

Smithsonian Resident Associate Program
and
The Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden

present

The 20th Century Consort

Christopher Kendall, Artistic Director and Conductor

Lucy Shelton, soprano

Elisabeth Adkins, violin

Thomas Jones, percussion

Kathryn Brake, piano

Loren Kitt, clarinet

David Flowers, trumpet

Sara Stern, flute

David Hardy, cello

William Street, saxophone

Guest Artists

Karen Akers, reciter

Peter Becker, reciter

Saturday, April 23, 1988

Lecture-discussion, 4:30 p.m.

Concert, 5:30 p.m.

Auditorium, Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden

The 20th Century Consort's 1987-88 performance series is supported in part by a grant from the National Endowment for the Arts, a Federal agency.

THE PROGRAM

LECTURE-DISCUSSION

Lady Susana Walton
Wayne Shirley, Music Division, Library of Congress
Nicholas Maw, Composer

CONCERT

Pierrot lunaire, Op. 21

- Part I*
1. *Moondrunk*
2. *Columbine*
3. *The Dandy*
4. *A Pallid Laundrymaid*
5. *Valse de Chopin*
6. *Madonna*
7. *The Sick Moon*

- Part II*
8. *Night (Passacaglia)*
9. *Prayer to Pierrot*
10. *Plunder*
11. *Red Mass*
12. *Gallows Song*
13. *Decapitation*
14. *The Crosses*

Arnold Schoenberg (1874–1951)

- Part III*
15. *Nostalgia*
16. *Mean Trick*
17. *Parody*
18. *The Moonfleck*
19. *Serenade*
20. *Journey Homeward*
(*Barcarolle*)
21. *O Ancient Scent*

Ms. Shelton
Ms. Stern, Mr. Kitt, Ms. Adkins, Mr. Hardy, Ms. Brake
Mr. Kendall

INTERMISSION

Facade (1922-23)

William Walton (1902–1983)

- Fanfare*
I 1. *Hornpipe* 2. *En Famille* 3. *Mariner Man*
II 4. *Long Steel Grass* 5. *Through Gilded Trellises* 6. *Tango-Pasodoble*
III 7. *Lullaby for Jumbo* 8. *Black Mrs. Behemoth* 9. *Tarantella*
IV 10. *A Man from a Far Countree* 11. *By the Lake* 12. *Country Dance*
V 13. *Polka* 14. *Four in the Morning* 15. *Something Lies Beyond the Scene*
VI 16. *Valse* 17. *Jodelling Song* 18. *Scotch Rhapsody*
VII 19. *Popular Song* 20. *Fox-Trot 'Old Sir Faulk'* 21. *Sir Beelzebub*

Ms. Akers, Mr. Becker
Ms. Stern, Mr. Kitt, Mr. Street, Mr. Flowers, Mr. Jones, Mr. Hardy
Mr. Kendall

The audience is invited to join the artists upstairs in the Plaza lobby immediately following the concert for an informal wine-and-cheese reception, sponsored by the Friends of the 20th Century Consort.

1988-89 Concert Series — 20th Century Consort

November 5 — *Gala Opening Concert*
Guest Ensemble, **Collage: New Music** from Boston

December 3 — *Death and Transfiguration*
20th Century Consort
Music by George Crumb and Olivier Messiaen

February 11 — *Contrasts and Café Music*
20th Century Consort
performs Bartók, Ravel, Schoenfield, Jolivet and Wuorinen

March 18 — *Magic!*
20th Century Consort
Works by Stephen Albert, Allen Schindler, and Joseph Schwantner

April 22 — *Strings in the Earth and Air*
20th Century Consort
Music by Warren Benson, Michael Finckel, and Nicholas Maw;
Arnold Schoenberg's *Transfigured Night*

20th Century Consort
Christopher Kendall, *Artistic Director*
Alyce Rideout, *Manager*



Smithsonian Institution

Robert McC. Adams, *Secretary*
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Janet W. Solinger, *Director*, Resident Associate Program
Marcus L. Overton, *Senior Program Coordinator*, RAP Performing Arts

The Smithsonian Resident Associate Program is the continuing education, cultural, and membership arm of the Institution in metropolitan Washington, and relies on the support of its more than 58,000 members to bring distinguished performing artists to the Washington area in more than 100 performances annually. We invite you to enjoy the many benefits of membership. Please telephone 357-3030.

Please note:

The taking of photographs and the use of recording equipment
are strictly prohibited.

Restrooms are located in the lower lobby adjacent to the escalators.



NOTES ON THE PROGRAM

Words and music. Voice with instruments. These phrases suggest the art of the lyric singer in the bel canto tradition or the dramatic outburst of the musical theater. But singing -- whether lyric or dramatic -- is only one way in which the voice can be used, and composers in the 20th century have been particularly inventive in trying new ideas, in "updating" the oldest musical instrument of all, the human voice.

Our voices' range of expression goes all the way from the guttural grunt of the cave to the primal scream, from normal speech to coloratura song. But only a very limited part is normally used in western music. The two works on today's program expand that range, in different ways, and to different expressive effect. Arnold Schoenberg's epoch-making Pierrot lunaire, one of the seminal works of our century, draws on and extends the tradition of the Berlin cabaret, heightening speech with pitched declamation. William Walton's collaboration with Edith Sitwell may have been partially inspired by Schoenberg's work, but it uses the voice to quite different effect, depersonalizing the words spoken in rhythm so that the voice becomes, in a sense, a singularly articulate instrument.

* * *

Pierrot lunaire ("Moon-struck Pierrot") sets O. E. Hartleben's German translation of modish French verses by Albert Giraud. The poems draw on images and characters from the commedia dell'arte, especially the clownish Pierrot and his beloved Columbine (in whose costume the first performer of Pierrot lunaire was dressed), put into modern situations that range from the grotesque to the sentimental. The surprise here is that Schoenberg decided to have his vocal soloist recite on pitch, but not sing (except in a few, carefully-designated spots). He termed the device Sprechstimme, which means, literally, "speaking voice," though the speaking voice required here is by no means the usual one of normal conversation.

