and piano

Peter Seabourne

September, Just Septembers p3

9 songs to words of Emily Dickinson

Sappho Songs p33

4 songs in translations by Renée Vivien

Moon Beyond the White Clouds p63

4 Classical Chinese songs in English translations

The Garden in the Brain p89

7 songs to words of Emily Dickinson

September, Just Septembers

Nine Songs to words of Emily Dickinson

September, Just Septembers

Nine Songs to words of Emily Dickinson

- I. They dropped like Flakes -
They dropped like Stars -
Like Petals from a Rose -
When suddenly across the June
A wind with fingers goes -

They perished in the Seamless Grass -
No eye could find the place -
But God can summon every face
On his Repealless List.
- II. I showed her Heights she never saw -
"Would'st Climb," I Said?
She said - "Not so" -
"With *me*." I said - "With *me*?"
I showed her Secrets - Morning's Nest-
The Rope the Nights were pul across -
And *now* - "Would'st have me for a Guest?"
She could not find her Yes-
And then, I brake my life - And Lo,
A Light, for her, did solemn glow,
The larger, as her face withdrew -
And *could* she, further, "No"?
- III. Wild Nights - Wild Nights!
Were I with thee
Wild Nights - should be
Our luxury!

Futile - the Winds -
To a Heart in port,
Done with the Compass,
Done with the Chart!

Rowing in Eden -
Ah, the Sea!
Might I but moor - Tonight
In Thee!
- IV. Midsummer, was it when They died -
A full, and perfect time -
The Summer closed upon itself
in Consumated Bloom -

The Corn, her furthest kernel filled
Before the coming Flail -
When These - leaned into Perfectness
Through Haze of Burial -
- V. Nobody knows this little Rose -
It might a pilgrim be
Did I not take it from the ways
And lift it up to thee.
Only a Bee will miss it-
Only a Butterfly,
Hastening from far journey -
On its breast to lie -
Only a Bird will wonder -
Only a breeze will sigh -
Ah Little Rose - how easy
For such as thee to die!
- VI. She bore it till the simple veins
Traced azure on her hand -
Till pleading, round her quiet eyes
The purple Crayons stand.

Till Daffodils had come and gone
I cannot tell the sum,
And then she ceased to bear it -
And with the Saints sat down.

No more her patient figure
At twilight soft to meet -
No more her timid bonnet
Upon the village street -

But Crowns, instead, and Courtiers -
And in the midst so fair,
Whose but her shy - immortal face
Of whom we're whispering here?
- VII. Whether my bark went down at sea -
Whether she met with gales -
Whether to isles enchanted
She bent her decile sails -

By what mystic mooring
She is held today -
This is the errand of the eye
Out upon the Bay.
- VIII. The Sky is low - the Clouds are mean.
A Travelling Flake of Snow
Across a Barn or through a Rut
De-bates if it will go -

A Narrow Wind complains all Day
How someone treated him
Nature, like Us is sometimes caught
Without her Diadem.
- IX. There's a certain slant of light,
Winter Afternoons -
That oppresses, like the Heft
Of Cathedral Tunes -

When it comes, the Landscape listens -
Shadows - hold their breath -
When it goes, 'tis like the Distance
On the look of Death.
- Composer's note re IX: I originally composed parts of this cycle in the 1980s. The copy of "Winter Afternoons" I had found was, unknown to me, truncated, two verses being omitted. I only afterwards discovered my error. However, the song seemed complete and so when the whole cycle was completely re-composed, and expanded the anomaly was allowed to remain. My apologies, Emily.....
- Emily Dickinson's original punctuation (sometimes quirky) is retained.

September, Just Septembers

Nine Songs to words of Emily Dickinson

Emily Dickinson

I

Peter Seabourne
2002

Allegretto ♩=112

Musical score for the first system, measures 1-4. The music is in 2/4 time and features a melody in the right hand and accompaniment in the left hand. The dynamic is *mf*.

Musical score for the second system, measures 5-8. The music continues with the melody and accompaniment. The dynamic is *mf*.

Musical score for the third system, measures 9-12. The music includes lyrics and a triplet. The dynamic is *mf* and *sub. p*.

10 *mf* They dropped like Flakes- They dropped like Stars- *sub. p*

15

Like Pe - - tals from a

19 *sub. mp*

Rose - When sud - den - ly a - cross the June A wind with

24

fin - gers goes -

27

32 *p* *mp*

They pe - rished in the Seam - less Grass - No eye -

36 *mf*

— could find the place - But God can sum - mon e - very face On

42 *pp* *mp* non rit.

his Re - peal - less List.

Still $\text{♩} = 72$ *p* *mp*

I showed her Heights she ne-ver saw— "Would'st Climb?" I Said—

5 *p* *mp*

She said—"Not So" "With me" I said—"With

10 *mf*

me?" I showed her se - crets— Mor ning's Nest—

14

The Rope the Nights were put a - cross- And

16 *ff*

now- "Would'st have me for a Guest?"

18 *sub. mp* *cresc. mollo* *ff*

She could not find her Yes— And then I brake my life—

21 *sub. p* *rubato (not too rigid)* *mf*

And Lo, A Light for her, did so-lemn glow, The

24 *sub. p ten.*

lar - ger, as her face with drew And

27

could_ she_____ fur- ther,_____ "No"?

sub. p

III

Con fuoco $\text{♩} = 100$ *fff*

Wild Nights- Wild

fff *ff*

8^{vb}-----|

5

Nights! Were I with thee Wild

fff *ff*

8

Nights- should be our lu - xu - ry.

fff *ff*

8^{vb}-----|

12 *f*

Fu - tile- the Winds- to a

16 *fff*

Heart in port, Done with the Com - pass,

19

Done with the Chart.

