

DUO CORTONA at the Columbia Museum of Art
Virtual Livestream - January 2021
Texts and Translations

Love Sonnets (2016): III. Sonnet 18 -Shall I Compare Thee to a Summer's Day?

Music By Laura Schwendinger, Text: Shakespeare

Shall I compare thee to a summer's day?
Thou art more lovely and more temperate:
Rough winds do shake the darling buds of May,
And summer's lease hath all too short a date:
Sometime too hot the eye of heaven shines,
And often is his gold complexion dimmed;
And every fair from fair sometime declines,
By chance, or nature's changing course, untrimmed:
But thy eternal summer shall not fade,
Nor lose possession of that fair thou ow'st;
Nor shall Death brag thou wander'st in his shade
When in eternal lines to time thou grow'st:
So long as men can breathe or eyes can see,
So long lives this, and this gives life to thee.

***Of my Grandfather* texts and music by Akshaya Avril Tucker**

At 6PM, I walked outside
I found a marble ogre's fingernail
I pressed it and hid it away
The house held silence
Oldest friend

Mama found a golden hair
As it lay in a dusty box
I fastened it around my wrist
A glowing amulet

At 4AM, I'd hear him cry
"What!
What do I do

What do I do now?
What!
What do I do with this?
What do I do with this?"
He clutched his pillow

Oldest friend,
I'm here, holding you,
Oldest friend,
In both senses of the words
Go to sleep
Pleasant dreams

At 6PM, the evening sun
Turned branches
Into canals of light

Suddenly blessed by the touch
Of an ancient grandfather
And the queen of love was installed
With him, in the full moon

"My love is in love
My love is in love
Is in love
My love is in love with
The man in the moon"

***Papalote* by Hilda Paredes**

Poem by Rocio González. English Translation by Hilda Paredes

Kite

(in San Mateo del Mar men
fish by tying the corners of their
nets to kites which are suspended
by the strength of the wind)

Kite tied to its net,
pursued patient of the moon
kite without thread between the waves
breeze's lover that envelops.

You were made centuries ago

by children who saw birds
purely devoted to the wind.

Staring at you there
excited by the foam's song,
beautiful brother of the salt
I know why you search for your lovers in the air.

Assunder by John Fitz Rogers

Text by Sappho, translated by A.S. Kline

Fragments, on the Muses

III

And I say to you someone will remember us
In [a] time to come... [in a distant time]...

Fragments, on Love and Desire

VIII

...but you have forgotten me...

XIII

Of all the stars, the loveliest...

The Moon is down

The Moon is down,
The Pleiades. Midnight,
The hours flow on,
I lie, alone.

***Who am I to say?* by Annika K. Socolofsky**

Program Note

The text for this song is derived from the English nursery rhyme "Tinker, tailor, soldier, sailor," which invites young girls to fantasize about what occupation their future husbands might have. As a child, I was told by nursery rhymes, by songs, by books, by stories, by the radio, by friends, and by society that my worth in life would be measured by the worth of my future husband. This message pours a foundation of endlessly conditioned heteronormativity so deep within us that even the most liberal and queer among us hold shame in a death grip close to our heart. It is that shame that brought some gay people to oppose same-sex marriage. It is that shame that kept me from finding my true self for 24 years of life. It is that shame that keeps me from imagining my own wedding day. It is that shame that perpetually haunts me with doubt, and makes me wonder, *who am I to say who I should marry?* Millions have been robbed of their agency, truth, and self-worth, and it is a long road to reclaim it.

Text

Who should I marry?
Who am I to say?
Tinker, tailor, soldier, sailor?
Who should I have?
What if my husband is a wife?

The Thaw* by Carolina Heredia*Text by Gabriel Fried**

One day we will speak about the darkness
When you are older and I am old
We, too, may have to speak about the cold
The cold we have been
The separate sound we woke to
The chisel the lone fox scuffling morsels
On a meadow so long frozen
It has a demoralized the sun
But for now we bask within the spark we have made
The flick that thawed the visible heart.

***Sappho Cycle* by Robert Morris**

The texts are found in SAPPHO: Lyrics in the Original Greek with Translations by Willis Barnstone

I. To the Graces and Muses

Come, come now,
tender Graces,
and Muses of the splendid hair.

II. Mnemosyne

(violin solo)

III. Making of the Poem

Come to me now, Muses.
Leave your gold house.

IV. Pneuma

V. The Lyric Poem

Come, holy tortoise shell,
my lyre, and become a poem

VI. A Prayer to Aphrodite

On your dappled throne, Aphrodite,
sly eternal daughter of Zeus,
I beg you: do not crush me with grief,

but come to me now – as once
you heard my far cry, and yielded,
slipping from your father's house

to yoke the birds to your gold
chariot, and came. Handsome swallows
brought you swiftly to the dark earth,

their wings whipping the middle sky.
Happy, with deathless lips, you smiled:
“What is wrong, why have you called me?”

What does your mad heart desire?
Whom shall I make love you, Sappho,
who is turning her back on you?

Let her run away, soon she'll chase you;
refuse your gifts, soon she'll give them.
She will love you, though unwillingly.”

Then come to me now and free me
from fearful agony. Labor
for my mad heart, and be my ally.

VII. Eros

Now in my
heart I
see clearly

a beautiful
face
shining,

etched
by love.

VIII. To Anaktoria

Some say cavalry and others claim
infantry or a fleet of long oars
is the supreme sight on the black earth.
I say it is

the one you love. And easily proved.
Did not Helen, who was queen of mortal
beauty, chose as first among mankind
the very scourge

of Trojan honor? Haunted by Love
she forgot kinsmen, her own dear child,
and wandered off to a remote country.
Weak and fitful

woman bending before any man!
So Anaktoria, although you are
far, do not forget your loving friends.
And I for one

would rather listen to your soft step
and see your radiant face – than watch
all the dazzling chariots and armored
hoplites of Lydia.

IX. You Forgot

And I am wholly
Gone into oblivion.

You forgot.