Composers had occasionally made use of spoken effects in 19th-century German opera, sometimes even employing a notation for it, as Schoenberg did. But in Pierrot, his source seems to be not so much the passionate outbursts of romantic opera, but rather the cool distancing of the Berlin cabaret, in which a chanteuse, a woman dressed in a tuxedo, would sing (or half-sing or even speak) songs with texts written from a distinctly male point of view. The effect of Sprechstimme is, indeed, a distancing from too dramatic an emotional involvement, a light ironic tone overall. No doubt the kind of work he wrote was affected by the fact that Schoenberg composed it at the request of a non-singing actress, Albertine Zehme. Her evident commitment to the piece at the first performance (given on October 16, 1912, after more than 40 rehearsals) was total; even the critics who did not care for Pierrot found her performance compelling.

The work itself became, as Stravinsky once remarked, "the solar plexus as well as the mind of early 20th-century music." Schoenberg had been struggling with ways to organize his musical material naturally and effectively without reference to the harmonic architecture that had shaped 19th-century music, the expressive value of which he felt to be exhausted. This struggle had led to a series of tiny pieces composed at great effort. But with Pierrot, Schoenberg suddenly recaptured the extraordinary fluency he had known earlier when writing such masterful scores as the String Quartet No. 1 (completed in 10 days). His best work always came at white heat, put down on paper almost as fast as he could write. Two-thirds of the 21 songs in Pierrot lunaire were composed in a single day each and, except for Nos. 14 and 15, the piece as a whole occupied the 10 weeks from March 12 to May 30, 1912. (The two remaining songs were composed on June 6 and July 9).

The ensemble called for in Pierrot -- flute, clarinet, violin, cello, and piano, with vocalist (and with doubling on related instruments, such as piccolo or bass clarinet) -- has become a standard instrumentation for contemporary music, much as the string quartet was the standard chamber medium of the late 18th and early 19th centuries. Many composers since Schoenberg have conceived their music in terms of the "Pierrot ensemble" and permanent groups have been formed on that basis, confident of finding a substantial and varied repertory to play -- one of the continuing legacies of Pierrot.

The 21 songs of Pierrot are arranged into three sets of seven each, but the groupings show the greatest possible internal variety. Scoring changes from song to song in an unpredictable way (though with certain obvious illustrative and parodistic elements, such as the "Serenade," in which Pierrot "scratches on his viola with a grotesque giant bow" -- and the cellist erupts in virtuoso display). Sooner or later just about every possible combination of instruments occurs. At the same time, the various numbers draw upon or refer to a dizzying range of musical styles, sometimes for direct expression, at others with grotesque or parodistic intent.

Much of the music is built up out of tiny motives of three or four notes each -- heard sometimes melodically, sometimes as chords. This intensive motivic working is varied in many ways. No. 5 ("Valse de Chopin"), for example, has an obvious element of parody, but at the same time the waltz genre gives Schoenberg a reference point for rhythmic and melodic gestures, while emphasis on a particular chord creates some kind of hierarchy. Some of the most famous movements are the most contrapuntal in conception -- No. 8 ("Night"), a sombre passacaglia growing out of a tiny three-note motive elaborated with extraordinary ingenuity, and No. 18 ("The Moonfleck"), a canon in which the top two parts, at the midpoint of the piece, start running literally backwards, while their companion parts in the piano continue running forward at half-speed. But each song has its own expressive and technical adventure.

Of the 50 poems in Giraud's original collection, Schoenberg chose 21 and made the particular arrangement found in Pierrot lunaire. The songs may be seen to trace a progress through the depths from a divine intoxication and sexual longings to blasphemy and despair, finally emerging in a homecoming that offers some promise of healing. Whatever significance Schoenberg had in mind in making this arrangement seems to have been subconscious; certainly he expressed the thought in a letter, 10 years after the premiere of Pierrot, that he had read the poems far more naively than some of his commentators: "Anyway," he went on, "I am not responsible for what people insist on reading into the words. If they were musical, not one of them would give a damn for the words. Instead they would just go away whistling the tunes."

* * *

William Walton's Façade may be considered an unlikely offspring of Pierrot. At the time of its composition, in 1923, Walton was one of the young Turks of British music -- he was just 21 and had become connected with the outrageous Sitwells, who were the motivating force for the creation of this early and unique masterpiece. Though Walton was of essentially a conservative temperament in his music (a fact that became much clearer in later years), he was surely influenced by the kind of ensemble used in Pierrot lunaire and by Schoenberg's treatment of the voice when he undertook to set the poems of Edith Sitwell for a special "entertainment" devised by the Sitwell family.

Edith Sitwell's poetry was not explicitly designed to suggest any sort of connected thought or to trace the progress of an idea. It is a kind of verbal music, playing upon the rhythms and rhymes of the English language, in various traditional meters and styles, with the aim of suggesting a music inherent in the text itself.

To set such poems to music in a traditional, lyric way, would in fact destroy the very effect at which Edith Sitwell was aiming, because a sustained vocal line would stretch and bend the musical rhythms inherent in the language itself. Walton's setting, therefore, employs the voice precisely in rhythm but with no indication whatever of pitch. And in the original performances, the voice was to be utterly depersonalized: the performer spoke through a megaphone from behind a curtain depicting an enormous mouth!

The 21 songs of the original Façade entertainment (a few additional songs were published in the composer's later years) are arranged into a familiar pattern: whereas Schoenberg chose 3 x 7 for Pierrot lunaire, Walton chose 7 x 3! Most of the texts are explicitly in the style of some kind of popular or folk song, and the score is filled with familiar or half-forgotten quotations (starting right in the opening song with the "Sailor's Hornpipe"). Though the instrumentation is not precisely the same as that of Pierrot, the family resemblance is evident. The free-wheeling kaleidoscope of images and musical styles offers a whimsical response to Schoenberg's dream/nightmare.

Polka, Ländler, tango, and country dance; waltz, foxtrot, and tarantella -- all these and other styles crop up in Walton's ebullient score, which is now familiar and welcomed for its inventiveness and wit. At the time of the premiere, though, it was regarded in the British press (which was somewhat parochial in its views of "modern art") as scandalous. Headlines read, "Drivel, they paid to hear," and "Surely it is time this sort of thing were stopped!"

Walton, in any case, did stop. Never again, over the course of a career that saw the production of traditional symphonies and concertos, oratorio and opera, chamber music and distinguished film scores, did he ever again essay the sheer cheekiness of this delightful work.

