



Awakenings

Sunday, May 15, 2016

7:00 PM

Program Notes & Translations

Lizbeth Malanga
soprano

with

Rami Saredidine, piano

Kelly Herrmann, flute

Cathryn Gaylord, bassoon

Alexander Bonus, harpsichord

László Z. Bitó Conservatory Performance Space

Bard College Conservatory of Music

Free and Open to the Public

Program

Changing Light (2002)

Kaija Saariaho (b. 1952)

Kelly Herrmann, flute

Cuatro sonetos de amor (1998)

Mark Carlson (b. 1952)

Recordarás
Amarra tu corazón al mio
Cuando yo muera
Reposa con tu sueño en mi sueño

Three Early Songs (1947)

George Crumb (b.1929)

Night
Let it be forgotten
Wind Elegy

Intermission

Le Café

Nicolas Bernier (1665-1734)

Prelude
Recitatif: Agréable café quels climats inconnus
Air: Favorable liqueur dont mon âme est ravie
Recitatif: L'astre dont chaque nuit la claret
Air: Café du jus de la bouteille
Recitatif: Quand une habile main t'apprête
Air: Ô toi liqueur que j'aime

Kelly Herrmann, flute
Cathryn Gaylord, bassoon
Alexander Bonus, harpsichord

Gott im Frühlinge
O ihr Zärtlichen
Schöne Fremde
Waldseligkeit
Wie froh und frisch

Franz Schubert (1797-1828)
Einojuhani Rautavaara (b.1928)
Robert Schumann (1810-1856)
Richard Strauss (1864-1949)
Johannes Brahms (1833-1897)

The Lorelei
Amor
Phenomenal Woman

George Gershwin (1898-1937)
William Bolcom (b. 1938)
David Garner (b. 1954)

Program Notes & Translations

An awakening can happen at any point in time and can be inspired by the marvels of the natural world: a spiritual awakening of the renewal of our spirit, awakening from dreams whether they are imagined or realized, the awakening to a new sense of self brought on by a momentous occasion. During my time in the Hudson Valley, I have experienced many of these awakenings and those experiences have inspired this evening's program.

We begin with Finnish composer Kaija Saariaho's setting of a poem by Rabbi Jules Harlow. Saariaho's setting highlights the mystery of our existence and the natural elements that both surround and dwell within us. She stated, "In this composition, I follow the idea of a dialogue [between the voice and the flute], suggested by the text I have chosen. The intimate nature and fragile sound world of the duo mirror the fragility of our uncertain existence." This setting expresses the poetry with an atmospheric, ethereal texture through a chant-like vocal line. Through the use of extended performance techniques, the flute conveys the energy of nature and the invisible elements of creation that spark our marveling. The vocal line sustains a modal, chant-like melody while exploring the extreme ranges of the voice with large leaps. I envision this piece as a meditation on the theme of awakenings to open my program. In Rabbi Harlow's text, we are awakened and marvel at the mysteries of the world around us as we ask for renewal with the dawning of each day, and as we strive to achieve compassion, love, and grace for each other and ourselves.

Changing Light

Rabbi Jules Harlow (b. 1931)

Light and darkness, night and day.
We marvel at the mystery of the stars.
Moon and sky, sand and sea.
We marvel at the mystery of the sun.
Though we are mortal, we are Creation's Crown.
Flesh and bone, steel and stone.
We dwell in fragile, temporary shelters.
Grant steadfast love, compassion, grace.
Sustain us, Lord; our origin is dust.
Splendor, mercy, love endure.
We are but little lower than the angels.
Resplendent skies, sunset, sunrise.
The grandeur of Creation lifts our lives.
Evening darkness, morning dawn.
Renew our lives as You renew all time.

After I met Mark Carlson through my participation in SongFest in 2014 at the Colburn School in Los Angeles, I have been eager to perform his songs again. Carlson graciously provided me with recordings of his vocal works, and upon listening; I was immediately drawn to his setting of four Pablo Neruda songs from his poetry collection *Cien sonetos de amor*. Carlson's settings capture the sonic realm of Neruda's poetic imagery. Inspired by the harmonies of jazz, folk and classical music, the harmonic colors and textures in these songs have a unique quality that suspends time and provides the illusion of eternity. The four poems Carlson chose to set focus on dreams. Neruda's poetry is made up of dream language and blurs the lines of reality. His colorful language is brought to life with Carlson's intuitive text setting, which captures the drama of the poetry with its evocative imagery and use of metaphor. Each song is distinct in its rhythmic and harmonic language. There are notable textural changes with every new poetic idea. The vocal melodies range from chorale-like simplicity to angular melodies made up of large leaps, with recurring motifs shared between the voice and the piano. The musical atmosphere Carlson has created evokes various states of reverie and the directness of the vocal line allows the singer to access the emotional subtleties of the poetry.

Cuatro sonetos de Amor

Pablo Neruda (1904-1973)

from *Cien sonetos de amor* (1960)

Recordarás aquella quebrada caprichosa
a donde los aromas palpitantes treparon,
de cuando en cuando un pájaro vestido
con agua y lentitud: traje de invierno.
Recordarás los dones de la tierra:
irascible fragancia, barro de oro,
hierbas del matorral, locas raíces,
sortilegas espinas como espadas.
Recordarás el ramo que trajiste,
ramo de sombra y agua con silencio,
ramo como una piedra con espuma.
Y aquella vez fue como nunca y siempre:
vamos allí donde no espera nada
y hallamos todo lo que está esperando.
~*Soneto IV*

You will remember the capricious ravine
Where the palpitating aromas climbed,
From time to time a bird dressed
With water and slowness: suit of winter.
You will remember the gifts of the earth:
Irascible fragrance, clay of gold,
Herbs of the thicket, crazy roots,
Charmed thorns like swords.
You will remember the bouquet you brought,
Bouquet of shadows and water with silence,
Bouquet like a stone with foam.
And that time was like never and always:
We go there where nothing waits
And we find all that is waiting.