21 *sub. f*

Ro - wing in E - den- Ah, _____

sub. f *ff sub. f*

Ped. _____

24

the Sea! // Might I but

ff sub. f

8va

Ped. _____

27

moor to - night in Thee. _____

(8) *(secco)*

8vb

Ped. _____

IV

Largo ♩=52

Musical score for measures 1-5. The vocal line begins with a rest, followed by a triplet of notes (G4, A4, B4) marked *p*. The piano accompaniment features a complex texture with triplets and a quintuplet in both hands. The lyrics "Mid-sum- mer," are positioned below the vocal line.

Mid-sum- mer,

Musical score for measures 6-9. The vocal line starts at measure 6 with a triplet of notes (G4, A4, B4) marked *sub. pp*, followed by a rest and then a note (G4) marked *p*. The piano accompaniment continues with triplets and a quintuplet. The lyrics "was it when They died- A full, and" are positioned below the vocal line.

was it when They died- A full, and

Musical score for measures 10-13. The tempo changes to *mp* with a new tempo marking ♩=44. The vocal line starts at measure 10 with a triplet of notes (G4, A4, B4) marked *mp*, followed by a rest and then a note (G4). The piano accompaniment features triplets and a quintuplet. The lyrics "per - fect time- The Sum - mer" are positioned below the vocal line. The score ends with a fermata and the instruction "Ped.".

per - fect time- The Sum - mer

Ped.

13

— closed u - pon it - self in Con - su - ma - ted Bloom-

16

$\text{♩} = 52$

p

The Corn, her fur - thest ker - nel filled

20

Be - fore the co - ming_ of the Flail- When these_

23 *mf* ♩ = 44 17

leaned in - to per - - - - - fect - ness. Through

26

Haze of Bu - ri - al.

V

Insistent, listless $\text{♩} = 72$

mf *sub. p* *mf*

5

mf

No-bo-dy knows this

sub. p *mf*

9

lit - tle Rose - It might a pil - grim

L.H. *mf* *sub. p*

12

be Did I not take it from the ways And lift it up

15

to thee. On - ly a Bee will miss it-

18

On - ly a But - ter - fly, Has - te - ning from far jour - ney On its breast to lie-

21 *mf*

On - ly a Bird will won - der, On - ly a breeze will sigh -

24 *f* *sub. mp*

Ah Lit - tle Rose how ea - sy for

27 *p* *non rit.*

such as thee to die!

Semplice $\text{♩} = 44$

p
She bore it till the

mf *p*

Red.

pp *p*

sim - ple veins Traced a - zure on her hand Till plea - ding, round her

pp *p*

Red.

mp

qui - et eyes The pur - ple Cra - yons stand. Till Daf - fo - dils

pp *mp*

Red.

16

had come—and gone— I can-not tell—the sum,— And then she ceased

mf *pp*

mf *ppp*

una corda

Ped.

21

— to bear it— And with the Saints— sat— down—

p *mp*

tre corde

Ped.

26

No more her pa-tient fi-gure At twi-light soft to meet No more her li-mid

mp *p* *cresc.*

p *cresc.*

Ped.

30 *f* *dim.*

bon-net U-pon the vil-lage street- But Crowns, in-stead, and Cour-tiers

f

Ped.

35 *p* *pp*

And in the midst so fair, Whose but her shy im-mor-tal face Of

una corda

p *ppp*

39

whom we're whis-pering here?

tre corde

Ped.

VII

Allegretto $\text{♩} = 66$

mf *p*

5 *mf* 3

Whe-ther my bark went down at sea

pp *mf* *8va*

9 *mf* 3 *sub. mp* *mf* 3

Whe-ther she met with gales— Whe-ther to isles en -

f *mf* *8va*

12

chan - ted She bent her do - cile sails—

15

mf *p*

19

p legato By what mys - tic moo - ring She—

mf *pp (legato)* *mp*

24

is held _____ to day _____ This is the er - rand

pp *p* *mp* *p* *p*

28

of the eye Out _____ u - pon the Bay.

mp *mf* *mp* *pp*

5 8va

31

p *pp* *ppp*

15^{ma} non ril.

VIII

Andante con moto ♩=80

The Sky is low- the Clouds are mean. A
 Tra - vel - ling Flake of Snow A cross a Barn or though a
 Rut De - bates if it will go A

mp *p* *mp* *mp* *mp*

18

Nar - row Wind com - plains all Day How some - one

21

Irea - ted Him Na - ture, like Us, is

25

some - times caught without her Di - a - dem.

IX

Lontano ♩=44
una corda (like imaginary harmonics)

pp < *ppp* *ppp* *pp* <

8vb Ped. 8vb

6

pppp *ppp* *pppp*

8vb

10 *pp* 3 5 3

There's a cer - tain slant of light, Win - ter Af - ter - noons — That op -

4/4 4/4 4/4

13 *p*

pres - ses, like the Heft Of Ca - the - dral Tunes

tre corde *p* *ppp*

pp *Red.*

17 *mp*

When it comes

poco *p*

21 *p*

the Land - scape lis - tens Sha dows hold their breath -

tre corde *pp* *pp*

8vb *Red.*

24 *pp*

When it goes, 'tis like the dis - tance on the look of

(8).....

26

Death.

pp *ppp*

una corda al fine

LH

8vb

* rehold without resounding

Sappho Songs

Four Songs in translation by Renée Vivien (1903)

Peter Seabourne

Sappho Songs

Four Songs in translation by Renée Vivien (1903)

1. Tu m'oublies

L'eau trouble reflète, ainsi qu'un vain miroir,
Mes yeux sans lueurs, mes paupières pâlies.
J'écoute ton rire et ta voix dans le soir...
Althis, tu m'oublies.
Tu n'as point connu la stupeur de l'amour
L'effroi du baiser et l'orgueil de la haine;
Tu n'as désiré que les roses d'un jour,
Amanle incertaine.