Notes by Steven Ledbetter

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NOTES ON THE ARTISTS

ELIZABETH ADKINS is Associate Concertmaster of the National Symphony Orchestra. She has been a soloist with the Oklahoma Symphony, the Aspen Repertory Orchestra, and the Chamber Orchestra of New England, and a member of Lincoln Center's Mostly Mozart Festival and Y Chamber Symphony orchestras in New York. She is also a member of the Broadwood Trio.

KAREN AKERS won both a Theater World award and a Tony nomination as Best Featured Actress for her starring role as Luisia Contini in the hit Broadway musical NINE. In addition to sold-out Carnegie Hall concerts, nationwide recognition for her public television special "Presenting Karen Akers", cabaret triumphs and television appearances, she was featured as the night club singer in Woody Allen's THE PURPLE ROSE OF CAIRO.

PETER BECKER has appeared as soloist or ensemble singer with an impressive variety of groups, including the Ensemble for Early Music, the Folger Consort, the New York Cornet and Sacbut Ensemble, the Smithsonian Chamber Players, and The Intimate P.D.Q. Bach. This summer, he will be appearing in a new Martha Clark work at the Spoleto Festival USA, and at the New York Public Theatre.

KATHRYN BRAKE has performed throughout the United States, France, and Spain, recorded for Radio-France Musique and Radio-Television Espanola, and appeared with the National and Baltimore Symphony Orchestras. Her contest prizes include the National Young Chopin and Beethoven Competitions, the Kosciuski Foundation awards, and the Elizabeth Davis Award.

DAVID FLOWERS is a graduate of the University of Michigan and received his D.M.A degree from Catholic University. A member of the National Symphony, he also performs with the Contemporary Music Forum, and the National Symphony Brass Quintet.

DAVID HARDY became the youngest member of the National Symphony Orchestra in 1981, when M^o. Rostropovich invited him to join the Orchestra as Assistant Principal Cellist. A graduate of the Peabody Conservatory, his busy recital schedule has included appearances at Wolf Trap and the British Embassy. In 1982, he was the top-ranking American prizewinner at the 7th International Tchaikovsky Cello Competition.

THOMAS JONES is a free-lance musician whose diverse performing assignments have included appearances with numerous bands, theatres, and orchestras both here and abroad at the Bayreuth and Spoleto festivals. He has recorded for Columbia, Deutsche Grammophon, the Smithsonian Collection of Recordings, and Vox.

CHRISTOPHER KENDALL is one of the busiest musicians on the Washington scene. In addition to his duties as artistic director of the 20th Century Consort, founder and lutenist for the Folger Consort, and artistic director of Millennium, he is now also spending considerable time on the west coast where he has been appointed Associate Conductor of the Seattle Symphony. A graduate of Antioch College and the University of Cincinnati College-Conservatory of Music, he studied with Louis Lane and Thomas Schippers.

LOREN KITT is the National Symphony Orchestra's Principal Clarinetist, with which he has often appeared as soloist in works by Mozart, Debussy, Copland, and Messiaen. Among his extensive chamber music activities are appearances with the Theater Chamber Players of Kennedy Center and the Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center.

LUCY SHELTON is one of the world's most sought-after artists, equally in demand for concerts, opera, and recordings. She holds the distinction of being the only two-time recipient of the prestigious Naumburg Award--winner of the 1980 Solo Vocal Competition and, in 1977, as a member of the Jubal Trio. With the 20th Century Consort, she has premiered many works, including several by Pulitzer Prize-winning composers Stephen Albert and Joseph Schwantner.

SARA STERN is principal flutist of the Kennedy Center Terrace Theater Orchestra. As solo flutist for the 20th Century Consort, she has recorded on the Smithsonian label, and performed a number of world premieres of significant contemporary compositions, including Maurice Wright's Solos for Flute and Electronic Sounds which was commissioned for her by the Consort.

WILLIAM STREET has appeared as soloist with orchestras, bands, and chamber ensembles throughout the United States, performing at the Smithsonian and the Kennedy Center in Washington, Lincoln Center in New York, and Orchestra Hall in Chicago. A faculty member of St. Mary's College of Maryland, he appears frequently as clinician and adjudicator throughout the eastern and midwestern United States.

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PLEASE NOTE: THIS CONCERT IS BEING RECORDED FOR LATER SYNDICATED BROADCAST.

AUDIENCE MEMBERS ARE REQUESTED TO TURN THE PAGES OF THE PROGRAM NOTES AND THE SONG TEXTS AS QUIETLY AS POSSIBLE. THE TEXTS HAVE BEEN PRINTED SO THAT NONE RUNS OVER TO AN ADJOINING PAGE SO THAT YOU MAY WAIT UNTIL THE COMPLETE CONCLUSION OF EACH INDIVIDUAL SONG BEFORE TURNING THE PAGE.

MANY THANKS TO EVERYONE FOR YOUR HELP AND ASSISTANCE TO THE CONSORT IN ACHIEVING THE 'QUIETEST' RECORDING POSSIBLE.....

PIERROT LUNAIRE

Thrice-seven poems from Albert Giraud's Pierrot lunaire, originally set in German translations by Otto Erich Hartleben;
English translation by Andrew Porter, commissioned by the Library of Congress, 1984.

PART I

1. MOON DRUNK

The wine that through the eyes is drunk
At night the moon pours down in torrents,
Until a spring-flood overflows
The silent far horizon.
Desires, shuddering and sweet
And swimming through the tide unnumbered!
The wine that through the eyes is drunk,
At night the moon pours down in torrents.
The poet, whom devotion drives,
Grows tipsy on the sacred liquor
To heaven turning his enraptured gaze
And reeling, sucks and slurps up the wine,
That through the eyes in drunk.

2. COLUMBINE

The moonlight's pallid blossoms,
The white and wondrous roses
Bloom in July nights-
Oh, could I pluck but one!
My heavy load to lighten,
In darkling streams I search for
The moonlight's pallid blossoms,
The white and wondrous roses.
Then stilled were all my yearning,
Could I, as in a fable,
So tenderly but scatter
Upon your brown tresses
The moonlight's pallid blossoms!

3. THE DANDY

And with a fantastical light-beam
The moon sheds a light on the crystalline flask
On the ebon, highly sacred washstand
Of the taciturn dandy from Bergamo.
In sonorous, bronzen basin
Laughs brightly the fountains metallical cry.
And with a fantastical light-beam
The moon sheds a light on the crystalline flask.
Pierrot with waxen complexion
Stands musing and ponders:
What make-up for today?
Rejecting the red and the orient green
He bedizens his face in a high noble style
With a fantastical moonbeam.

