

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.