The turbid water reflects, as an empty mirror,
My eyes without light, my eyelids now pale.
I listen to your laughter and your voice in the evening ...
Althis, you forget me.
You knew not at all the stupor of love
The awe of a kiss and the pride of hatred;
You desired only the roses of a day,
Doubtful lover.

2. Je serai toujours vierge

Je demeurerai vierge comme la neige
Sereine, qui dort là-bas d'un blanc sommeil,
Qui dort pâlement, et que l'hiver protège
Du brutal soleil.
Et j'ignorerai la souillure et l'empreinte
Comme l'eau du fleuve et l'haleine du nord.
Je fuirai l'horreur sanglante de l'étreinte,
Du baiser qui mord.
Je demeurerai vierge comme la lune
Qui se réfléchit dans le miroir du flot,
Et que le désir de la mer importune
De son long sanglot.

I shall remain virgin as the untrodden snow,
Which sleeps there of a white slumber,
Which sleeps pallidly, and which the winter protects
From the brutal sun.
And I shall not know stain or imprint
As the water of the river and the breath of the North.
I shall shun the bloody horror of embrace,
The kiss which bites.
I shall remain virgin as the moon
Which is reflected in the mirror of the stream,
And which the desire of the sea troubles
With its long sob.

3. Ondine

Ton rire est clair, ta caresse est profonde,
Tes froids baisers aiment le mal qu'ils font;
Tes yeux sont bleus comme un lotus sur l'onde,
Et les lys d'eau sont moins purs que ton front.
Ta forme fuit, ta démarche est fluide,
Et tes cheveux sont de légers réseaux;
Ta voix ruisselle ainsi qu'un flot perfide;
Tes souples bras sont pareils aux roseaux,
Aux longs roseaux des fleuves, dont l'étreinte
Enlace, étouffe, étrangle savamment,
Au fond des flots, une agonie éteinte
Dans un nocturne évanouissement.

Your laughter is clear, your caress is profound,
Your cold kisses love the harm that they do;
Your eyes are blue like a lotus on the wave,
And the water lilies are less pure than your brow..
Your form flees, your parting is fluid,
And your hair falls in gentle cascades;
Your voice streams as a treacherous tide;
Your supple arms are like reeds,
Like long river reeds, whose embrace
Entwines, chokes, strangles knowingly,
In the depths of the waves, an agony extinguished
In a nocturnal evanescence.

4. Roses du Soir

Des roses sur la mer, des roses dans le soir,
Et toi qui viens de loin, les mains lourdes de roses!
J'aspire ta beauté. Le couchant fait pleuvoir
Ses fines cendres d'or et ses poussières roses...
Des roses sur la mer, des roses dans le soir.
Un songe évocateur tient mes paupières closes.
J'attends, ne sachant trop ce que j'attends en vain,
Devant la mer pareille aux boucliers d'airain,
Et te voici venue en m'apportant des roses...
Ô roses dans le ciel et le soir ! Ô mes roses!

Roses on the sea, roses in the evening
And you, who come from afar, your hands heavy with roses!
I breathe in your beauty. The setting sun rains
Its fine cinders of gold and its dusting of roses...
Roses on the sea, roses in the evening.
An evocative dream holds my eyelids closed
I wait, not quite knowing that for which I wait in vain,
Before the sea, like shields of brass,
And here you have come bringing me roses...
Oh roses in the sky and the evening! Ah my roses!

Sappho Songs

Four Songs in French translation

1. Tu m'oublies

Translation Renée Vivien (1903)

Peter Seabourne
March 2002

Bitter, harsh $\text{♩} = 63$

sfz *sub. pp* *mp* *sfz*

Ped.

4 $\text{♩} = 84$

pp *pp* *pp*

8 *p*

L'eau trou - ble re - flè - te, ain - si qu'un vain mi -

pp *p* *sfz* *p* *pp* *pp*

11

- roir, Mes yeux sans lu - eurs, mes pau - pi - ères

mf *sub. mf*

sfz *mp* *sfz* *mp*

p *15^{ma}* *sfz*

13

pâ - lies.

mp *mf*

Ped.

15

J'é - cou-te lon rire et ta voix dans le soir...

mf *sffz* *mf* *f* *sfz*

mf *Ped.* *Ped.* *8^{va}* *Ped.*

18

Musical score for measures 18-20. The system includes a vocal line and a piano accompaniment. The piano part features triplets and dynamic markings: *f*, *sfz*, *f*, and *ff*. Pedal markings (*Ped.*) are indicated at the bottom of the piano part.

21

Musical score for measures 21-23. The system includes a vocal line with lyrics and a piano accompaniment. The tempo is marked as quarter note = 63. Dynamics include *p*, *sub. pp*, and *p tendre*. Octave markings (*8va* and *8vb*) are used for the piano part.

At - this, tu m'ou - - bli - es.

26

Musical score for measures 26-29. The system features a piano accompaniment with dynamics *mp tendre* and *mf*. A triplet is marked in the final measure.

31 $\text{♩} = 84$ *mp*

Tu n'as point con - nu la

34 *f*

stu - peur de l'a mour L'ef-froi du bai - ser et l'or

mp *mf* *f*

Ped. Ped. Ped.

37 *ff*

quel de la haine; Tu n'as dé -

ff

Ped. Ped. Ped.

40

- si - ré - que les ro - ses d'un jour,

mf *molto* *pp*

Ped.

43

$\text{♩} = 63$ *p*

A -

sub. pp *poco rit.* *mp*

8va

Ped.

47

man - te in - cer - taine.

(8) *sub. pp* *long* *long* *sfz* *sfz*

Ped.

2. Je serai toujours vierge

Transient, suspended $\text{♩} = 96$

p

5:6

Je de-meu-re-rai vierge com-me la nei-ge Se - rei - - ne,

8va

pp

Ped.