4. A PALLID LAUNDRYMAID

See a pallid laundrymaid
Washing nightly faded linen;
Naked, silver whitish arms
Stretching downward in the flood.
Through the clearing, gentle breezes
Lightly ruffle up the stream.
See a pallid laundrymaid
Washing nightly faded linen.
And the tender maid of heaven,
By the branches softly fondled,
Lays out on the darkling meadows
All her linen woven of moonbeams-
See a pallid laundrymaid.

5. VALSE DE CHOPIN

As a pallid drop of blood
Stains the lips of a consumptive,
So there lurks within this music
Morbid soul destructive charm.
Wild accords of passion
Breaking desperation's icy dream-
As a pallid drop of blood
Stains the lips of a consumptive.
Fierce, triumphant, sweet and yearning,
Melancholy somber waltzing,
You never leave my senses,
Cling to each thought as I think it,
Like a pallid drop of blood!

6. MADONNA

Rise, O mother of all sorrows,
On the altar of my verses!
Blood pours forth from withered bosom
Where the cruel sword has pierced it.
And thine ever bleeding wounds
Seem like eyes, red and open.
Rise, O mother of all sorrows,
On the altar of my verses!
In thy torn and wasted hands
Now holding thy Son's holy body,
Thou reveal'st Him to all mankind-
But the eyes of men are turned away,
O mother of all sorrows!

7. THE SICK MOON

O somber, deathly stricken moon,
Lying on heaven's dusky pillow,
Your gaze, so wide-eyed, feverish,
Charms me, like far-off melody.
Of unappeasable pain of love
You die, of yearning, choked to death,
O somber deathly stricken moon,
Lying on heaven's dusky pillow.
The lover with his heart aflame,
Who heedless goes to meet his love,
Rejoices in your play of light,
Your pallid, pain-begotten blood,
O somber, deathly stricken moon!

PART II

8. NIGHT (Passacaglia)

Black gigantic butterflies
Have blotted out the shining sun.
Like a sorc'rer's sealed book,
The horizon sleeps in silence.
From the murky depths forgotten,
Vapors rise, to murder mem'ry!
Black gigantic butterflies
Have blotted out the shining sun.
And from heaven t'ward the earth,
Sinking down on heavy pinnions,
All unseen descend the monters
To the hearts of men below here...
Black gigantic butterflies.

9. PRAYER TO PIERROT

Pierrot! my laughter I have unlearnt!
The dream of radiance dispersed, dispersed!
Black waves the banner upon the mast.
Pierrot! my laughter I have unlearnt!
O now return me, soul's veterinarian,
Snowman of lyric, your highness,
Pierrot, my laughter!

10. PLUNDER

Redly gleaming princely rubies,
Bleeding drops of ancient glory,
Slumber in the dead men's coffins
Buried in the vaults below us.
Nights alone with his companions
Pierrot descends to plunder
Redly gleaming princely rubies,
Bleeding drops of ancient glory.
But then suddenly they're rooted,
Scared to death, hair standing straight up:
Through the darkness, like eyes!-
Staring from the dead men's coffins-
Redly gleaming princely rubies.

11. RED MASS

To gruesome grim Communion,
By blinding golden glitter,
By flick'ring shine of candles,
Comes to the altar Pierrot!
His hand to God devoted
Tears wide the priestly vestment.
At gruesome grim Communion
By blinding golden glitter.
He makes the sign of the Cross
Over the trembling, trembling people,
With trickling crimson wafer:
His heart in bloody fingers,
At gruesome grim Communion.

12. GALLOWS SONG

The haggard harlot whose neck is scrawny
Will be the last of his mistresses.
And in his skull she'll stick like a needle,
The haggard harlot whose neck is scrawny.
Slim as a pinetree, she has a pigtail,
Gaily she'll bind it around his neck,
The haggard harlot!

13. DECAPITATION

The moon, a shining Turkish sword
Upon a black and silken cushion,
And spectral vast hangs like a threat
In sorrow-darkened night.
Pierrot restlessly roams about
And stares on high in deathly fear
At the moon, a shining Turkish sword
Upon a black and silken cushion.
And quaking, trembling, shaking knees
Oh suddenly he faints, collapses:
Convinced that there comes whistling down
Upon his sinful, guilty neck
The moon, a shining Turkish sword.

14. THE CROSSES

Holy Crosses are the verses
Whereon poets bleed in silence,
Blinded by a flock of vultures
Flutt'ring 'round in spectral swarms.
In their bodies swords have feasted,
Glorying in their robes of scarlet!
Holy Crosses are the verses
Whereon poets bleed in silence.
Dead the heads, matted the tresses,
Far and faint the noisy people.
Slowly sinks the sun in splendor,
Like a crimson kingly crown.
Holy Crosses are the verses.

PART III

15. NOSTALGIA

Sweet lamenting - like a crystal sighing
Rises from the old Italian comedy,
Sadly asking: Why's Pierrot so boring
In the sentimental modern manner?
And it echoes through his heart's desert,
Echoes mutedly through all his senses,
Sweet lamenting - like a crystal sighing
Rising from the old Italian comedy.
Then Pierrot forgets his tragic manner!
Through the silver fiery glow of moonlight,
Through a flood of radiance swells his yearning,
Boldly soars on high to skies of homeland,
Sweet lamenting - like a crystal sighing.

16. MEAN TRICK

In the gleaming skull of Cassander,
As he shrieks and cries blue murder,
Bores Pierrot with hypocritic kindness-
And a cranium borer.
And then presses with his finger
His genuine Turkish tobacco
In the gleaming skull of Cassander,
As he shrieks and cries blue murder.
Then screwing a cherry pipe stem
Firmly in the polished surface,
At his ease he puffs away-
Puffs at his genuine Turkish tobacco
In the gleaming skull of Cassander!

17. PARODY

Knitting needles, brightly twinkling,
Stuck in her mouse-gray hair,
Sits the duenna mumbling,
Wearing her short red dress.
She's waiting in the arbor,
She love's Pierrot with anguish.
Knitting needles, brightly twinkling,
Stuck in her graying hair.
And sudden- hark- a whisper!
A wind-puff titters softly:
The moon, that cruel mocker,
Is mimicing with moonbeams
Knitting needles twinkling bright.

18. THE MOONFLECK

With a snowy fleck of shining moonlight
On the back side of his smart, black frock-coat,
So sets off Pierrot one balmy evening,
In pursuit of fortune and adventure.
Sudden, something's with his appearance.
He looks round and round and then he finds it-
There's a snowy fleck of shining moonlight
On the back side of his smart, new frock-coat.
"Hang it!" thinks he: "A speck of plaster!"
Wipes and wipes, but he can't make it vanish!
On he goes, his pleasure has been poisoned,
Rubs and rubs until it's almost morning
At a snowy fleck of shining moonlight.

19. SERENADE

With a bow grotesquely monstrous
Scrapes Pierrot on his viola.
Like a stork on one leg standing,
Sadly plucks a pizzacatto.
Sudden! here's Cassander raging
At the night-time virtuoso.
With a bow grotesquely monstrous
Scrapes Pierrot at his viola.
Then he throws aside viola:
With a delicate use of left hand
Seizes Cassander by the collar-
Dreaming plays upon his bald head
With a bow grotesquely monstrous.

20. JOURNEY HOMEWARD (Barcarolle)

The moonbeam is the rudder,
Water lily serves as boat,
And so Pierrot goes southward
With friendly foll'wing wind.
The stream hums scales beneath him,
And rocks the fragile craft.
A moonbeam is the rudder,
Water lily serves as boat.
To Bergamo, his homeland,
At last Pierrot returns;
Soft glimmers rise to eastward,
The green of the horizon.
A moonbeam is the rudder.

21. O ANCIENT SCENT

O ancient scent from fabled times,
Once more you captivate my senses!
A merry troupe of roguish pranks
Pervades the gentle air.
With cheerful yearning I return
To pleasures I too long neglected.
O ancient scent from fabled times,
Once more you captivate me.
All of my gloom I've cast aside;
And from my sun-encircled window
I gladly view the lovely world
And dreams go forth to greet the distance...
O ancient scent from fabled times.

F A Ç A D E

An Entertainment

Poems by
Dame Edith Sitwell

I
1. HORNPIPE

Sailors come
To the drum
Out of Babylon;
Hobby-horses
Foam, the dumb
Sky rhinoceros-glum
Watched the courses of the breakers' rocking-horses and with
Glaucis,
Lady Venus on the settee of the horsehair sea!
Where Lord Tennyson in laurels wrote a Gloria free,
In a borealic iceberg come Victoria; she
Knew Prince Albert's tall memorial took the colours of the
floreal
And the borealic iceberg; floating on they see
New-arisen Madam Venus for whose sake from far
Came the fat and zebra'd emperor from Zanzibar
Where like golden bouquets lay far Asia, Africa, Cathay,
All laid before that shady lady by the fibroid Shah.
Capain Fracasse stout as any water-butt came, stood
With Sir Bacchus both a-drinking the black tarr'd grapes'
blood
Plucked among the tartan leafage
By the furry wind whose grief age
Could not wither - like a squirrel with a gold star-nut.
Queen Victoria sitting shocked upon the rocking horse
Of a wave said to the Laureate, 'This minx of course
Is as sharp as any lynx and blacker-deeper than the drinks
and quite as
Hot as any Hottentot, without remorse!
For the minx',
Said she,
'And the drinks,
You can see
Are hot as any Hottentot and not the goods for me!'

2. EN FAMILLE

In the early spring-time, after their tea,
Through the young fields of the springing Bohea,
Jemima, Jocasta, Dinah, and Deb
Walked with their father Sir Joshua Jebb-
An admiral red, whose only notion,
(A butterfly poised on a pigtailed ocean)
Is of the peruked sea whose swell
Breaks on the flowerless rocks of Hell.
Under the thin trees, Deb and Dinah,
Jemima, Jocasta, walked, and finer
Their black hair seemed (flat-sleek to see)
Than the young leaves of the springing Bohea;
Their cheeks were like nutmeg-flowers when swells
The rain into foolish silver bells.
They said, 'If the door you would only slam,
Or if, Papa, you would once say "Damn" -
Instead of merely roaring "Avast"
Or boldly invoking the nautical Blast -
We should now stand in the street of Hell
Watching siesta shutters that fell
With a noise like amber softly sliding;
Our moon-like glances through these gliding
Would see at her table preened and set
Myrrhina sitting at her toilette
With eyelids closed as soft as the breeze
That flows from gold flowers on the incense-trees.'

* * * * *

The Admiral said, 'You could never call -
I assure you it would not do at all!
She gets down from table without saying "Please",
Forgets her prayers and to cross her T's,
In short, her scandalous reputation
Has shocked the whole of the Hellish nation;
And every turbaned Chinoiserie,
With whom we should sip our black Bohea,
Would stretch out her simian fingers thin
To scratch you, my dears, like a mandoline;
For Hell is just as properly proper
As Greenwich, or as Bath, or Joppa!'

3. MARINER MAN

'What are you staring at, mariner man
Wrinkled as sea-sand and old as the sea?'
'Those trains will run over their tails, if they can,
Snorting and sporting like porpoises. Flee
The burly, the whirligig wheels of the train,
As round as the world and as large again,
Running half the way over to Babylon, down
Through fields of colver to gay Troy town -
A-puffing their smoke as grey as the curl
On my forehead as wrinkled as sands of the sea! -
But what can that matter to you, my girl?
(And what can that matter to me?)

II

4. LONG STEEL GRASS

Long steel grass -
 The white soldiers pass -
 The light is braying like an ass.
 See
 The tall Spanish jade
 With hair black as nightshade
 Worn as a cockade!
 Flee
 Her eyes' gasconade
 And her gown's parade
 (As stiff as a brigade).
 Tee-hee!
 The hard and braying light
 Is zebra'd black and white
 It will take away the slight
 And free,
 Tinge of the mouth-organ sound,
 (Oyster-stall notes) oozing round
 Her flounces as they sweep the ground.
 The
 Trumpet and the drum
 And the martial cornet come
 To make the people dumb-
 But we
 Won't wait for sly-foot night
 (Moonlight, watered milk-white, bright)
 To make clear the declaration
 Of our Paphian vocation,
 Beside the castanetted sea,
 Where stalks Il Capitaneo
 Swaggart braggadocio
 Sword and moustachio -
 He
 Is green as a cassada
 And his hair is an armada.
 To the jade 'Come kiss me harder'
 He called across the battlements as she
 Heard our voices thin and shrill
 As the steely grasses' thrill,
 Or the sound of the onycha
 When the phoca has the pica
 In the palace of the Queen's Chinee!