5

5:6

quidort là- - bas d'un blanc som - meil, Qui dort pâle - ment,

(8)

mp

8

et que l'hi - ver pro - tège Du bru-tal so-leil.

11 rit. - - - - - a tempo *pp*

Et ji - gno - re -

14 *cresc...* *poco...* *a...* *poco...*

rai lasou - il - lure et l'em - prein - te Com-me l'eau du

18 *f*

fleu - ve et l'ha - lei - ne du nord.

(8)

20 *f* *increasingly impassioned*

Je fui - rai l'hor - reur san - glan - te

(8)

22 *ff*

de l'é - trein - te, Du bai - ser qui mord.

(8)

8va

8vb

24

8va

8va

3

tr^b

(8)

25

sub. p

Je de - meure - rai vier - -

8va

5:6

5

sub. pp

5:6

27

- ge com-me la lu - ne Qui se ré - flé - chit dans le mi - -

3

5:6

8va

5

31 *p*

roir du flot, Et que le dé-sir de la mer

(8)

mp

3

5

5

3

34 *mp* *mf*

im-por-tu-ne De son long san-

mp *mf*

3

37

- - - glot.

8va

p *mp* *mp* *p*

3

(8)

45

40

pp

(8)

41

3. Ondine

Capricious, cold $\text{♩} = 88$

mf

3

5

3

sub. p

mf

9

mf

mf

Ton_ ri - re est clair, ta_ ca - re -

3

mp

12 *p*

- se est pro - fon - de,

sub. mf *p*

3

15^{ma}

3

16 *p*

Tes_ froids bai - sers ai - - ment le mal_ qu'ils

20 *mp*

— font; Tes_ yeux_ sont bleus_

sub. pp *mp*

3

3

23

com - me un lo - tus sur l'on - de,

mp

27

Et les lys d'eau sont moins purs que ton front.

trill

mp

32

Ta - for - me fu-it,

8va

mp

mf

35 *mf*

ta dé - mar - che est flu - ide

38 *mf*

Et tes che - veux sont de lé - gers ré - seux;

42 *f*

Ta voix puis - sel - le ain -

45 *sub. mf*

si qu'on flot per - fi - de; tes

48 *poco*

sou - ples bras sont pa - reils aux ro -

50 *f* *cresc. poco a poco*

seaux, Aux longs ro - seaux des

53 *ff*

fleu - ves, - dont l'é - trein - te En - la - - ce,

8va

ff

3

56

é - touf - fe, é - tran - gle sa - vam-ment,

(8) *8va*

sub. p

3

59 *sub. p*

Au - fond des flots,

8va

sub. ff

3

8vb

62 *sub. p* *poco cresc.*

u-ne a - go - ni - e — é - tein - - - le

sub. p *poco cresc.*

8^{vb}

66 *p*

dans un — noc - tur - - - ne é - va -

p *tr* 3 3

8^{vb}

69

- nuis - - se - ment.

3

(8)

71

ppp

8^{vb}

4. Roses du Soir

'Saturated', sultry $\text{♩} = 72$

First system of musical notation. The left hand (bass clef) plays a descending eighth-note scale starting on B-flat, moving from the 7th finger to the 1st. The right hand (bass clef) plays a series of chords: a whole note B-flat, a half note B-flat, a half note B-flat, a half note B-flat, and a dotted half note B-flat. The dynamic is *mf* for the first measure and *mp* for the rest. A triplet of eighth notes is indicated in the right hand.

Red.

Second system of musical notation. The left hand (bass clef) plays a descending eighth-note scale starting on B-flat, moving from the 9th finger to the 1st. The right hand (treble clef) plays a series of chords: a whole note B-flat, a half note B-flat, a half note B-flat, and a dotted half note B-flat. The dynamic is *mf* for the first measure and *mp* for the rest. A quintuplet of eighth notes is indicated in the right hand.

Third system of musical notation. The left hand (bass clef) plays a descending eighth-note scale starting on B-flat, moving from the 10th finger to the 1st. The right hand (treble clef) plays a series of chords: a whole note B-flat, a half note B-flat, a half note B-flat, and a dotted half note B-flat. The dynamic is *f* for the first measure and *f* for the rest. A quintuplet of eighth notes is indicated in the right hand.

Fourth system of musical notation. The left hand (bass clef) plays a descending eighth-note scale starting on B-flat, moving from the 5th finger to the 1st. The right hand (treble clef) plays a series of chords: a whole note B-flat, a half note B-flat, a half note B-flat, and a dotted half note B-flat. The dynamic is *ff* for the first measure and *mf* for the rest. A triplet of eighth notes is indicated in the right hand.

7

mp *p*

Des ro - ses sur la mer, _____ des ro - ses dans le

9

mf *sub. p*

soir, _____ Et toi qui viens de

11

ppp

loin, _____ les mains lour - des de ro - ses!

14 *ff*

J'as -

15

pi - - - re - ta

16

beau - - - té. Le

17

cou - chant fait pleu - voir Ses

18

fi - nes cend - dres d'or

19

et ses pous - siè - res ro - ses...

21 (8)

pp 3

ppp 3

mp 3

23

mp 3

Des ro - - ses sur la

mp 3

24

p 3

mer, des ro - - ses dans le

p 9 3

25 *mf* *mp*

soir. _____ Un_

27

son-ge é - vo - ca - teur _____ tient mes pau-piè res clo - ses.

29 *sub. p*

J'at-tends, ne sa-chant trop ce que j'at - tends _____ en vain, De -

31

vant la mer pa -

32

molto cresc.

-reil - le aux bou - ciers d'ai - rain,

33

ff

Et te voi - ci ve - nue en m'ap - por - tant des

8^{va}

ff

rehold

ff

34

PO - - - - - SES... O

ff intense

This system contains measures 34 and 35. The vocal line (treble clef) features a triplet of eighth notes in measure 34, followed by a dotted quarter note in measure 35. The lyrics are "PO - - - - - SES... O". The piano accompaniment (grand staff) is marked *ff intense* and features a complex texture with sixteenth-note runs in the right hand and a steady eighth-note bass line in the left hand.