5. THROUGH GILDED TRELLISES

'Through gilded trellises
 Of the heat, Dolores,
 Inez, Manuccia,
 Isabel, Lucia,
 Mock Time that flies.
 "Lovely bird, will you stay and sing,
 Flirting your sheened wing,-
 Peck with your beak, and cling
 To our balconies?"
 They flirt their fans, flaunting -
 "O silence enchanting
 As music!" then slanting
 Their eyes,
 Like gilded or emerald grapes,
 They take mantillas, capes,
 Hiding their simian shapes.
 Sighs
 Each lady, "Our spadille
 Is done..." "Dance the quadrille
 From Hell's towers to Seville;
 Surprise
 Their siesta, "Dolores
 Said. Through gilded trellises
 Of the heat, spangles
 Pelt down through the tangles
 Of bell-flowers; each dangles
 Her castanets, shutters
 Fall while the heat mutters,
 With sounds like a mandoline
 Or tinkled tambourine....
 Ladies, Time dies!'

6. TANGO-PASODOBLE

When

Don

Pasquito arrived at the seaside
 Where the donkey's hide tide brayed, he
 Saw the banditto Joe in a black cape
 Whose slack shape waved like the sea -
 Thetis wrote a treatise noting wheat is silver like the sea;
 the lovely cheat is sweet as foam; Erotis notices that she

Will

Steal

The

Wheat-Kings' luggage, like Babel
 Before the League of Nations grew -
 So Joe put the luggage and the label
 In the pocket of Flo the Kangaroo.
 Through trees like rich hotels that bode
 Of dreamless ease fled she,
 Carrying the load and goading the road
 Through the marine scene to the sea.
 'Don Pasquito, the road is eloping
 With your luggage, though heavy and large;
 You must follow and leave your moping
 Bride to my guidance and charge!'

When

Don

Pasquito returned from the road's end,
 Where vanilla-coloured ladies ride
 From Sevilla, his mantilla'd bride and young friend
 Were forgetting their mentor and guide.
 For the Lady and her friend from Le Touquet
 In the very shady trees upon the sand
 Were plucking a white satin bouquet
 Of foam, while the sand's brassy band
 Blared in the wind. Don Pasquito
 Hid where the leaves drip with sweet...
 But a word stung him like a mosquito...
 For what they hear, they repeat!

III

7. LULLABY FOR JUMBO

Jumbo asleep!
Grey leaves thick-furred
As his ears, keep
Conversations blurred.
Thicker than hide
Is the trumpeting water;
Don Pasquito's bride
And his youngest daughter
Watch the leaves
Elephantine grey:
What is it grieves
In the torrid day?
Is it the animal
World that snores
Harsh and inimical
In sleepy pores?
And why should the spined flowers
Red as a soldier
Make Don Pasquito
Seem still mouldier?

8. BLACK MRS. BEHEMOTH

In a room of the palace
Black Mrs. Behemoth
Gave way to wroth
And the wildest malice.
Cried Mrs. Behemoth,
'Come,- come,-
Come, court lady,
Doomed like a moth,
Through palace rooms shady!
The candle flame
Seemed a yellow pompion,
Sharp as a scorpion,
Nobody came...
Only a bug bear
Air unkind,
That bud furred papoose,
The young spring wind,
Blew out the candle.
Where is it gone?
To flat
Coromandel
Rolling on!

9. TARANTELLA

Where the satyrs are chattering, nymphs in their flattering
Glimpse of the forest enhance
All the beauty of marrow and cucumber narrow
And Ceres will join in the dance.
Where the satyrs can flatter the flat-leaved fruit
And the gherkin green and the marrow,
Said Queen Venus, 'Silenus, we'll settle between us
The gourd and the cucumber narrow.'
See, like palaces hid in the lake, they shake -
Those greenhouses shot by her arrow narrow!
The gardener seizes the pieces like Croesus for gilding the
pottingshed barrow.
There the radish roots,
And the strawberry fruits
Feel the nymphs' high boots in the glade.
Trampling and sampling mazurkas, cachucas and turkas,
Cracoviaks hid in the shade.
Where in the haycocks the country nymphs' gay flocks
Wear gowns that are looped over bright yellow petticoats;
Gaiters of leather and pheasants' tail feathers
In straw hats bewildering many a leathern bat.
There they haymake
Cowers and whines in showers
The dew in the dogskin bright flowers;
Pumpkin and marrow
And cucumber narrow
Have grown through the spangled June hours.
Melons as dark as caves have for their fountain waves
Thickest gold honey. And wrinkled as dark as Pan,
Or old Silenus, yet youthful as Venus
Are gourds and the wrinkled figs
Whence all the jewels ran.
Said Queen Venus, 'Silenus
We'll settle between us
The numphs' disobedience, forestall
With my bow and my quiver
Each fresh evil liver:
For I don't understand it at all!'

IV

10. A MAN FROM A FAR COUNTRIE

Rose and Alice,
Oh, the pretty lassies,
With their mouths like a calice
And their hair a golden palace -
Through my heart like a lovely wind they blow.

Though I am black and not comely,
Though I am black as the darkest trees,
I have swarms of gold that will fly like honey-bees,
By the rivers of the sun I will feed my words
Until they skip like those fleeced lambs
The waterfalls, and the rivers (horned rams),
Then for all my darkness I shall be
The peacefulness of a lovely tree -
A tree wherein the golden birds
Are singing in the darkest branches, oh!

11. BY THE LAKE

Across the thick and the pastel snow
Two people go.... 'And do you remember
When last we wandered this shore?'...'Ah no!
For it is cold-hearted December.'
'Dead, the leaves that likes asses'ears hung on the trees
When last we wandered and squandered joy here;
Now Midas your husband will listen for these
Whispers - these tears for joy's bier.
And as they walk, they seem tall pagodas;
And all the ropes let down from the cloud
Ring the hard cold bell-buds upon the trees - codas
Of overtones, ecstasies, grown for love's shroud.