35

PO - - - - -

14:16 *14:16* *14:16*

This system contains measures 35 and 36. The vocal line (treble clef) continues with a triplet of eighth notes in measure 35. The lyrics are "PO - - - - -". The piano accompaniment (grand staff) features three distinct *14:16* rhythmic patterns in the right hand, each marked with a slur and a fermata. The left hand continues with a steady eighth-note bass line.

36

- ses dans le ciel et le soir!

14:16 *14:16*

5

This system contains measures 36 and 37. The vocal line (treble clef) has a triplet of eighth notes in measure 36, followed by a quarter note in measure 37. The lyrics are "- ses dans le ciel et le soir!". The piano accompaniment (grand staff) features two *14:16* rhythmic patterns in the right hand, a quintuplet of eighth notes in the right hand in measure 37, and a steady eighth-note bass line in the left hand.

38 *f* *molto ten.* *molto*

Ô mes ro - ses!

poco dim. *f* *molto* *mp*

8va

41 *p* *molto ten.*

Ô mes ro - ses!

pp *p*

44 *len.*

len.

Ped.

Moon Beyond the White Clouds

Four classical Chinese songs in translation

Peter Seabourne

Moon Beyond the White Clouds

Four classical Chinese songs in translation

I. Distant Bell

Wang Wei (699-761) trans. G.W. Robinson

Distant bell sounding at the mouth of the valley,
Fewer and fewer the fishermen and woodmen,
Away in the far mountains it is evening and
I am going home alone to-wards the white clouds home.

Water-chestnut flowers so delicate, so hardly still,
Willow catkins so light, so easily fly,
Colours of spring on the banks of the marsh to the east,
And I am melan-choly as I shut my door.

II. The Man of the Mountains

Wang Wei (699-761) trans. G.W. Robinson

The man of the mountains wants to go home,
Clouds dark, dark rain driving down,
Waters surging green, rushes swaying,
White egrets suddenly wheeling about. hsi*

My friend you must not hitch up your clothes,
Mountains many layered, all one cloud,
Heaven and earth confused, indistinguishable, hsi
Trees dim and dark, air heavy,

Monkeys not seen only heard, hsi
Suddenly west of the mountains evening light,
We see among the eastern fields a distant village,
Flat plain green, hundred miles clear, I am sad thinking of you.

[*hsi - a nonsense syllable to fill space]

III. Drinking Alone by Moonlight

Li Po (701 - 762) freely adapted PS

From a pot of wine among the flowers I drink alone,
'Til lifting up my cup I beckon the bright moon to be my guest, my shadow making three,
The moon, alas, is no wine drinker, my shadow emptily creeps beside,
Yet moon as friend and shadow as slave must cheer me 'til the spring is spent.

At my song the moon flickers her beams,
In my dance my shadow tumbles and twines.
Sober we were companions, drunk we lost each other.
May we meet at last on the Ri-ver of Stars.

IV. Looking at the moon and thinking of one far away

Chang Chiu-ling (673-740) freely trans. PS

The moon climbs bright above the sea, borne to its furthest rim
Through the endless night it holds the long-ing thoughts of distant hearts
I blow out my candle the radiance remains
I slip on my robe the cold persists
Since I can gather no moonlight to send you
Let me sleep and meet you in a dream.

Moon Beyond the White Clouds

Four classical Chinese songs in translation

I. Distant Bell

Wang Wei (699-761)
trans. G.W. Robinson*

Peter Seabourne
2003

Very Still - like raindrops ♩=60 *8va*-----1
like a breeze

Damper pedal is intended *not* 3rd Pedal - i.e. R.H. staccato 'bell' notes are laissez vibrer

* By permission of Pequin Books and the family of the late Mr Robinson - translations are now placed in the public domain

12 *mp* (a little 'actually')

val - ley, Fe - wer and fe - wer the fi - sher - men and wood - men,

15 *mp* *poco*

A - way in the far moun tains it is

19 *sub. p*

eve - ning_ and I am go - ing home a - lone to - wards the white clouds home.

24 *mp*

Wa-ter-chest-nut flo-wers so

30 *mp* *mp* *sub. p* *poco*

de - li - cate, so hard - ly still, Wil-low cat-kins so light, so ea-si-ly

35 *mf* (with a little more warmth and forward movement)

fly, Co-lours of spring on the banks of the marsh to the east, -

39 *pp*

And I am me-lan-cho-ly_

43 *pochiss.* *p* (immediately a little more composed and factual)

as I shut my door.

47 *pp* *p* *pp* *p* *pp* *molto ten.*

II. The Man of the Mountains

Wang Wei (699-761)
trans. G.W. Robinson

Stormy - turbulent ♩=100

f
The man of the moun tains...

pesante
f
simile

[reminder accidentals are not written in each staff here as the chords are maintained throughout the bar and should be self-evident]

f
wants to go home, Clouds dark, dark

f

ff
rain dri-ving down, Wa ters sur - ging, green ru - shes

ff

12

swa - ying, White e - grets sud - den - ly whee - ling a - bout.

15

hsi * My friend

f

pesante

f come prima

* see note on words page

19

you must not hitch up your clothes. Moun - tains ma -

sub. mf

sub. mf

22

ny layered,

24

all one cloud, Hea-ven and earth con-

come prima

ff

ff

8va

8va

ff

Ped.

27

fused, in - di - stin - qui - sha - ble,

30

hsi

8va

3

tr

3

tr

3

33 *sempre f*

Trees dim and dark, air hea-vy,

8va

sempre f

poco

8vb
Ped.