12. COUNTRY DANCE

That hobnailed goblin, the bob-tailed Hob,
Said, 'It is time I began to rob'.
For strawberries bob, hob-nob with the pearls
Of cream (like the curls of the dairy girls),
And flushed with the heat and fruitish-ripe
Are the gowns of the maids who dance to the pipe.
Chase a maid?
She's afraid!
'Go gather a bob-cherry kiss from a tree,
But don't, I prithee, come bothering me!'
She said -
As she fled.
The snouted satyrs drink clouted cream
'Neath the chestnut-tree as thick as a dream;
So I went,
And leant,
Where none but the doltish coltish wind
Nuzzeled my hand for what it could find.
As it neighed,
I said,
'Don't touch me, sir, don't touch me, I say,
You'll tumble my strawberries into the hay.
Those snow-mounds of silver that bee, the spring,
Has sucked his sweetness from, I will bring
With fair-haired plants and with apples chill
For the great god Pan's high altar... I'll spill
Not one!'
So, in fun,
We rolled on the grass and began to run
Chasing that gaudy satyr the Sun;
Over the haycocks, away we ran
Crying, 'Here be berries as sunburnt as Pan!'
But Silenus
Has seen us....
He runs like the rough satyr Sun.

Come away!

V

13. POLKA

"Tra la la la la la la
 La - la!
 See me dance the polka",
Said Mr. Wagg like a bear,
"With my top hat
And my whiskers that -
(Tra la la la) trap the Fair.

Where the waves seem chiming haycocks
I dance the polka; there
Stand Venus' children in their gay frocks,-
Maroon and marine,- and stare

To see me fire my pistol
Through the distance blue as my coat;
Like Willington, Byron, the Marquis of Bristol,
Busbied great trees float.

While the wheezing hurdy-gurdy
Of the marine wind blows me
To the tune of Annie Rooney, sturdy,
Over the sheafs of the sea;

And bright as a seedman's packet
With zinnias, candytuffs chill,
Is Mrs. Marigold's jacket
As she gapes at the inn door still,

Where at dawn in the box of the sailor,
Blue as the decks of the sea,
Nelson awoke, crowed like the cocks,
Then back to the dust sank he.

And Robinson Crusoe
Rues so
The bright and foxy beer,-
But he finds fresh isles in a negress' smiles,-
the poxy doxy dear,

As they watch me dance the polka",
Said Mr. Wagg like a bear,
"In my top hat and my whiskers that,-
Tra la la la trap the Fair.

Tra la la la la -
Tra la la la la -
Tra la la la la la la la
 La
 La
 La!"

14. FOUR IN THE MORNING

Cried the navy-blue ghost of Mister Belaker
The allegro negro cocktail shaker;
'Why did the cock crow,
Why am I lost
Down the endless road to
Infinity toss'd?
The tropical leaves are whispering white as water:
I race the wind in my flight down the promenade,
Edging the far-off sand
Is the foam of the sirens' Metropole and Grand,-
As I raced through the leaves as white as water
My ghost flowed over a nursemaid, caught her,
And there I saw the long grass weep,
Where the guinea-fowl plumaged houses sleep
And the sweet ring-doves of curded milk
Watch the Infanta's gown of silk
In the ghost room tall where the governante
Whispers slyly fading andante.'
In at the window then looked he,
The navy-blue ghost of Mister Belaker,
The allegro negro cocktail shaker,-
And his flattened face like the moon saw she,-
Rhinoceros black yet flowing like the sea.

15. SOMETHING LIES BEYOND THE SCENE

Something lies beyond the scene,
the encre de chine, marine, obscene
Horizon
In
Heli
Black as a bison
See the tall black Aga
 on the sofa in the alga mope, his
Bell-rope
Moustache (clear as a great bell!)
Waves in eighteen eighty
Bustles
Come
Late with tambourines of
Rustling
Foam.
They answer to the names
Of ancient dames and shames, and
Only call horizons their home.
Coldly wheeze
(Chinese as these black-armoured fleas that dance)
 the breezes
Seeking for horizons
Wide; from her orisons
In her wide
Vermilion
Pavilion
by the sea-side
The doors clang open and hide
Where the wind died
Nothing but the Princess
Cockatrice
Lean
Dancing a caprice
To the wind's tambourine.

VI
16. VALSE

'Daisy and Lily,
Lazy and silly,
Walk by the shore of the wan grassy sea,-
Talking once more 'neath a swan-bosomed tree.
Rose castles,
Tourelles,
Those bustles
Where swell
Each foam-bell of ermine,
They roam and determine
What fashions have been and what fashions will be,-
What tartan leaves born,
What crinolines worn,
By Queen Thetis,
Pelisses
Of tarlatine blue,
Like the thin plaided leaves that the castle crags grew,
Or velours d'Afrande;
On the water-gods' land
Her hair seemed god trees on the honey-cell sand
When the thickest gold spangles, on deep water seen
Were like twanging guitar and like cold mandoline,
And the nymphs of great caves,
With hair like gold waves,
Of Venus, wore tarlatine.
Louise and Charlottine
(Boreas' daughters)
And the nymphs of deep waters,
The nymph Taglioni, Grisi the ondine,
Wear plaided Victoria and thin Clementine
Like the crinolined waterfalls;
Wood-nymphs wear bonnets, shawls,
Elegant parasols
Floating are seen.
The Amazons wear balzarine of jonquille
Beside the blond lace of a deep-falling rill;
Through glades like a nun
They run from and shun
The enormous and gold-rayed rustling sun;
And the nymphs of the fountains
Descend from the mountains
Like elegant willows
On their deep barouche pillows,
In cashmere Alvandar, barege Isabelle,
Like bells of bright water from the clearest wood-well.
Our elegantes favouring bonnets of blond,
The stars in their apiaries,
Sylphs in their aviaries,
Seeing them, spangle these, and the sylphs fond
From their aviaries fanned
With each long fluid hand
The manteaux espagnoles,
Mimic the waterfalls
Over the long and the light summer land.

So Daisy and Lily,
Lazy and silly,
Walk by the shore of the wan grassy sea,
Talking once more 'neath a swan-bosomed tree.
Rose castles,
Tourelles,
Those bustles!
Mourelles
Of the shade in their train follow.
Ladies, how vain, -hollow,-
Gone is the sweet swallow,-
Gone, Philomel!'