36

Mon keys not seen, on - ly heard,

3

3

3

5

5

poco

39 *ff*

hsi

8va

ff

3

3

3

3

3

3

41

molto

pp

mf

pp

Ped.

8va

3

3

3

3

3

43 *p*

Sud - den - ly west of the moun-tains

pp

ppp

pp

ppp

pp

pp

8va

8vb

3

3

3

3

3

3

3

3

47

eve-ning light, — We see a -

8^{va}-----

pp

ppp

8^{vb}-----

51

mong — the ea - stern fields a dis-tant

pp

pp

ppp

54

vil - lage, — Flat plain green, — hun - dred miles clear, —

pp

8^{va}-----

ppp

8^{vb}-----

57

The musical score consists of two staves. The upper staff is for the voice, and the lower staff is for the piano. The key signature has one flat (B-flat) and the time signature is 7/8. The voice part begins with a rest, followed by the lyrics "am sad thin-king of you." The piano accompaniment starts with a *pp* dynamic and features a series of chords in the right hand and rests in the left hand. The final measure of the piano part includes an *8va* marking and a triplet of chords.

pp *non ril.* 3

am sad thin-king of you.

pp *8va* *non ril.* 3

III. Drinking Alone by Moonlight

Li Po (701 - 762)

freely adapted PS

Jerky, rather unsteady, 'on the edge' ♩=100

f *mp* *8va*

R.H. L.H.

i.e. the lower note is restruck, the top one held

mf *mp*

mf *mf* 3

From a pot of

8 *dryly mp*

wine a - mong the flowers I drink a-lone, Til

8va *mp* *mf*

11

lif - ting up my cup I bec - kon the

13 *mp* (explanation - matter of fact)

bright moon to be my quest, my sha-dow ma - king three,

mp

15 *f*

The moon, a - las, is no wine

17

drin - ker, my sha - dow emp - ti - ly creeps be -

19 *mp*

side, Yet moon as friend and sha-dow as slave must

22 *f*

cheer_ me 'til the spring is spent.

(8)

f *mp*

26 *f*

At my song the

f

28

moon_ fli - ckers her beams,

ff

31 *f*

In my dance my sha - - - dow

33 *p*

tum - bles and twines. So - ber we were com -

35 *p*

pa - ni - ons, drunk we

37

lost each o - ther.

pp *ppp*

3 3

Detailed description: This block contains the musical notation for measures 37 and 38. The vocal line is in 3/4 time, with lyrics "lost each o - ther." The piano accompaniment is in 3/4 time. The right hand features chords and rests, while the left hand has a complex rhythmic pattern with triplets and slurs. Dynamics include *pp* and *ppp*.

rather dispassionately
39 *mp*

May we meet at last on the Ri - ver of Stars...

mp non rit.

Detailed description: This block contains the musical notation for measures 39 and 40. The vocal line is in 7/8 time, with lyrics "May we meet at last on the Ri - ver of Stars...". The piano accompaniment is in 7/8 time. The right hand has chords and a melodic line, while the left hand has chords and a bass line. Dynamics include *mp* and *non rit.*.

4. Looking at the moon and thinking of one far away

Chang Chiu-ling (673-740)

freely adapted. PS

Very delicate ♩ = 120

p

poco

And.

beat groups in 2+3 but not exaggeratedly so

p

The moon climbs bright

15 *poco*

a - bove the sea, borne

20 *p*

to its fur - thest rim Through the

25

end - - - less night

29

it holds the long - ing thoughts

32

of dis - tant hearts

36

mp espress. *mf*

40 *mp* *p*

I blow out my can - dle the ra - diance re - mains

mp *espress.* *p* *mf*

Ped. Ped.

45 *mp*

I slip on my robe the cold per - sists

mp

Ped. Ped.

51 *mp* *espress.* *pp*

mp *espress.* *pp*

57 *mp* *espress.*

mp *espress.*

Ped.

63

Since I can

69

ga - ther no moon - light to

73

send you Let me

8va

77

sleep and meet you

81 *mp*

in a dream.

p

85

The Garden in the Brain
Seven Songs to words of Emily Dickinson

Peter Seabourne

The Garden in the Brain

Seven Songs to words of Emily Dickinson

I. Within my Garden, rides a Bird
Upon a single Wheel -
Whose spokes a dizzy Music make
As 'twere a travelling Mill -

He never stops, but slackens
Above the Ripest Rose -
Partakes without alighting
And praises as he goes,

Till every spice is tasted -
And then his Fairy Gig
Reels in remoter atmospheres -
And I rejoin my Dog,

And He and I, perplex us
If positive, 'twere we -
Or bore the Garden in the Brain
This Curiosity -

But He, the best Logician,
Refers my clumsy eye -
To just vibrating Blossoms!
An Exquisite Reply!

II. You see I cannot see - your lifetime -
I must guess -
How many times it ache for me - today - Confess -
How many times for my far sake
The brave eyes film -
But I guess guessing hurts -
Mine - get so dim!

Too vague - the face -
My own - so patient - covers -
Too far - the strength -
My timidness enfolds -
Haunting the Heart -
Like her translated faces -
Teasing the want -
It - only - can suffice!

III. What if I say I shall not wait!
What if I burst the fleshly Gate -
And pass escaped - to thee!

What if I file this Mortal - off -
See where it hurt me - That's enough!
And wade in Liberty!

They cannot take me - any more!
Dungeons can call - and Guns implore
Unmeaning - now - to me -

As laughter - was - an hour ago -
Or Laces - or a Travelling Show -
Or who died - yesterday!

IV. Fairer through Fading - as the Day
Into the Darkness dips away -
Half Her Complexion of the Sun -
Hindering - Haunting - Perishing -

Rallies Her Glow, like a Dying Friend -
Teasing with glittering Amend
Only to aggravate the Dark
Through an expiring - perfect - look -

V. A Dying Tiger - moaned for Drink -
I hunted all the Sand -
I caught the Dripping of a Rock
And bore it in my Hand -

His Mighty Balls - in death were thick -
But searching - I could see
A Vision on the Retina
Of Water - and of me -

'Twas not my blame - who sped too slow -
'Twas not his blame - who died
While I was reaching him -
But 'twas - the fact that He was dead -

VI. Two butterflies went out at Noon -
And waltzed upon a Farm -
Then stepped straight through the Firmament
And rested, on a Beam -

And then - together bore away
Upon a shining Sea -
Though never yet, in any Port -
Their coming, mentioned - be -

If spoken by the distant Bird -
If met in Ether Sea
By Frigate, or by Merchantman -
No notice - was - to me -

VII. Good Morning - Midnight -
I'm coming Home -
Day - got tired of Me -
How could I - of Him?

Sunshine was a sweet place -
I liked to stay -
But Morn - didn't want me - now -
So - Goodnight - Day!

I can look - can't I -
When the East is Red?
The Hills - have a way - then -
That puts the Heart - abroad -

You - are not so fair - Midnight -
I chose - Day -
But - please take a little Girl -
He turned away!

The Garden in the Brain

I. Within my Garden, rides a Bird

Emily Dickinson

Peter Seabourne

May/June 2003

With gentle but purposeful forward movement ♩ = 92

mp

5

9 *mp*

Wi - thin my Gar - den, rides a Bird_ U - pon a sin-gle Wheel-

13

one syllable

Whose spokes a diz-zy Mu-sic make_ As 'twere a trav_el-ling Mill-

16

He ne - ver stops, but

20

sla-ckens A - bove the Ri-pest Rose- Par-takes wi-thout a-

24 *mp*

ligh-ting And prai-ses as he goes, Till eve-ry spice is tas-ted

8va

mp

27

And then his Fai-ry Gig Reels in re-mo-ter at-mos - pheres-

6/16 6/8

30

And I re-joinmy Dog, And He and I, per-plex us If po - si-live, 'twere

34 *p*

we- Or bore the Gar-den in the Brain This Cu-ri - o - si - ty

38 *poco* *mp*

42 *mp*

But He, the best Lo - gi - cian Re - fers my dum-sy eye-

46 *non ril.*

To just vi-bra-ling Blos-soms! An ex - qui-site re-ply.

II. You see I cannot see - your lifetime

Lontano - lento molto ♩=32

this staff - sempre lontano

The musical score is written for piano and consists of two systems, each with three staves. The first system begins with a tempo marking of "Lontano - lento molto" and a note value of 32. The first staff is marked "p" and contains a high register line with notes marked "8va". The second and third staves are marked "mp" and feature complex chordal textures with triplets. The second system begins with a measure number "4" and continues the complex textures, including a triplet in the second staff. The key signature is B-flat major (two flats).

7 *p simply but with great intensity*

Musical score for measures 7-8. The vocal line (treble clef) contains the lyrics: "You see I can - not see- your life - time-". The piano accompaniment (grand staff) features a complex harmonic structure with a five-measure phrase in the right hand and a sustained chordal texture in the left hand. The dynamic marking *p* is present.

9 I must guess-

Musical score for measures 9-11. The vocal line (treble clef) contains the lyrics: "I must guess-". The piano accompaniment (grand staff) features a complex harmonic structure with a five-measure phrase in the right hand and a sustained chordal texture in the left hand. The dynamic marking *mp* is present.

12 *mp* How ma-ny times it ache for me- *mf* to - day- *sub. mp* Con-fess- How ma-ny

Musical score for measures 12-14. The vocal line (treble clef) contains the lyrics: "How ma-ny times it ache for me- to - day- Con-fess- How ma-ny". The piano accompaniment (grand staff) features a complex harmonic structure with a five-measure phrase in the right hand and a sustained chordal texture in the left hand. The dynamic markings *mp*, *mf*, and *sub. mp* are present.

15

sub. mp

times for my far sake The brave eyes film- But I guess

pizz

sub. mp

18

p plainer

guess-sing hurts- Mine- get so dim! Too vague- the face-

p

22

poco

p

My own- so pa-tient- co-vers- Too far- the strength-

poco

p

26 *mp*

My ti - mid-ness en - folds- Haun-ting the Heart- Like

5

mp

29 *mf* *sub. mp*

her trans-la - ted fa - ces- Tea-sing the want-

mf *poco* *sub. mp*

3

32 *p*

It - on - ly - can - suf - fice!

p *8va* *p*

III. What if I say I shall not wait!

Defiantly -with a gush! ♩=132

ff

What if I say I shall not wait! What if I burst the flesh-ly

ff

Ped.

4

Gate-

sub. mp

8va

Ped.

7

floating on air - mp

And passes - caped- to thee!

(8)

10 *sub. ff*

What if I file this Mor-tal- off- See where it hurt me- That's e-

sub. ff

13 *(non dim)*

nough- And wade

(non dim)

8^{va}

5 *(non dim)*

15 *pesante*

in Li - ber - ty! They can - not

pesante

19

take me - a - ny more! Dun - geons can call - and Guns im -

Ped.

22

plore Un - mea-ning- now- to me-

mp

sub. scherzando

mp

Ped.

25

As laugh-ter- was- an hour a - go- Or La-cies- or

p

8va-

sfz

mf

8va-

29

a Tra-vel - ling Show-

(8)

sfz *mf*

31

mp

Or who died- yes - ter - day!

mp *non ril.* *molto*

IV. The Perfect Look

Extremely delicate, almost unbearably so ♩ = 72

una corda

The first system of the musical score consists of two staves. The upper staff is a treble clef with a 2/4 time signature, containing a melodic line with various accidentals and a fermata over the final measure. The lower staff is a bass clef with a 2/4 time signature, containing a rhythmic accompaniment. The tempo is marked 'p' (piano) and 'len.' (lento). The key signature has one sharp (F#). The system concludes with a 'Ped.' (pedal) marking and a series of five upward-pointing triangles along the bottom line.