17. JODELLING SONG

'We bear velvet cream.
Green and babyish
Small leaves seem; each stream
Horses' tails that swish,

And the chimes remind
Us of sweet birds singing,
Like the jangling bells
On rose trees ringing.

Man must say farwell
To parents now,
And to William Tell
And Mrs. Cow.

Man must say farewells
To storks and Bettes,
And to roses' bells,
And statuettes.

Forests white and black
In spring are blue
With forget-me-nots,
And to lovers true

Still the sweet bird begs
And tries to cozen
Them: "Buy angels' eggs
Sold by the dozen."

Gone are clouds like inns
On the gardens' brinks,
And the mountain djinns,-
Ganymede sells drinks:

While the days seem grey,
And his heart of ice,
Grey as chamois, or
The edelweiss,

And the mountain streams
Like cowbells sound-
Tirra lirra, drowned
In the waiter's dreams

Who has gone beyond
The forest waves,
While his true and fond
Ones seek their graves.'

18. SCOTCH RHAPSODY

'Do not take a bath in Jordan,
Gordon,
On the holy Sabbath, on the peaceful day!' Said the huntsman, playing on his old bagpipe,
Boring to death the pheasant and the snipe-
Boring the ptarmigan and grouse for fun-
Boring them worse than a nine-bore gun.
Till the flaxen leaves where the prunes are ripe,
Heard the tartan wind a-droning through the pipe,
And they heard Macpherson say:
'Where do the waves go? What hotels
Hide their bustles and their gay umbrellas?
And would there be room? - Would there be
room? Would there be room for me?'
There is a hotel at Ostend
Cold as the wind, without an end,
Haunted by ghostly poor relations
Of Bostonian conversations
(Like bagpipes rotting through the walls.)
And there the pearl-ropes fall like shawls
With a noise like marine waterfalls.
And 'Another little drink wouldn't do us any
harm'
Pierces through the sabbatical calm.
And that is the place for me!
So do not take a bath in Jordan, Gordon,
On the holy Sabbath on the peaceful day-
Or you'll never go to heaven, Gordon Macpherson,
And speaking purely as a private person
That is the place - that is the place - that is the
place for me!

19. POPULAR SONG

Lily O'Grady,
 Silly and shady,
 Longing to be
 A lazy lady,
 Walked by the cupolas, gables in the
 Lake's Georgian stables,
 In a fairy tale like the heat intense,
 And the mist in the woods when across the fence
 The children gathering strawberries
 Are changed by the heat into negresses,
 Though their fair hair
 Shines there
 Like gold-haired planets, Calliope, Io,
 Pomona, Antiope, Echo, and Clio.
 Then Lily O'Grady,
 Silly and shady,
 Sauntered along like a
 Lazy lady;
 Beside the waves' haycocks her gown with tucks
 Was of satin the colour of shining green ducks,
 And her fol-de-rol
 Paorsol
 Was a great gold sun o'er the haycocks shining,
 But she was a negress black as the shade
 That time on the brightest lady laid.
 Then trampled the strawberry, buttercup root,
 In the thick gold dew as bright as the mesh
 Of dead Panope's golden flesh,
 Made from the music whence were born
 Memphis and Thebes in the first hot morn,
 - And ran, to wake
 In the lake,
 Where the water-ripples seem hay to rake.
 And Charlottine,
 Adeline,
 Round rose-bubbling Victorine,
 And the other fish
 Express a wish
 For mastic mantles and gowns with a swish;
 And bright and slight as the posies
 Of buttercups and of roses,
 And buds of the wild-wood lilies
 They chase her, as frisky as fillies.
 The red retriever-haired satyr
 Can whine and tease her and flatter,
 By Lily O'Grady,
 Silly and shady,
 In the deep shade is a lazy lady;
 Now Pompey's dead, Homer's read,
 Heliogabalus lost his head,
 And shade is on the brightest wing,
 And dust forbids the bird to sing.

20. FOX-TROT 'OLD SIR FAULK'

Old
 Sir.
 Faulk,
 Tall as a stork,
 Before the honeyed fruits of dawn were ripe,
 would walk,
 And stalk with a gun
 The reynard-coloured sun,
 Among the pheasant-feathered corn the unicorn
 has torn, forlorn the
 Smock-faced sheep
 Sit
 And
 Sleep;
 Periwigged as William and Mary, weep...
 'Sally, Mary, Mattie, what's the matter, why cry?'
 The huntsman and the reynard-coloured sun and I sigh;
 'Oh, the nursery-maid Meg
 With a leg like a peg
 Chased the feathered dreams like hens, and when they
 laid an egg
 In the sheepskin
 Meadows
 Where
 The serene King James would steer
 Horse and hounds, then he
 From the shade of a tree
 Picked it up as spoil to boil for nursery tea,'
 said the mourners.
 In the
 Corn, towers strain,
 Feathered tall as a crane,
 And whistling down the feathered rain, old Noah
 goes again -
 An old dull mome
 With a head like a pome
 Seeing the world as a bare egg,
 Laid by the feathered air; Meg
 Would beg three of these
 For the nursery teas
 Of Japhet, Shem, and Ham; she gave it
 Underneath the trees,
 Where the boiling
 Water
 Hissed,
 Like the goose-king's feathered daughter - kissed,
 Pot and pan and copper kettle
 Put upon their proper mettle,
 Lest the Flood - the Flood - the Flood begin again
 through these!

21. SIR BEELZEBUB

When
 Sir
 Beelzebub called for his syllabub in the hotel
 in Hell
 Where Proserpine first fell,
 Blue as the gendarmerie were the waves of the sea,
 (Rocking and shocking the bar-maid).
 Nobody comes to give him his rum but the
 Rim of the sky hippopotamus-glum
 Enhances the chances to bless with a benison
 Alfred Lord Tennyson crossing the bar laid
 With cold vegetation from pale deputations
 Of temperance workers (all signed In Memoriam)
 Hoping with glory to trip up the Laureate's feet,
 (Moving in classical metres)...
 Like Balaclava, the lava came down from the
 Roof, and the sea's blue wooden gendarmerie
 Took them in charge while Beelzebub roared for his
 rum.
 ...None of them come!