4

p very legato - dreamy

Fai - rer through

The second system begins with a treble clef staff at measure 4, which is mostly empty with a few notes. The piano accompaniment continues in the lower staves. The tempo remains 'p' and 'very legato - dreamy'. The lyrics 'Fai - rer through' are written below the vocal line. The system concludes with a 'Ped.' marking and a series of five upward-pointing triangles along the bottom line.

9

Fa - - ding- as the Day

The third system begins with a treble clef staff at measure 9, containing a few notes. The piano accompaniment continues in the lower staves. The tempo remains 'p' and 'very legato - dreamy'. The lyrics 'Fa - - ding- as the Day' are written below the vocal line. The system concludes with a 'Ped.' marking and a series of five upward-pointing triangles along the bottom line.

12

In - to the Dark - ness dips a - way-

len.

16

mp

Half Her Com -

mp

20

ple - xion of the Sun - Hin - de - ring-

24

Haun-ling- De - ri - shing-

28

Ral-lies Her

33

Glow, like a dy - ing Friend-

37

Tea - sing with glit - te - ring A - mend

len.

41

On - ly to

sub. mp

poco f

sub. mp

44

ag - gra - vate the Dark Through an ex - pi - ring

poco a poco dim. (but like a warm reminiscence)

48

Musical score for measures 48-50. The score is in 2/4 time and features a vocal line and a piano accompaniment. The vocal line includes the lyrics "per - fect- look-". The piano accompaniment consists of two staves, with a piano dynamic marking (*p*) in measure 50. The key signature has one flat (B-flat).

51

Musical score for measures 51-54. The score is in 2/4 time and features a piano accompaniment. The key signature has two flats (B-flat and E-flat). The score includes various musical notations such as slurs, accents, and dynamic markings.

V. A Dying Tiger

Andante ♩=72

mp

dry - rather like a dull thud

A Dy-ing Ti-ger-

mp

p

8^{vb}

6

p

moaned for Drink-

p

p tender

mp *R.H. legato*

come prima

Red.

8^{vb}

10

mp

I hun-ted all the Sand-

poco cresc.

p *sub. mf*

molto

3

8^{vb}

14 *mp*

I caught the Drip-ping of a Rock And bore it in my Hand-

p *p* *p* *mp* *p* *tender* 5

mp *mp* *mp* *mp* *mp* *mp*

Ped. *Ped.*

18 *mp*

His Migh - ty

mp *sub. mf* *3* *3*

ten. R.H. legato

22 *mf* *molto* *p* *increasingly poignant*

Balls- in Death were thick- But sear-ching- I could see

mf *molto* *p* *very tender* 5

Ped. *Ped.*

25

poco rit.

A Vi-sion on the Re-ti-na— Of Wa-ter- and of me—

come prima

poco rit.

mp

29

mp

'Twas not my blame- who sped

8vb

Ped.

33

too slow- 'Twas not his blame- who died While I was rea-ching him—

Ped.

37 *sub. p* *very tender*

But 'twas- the fact that

p

40

He was dead-

p

VI. Two Butterflies

Jittery $\text{♩} = 72$ *mf*

Two but - ter - flies went out at Noon-

mf

8va

Detailed description: This system contains the first three measures of the piece. The vocal line is in 2/4 time, starting with a whole rest followed by a half note G4, a quarter note A4, a quarter note B4, and a quarter note C5. The piano accompaniment features a rhythmic pattern of eighth notes in the right hand and chords in the left hand. A dynamic marking of *mf* is present. An 8va marking is shown above the final piano chord.

4

And waltzed u-pon a Farm

8va

Detailed description: This system contains measures 4 through 6. The vocal line changes to 3/4 time at measure 5. The piano accompaniment continues with a similar rhythmic pattern. A dynamic marking of *mf* is present. An 8va marking is shown above the final piano chord.

7

Then stepped straight through the Fir-ma-ment And res - ted, on a Beam

p

8va

Detailed description: This system contains measures 7 through 9. The vocal line changes to 2/4 time at measure 8. The piano accompaniment continues with a similar rhythmic pattern. A dynamic marking of *p* is present. An 8va marking is shown above the final piano chord.

10 (8)

mf *mp*

13 *mf*

And then to - ge-ther bore a-way U -

8va

mf

17

pon a shi - ning Sea- Though ne-ver yet, in

(8)

mf

20

a - ny Port- Their co - ming men - tioned-

(8)

23

mp

be- ll spo - ken by the dis-tant Bird-

8va

p *mp* *mf*

8va

28

mp

ll met in E-ther Sea- By Fri - gate, or by Mer-chant-man- No

(8)

mp

8va

32

not - tice- was- to

(8)

34

me-

8va

8va

VII. Good Morning - Midnight

Extremely poignantly ♩ = 60

p

Good Mor-ning-Mid-night- I'm co-ming Home Day- got

p

Ped.

6

tired of Me- How could I- of Him?

10 *mp* *poco* *mf* *p semplice*

Sun - shine was a sweet place- I liked to stay- But Morn di - dn't

mp *poco* *mf* *p semplice*

13

poco animato, affronted
mp

want me- now- So- Good-night- Day! I can look-

16

mf

can't I- When the East is Red? The Hills-have a way- then- That

20

f *passionate, desperate, even a little angry*

puts the Heart- a - broad- You- are not so fair- Mid-night-
passionate, desperate, even a little angry

24 *sub. mp* *suddenly drained, hopeless*

I _____ chose Day- _____ *p* But- _____ please _____

sub. mp *p*

3

27

take a lit - tle Girl- He turned a - way! _____

lontano

3