De noche, amada, amarra tu corazón al mío
y que ellos en el sueño derroten las tinieblas
como un doble tambor combatiendo en el bosque
contra el espeso muro de las hojas mojadas.

At night, beloved, tie your heart to mine
And both will vanquish the darkness in our dreams,
Like twin drums fighting in the forest
Against the dense wall of drenched leaves.

Nocturna travesía, brasa negra del sueño
interceptando el hilo de las uvas terrestres
con la puntualidad de un tren descabellado
que sombra y piedras frías sin cesar arrastrara.

Nocturnal voyage, black ember of sleep
Intercepting the thread of the terrestrial grapes
With the punctuality of a crazy train that will
Endlessly drag shadows and cold stones.

Por eso, amor, amárrame el movimiento puro,
a la tenacidad que en tu pecho golpea
con las alas de un cisne sumergido,
para que a las preguntas estrelladas del cielo
responda nuestro sueño con una sola llave,
con una sola puerta cerrada por la sombra.
~*Soneto LXXIX*

Therefore, love, tie me to pure movement,
To the tenacity that pounds in your chest
With the wings of a submerged swan,
so that our dream will answer all with a single key,
With a single door closed by shadows
star-filled questions of the sky.

Cuando yo muera quiero tus manos en mis ojos:
quiero la luz y el trigo de tus manos amadas
pasar una vez más sobre mí su frescura:
sentir la suavidad que cambió mi destino.
Quiero que vivas mientras yo, dormido, te espero,
quiero que tus oídos sigan oyendo el viento,
que huelas el aroma del mar que amamos juntos
y que sigas pisando la arena que pisamos.
Quiero que lo que amo siga vivo
y a ti te amé y canté sobre todas las cosas,
por eso sigue tú floreciendo, florida,
para que alcances todo lo que mi amor te ordena,
para que se pasee mi sombra por tu pelo,
para que así conozcan la razón de mi canto.
~ *Soneto LXXXIX*

Ya eres mía. Reposa con tu sueño en mi sueño.
Amor, dolor, trabajos, deben dormir ahora.
Gira la noche sobre sus invisibles ruedas
y junto a mí eres pura como el ámbar dormido.
Ninguna más, amor, dormirá con mis sueños.
Irás, iremos juntos por las aguas del tiempo.
Ninguna viajará por la sombra conmigo,
sólo tú, siempre viva, siempre sol, siempre luna.
Ya tus manos abrieron los puños delicados
y dejaron caer suaves signos sin rumbo,
tus ojos se cerraron como dos alas grises,
mientras yo sigo el agua que llevas y me lleva:
la noche, el mundo, el viento devanan su destino,
y ya no soy sin ti sino sólo tu sueño.
~*Soneto LXXXI*

When I die I want your hands on my eyes:
I want the light and the wheat of your beloved hands
To pass their freshness over me one more time:
To feel the gentleness that changed my destiny.
I want you to live while I, sleeping, wait for you,
I want your ears to go on hearing the wind,
For you to smell the sea that we loved together,
And for you to continue walking on the sand we walked on.
I want what I love to stay alive and to you I loved and sang
about all things, because of this,
Continue flourishing, full-flowered,
so you may reach all that my love commands
so that my shadow may saunter through your hair,
so that all may know the reason for my song.

You are already mine. Rest with your dream in my dream.
Love, sorrow, chores, must sleep now.
The night turns its invisible wheels
and next to me you are pure like sleeping amber.
No other, love, will sleep with my dreams.
You will go, we will go together through the waters of time.
No other will travel through the shadows with me,
only you, ever alive, always sun, always moon.
Already your hands opened their delicate fists
and aimlessly dropped your soft signs,
Your eyes closed like two grey wings
While I follow the water that you carry and that carries me:
The night, the world, the wind spin their destiny,
and now I am nothing without you but your dream.

George Crumb's *Three Early Songs* came to me by the way of a friend's recommendation, and once I had heard them they became the inspiration for my recital. Crumb wrote these songs in 1947 at the age of seventeen, and while they are his very first songs they foreshadow elements of his mature compositional voice. The textures in the piano accompaniment evocatively paint the poetic imagery of Robert Southey and Sara Teasdale: the wonder of nighttime, the delicacy of a snowfall and the motion of the wind with arpeggiated figures in different rhythmic motives. Each song is a short vignette exploring wonder, acceptance, and grief. The simplicity of the vocal line is reminiscent of folk song, punctuated with prolonged note values allowing for moments of reflection suspended in time. I was drawn to these songs for the natural musical expression Crumb found to convey the text, which describe experiences that I have had personally over the last few years. These songs have allowed me to articulate some of my emotions that have yearned for a vehicle. I find Crumb's musical language and his choice of poetry to be an ideal union through which I have been able to identify and release these feelings.

Three Early Songs

I. Night

Robert Southey (1774-1843)

How beautiful is night!
A dewy freshness fills the silent air;
No mist obscures, nor cloud, nor speck, nor stain,
Breaks the serene of heaven;
In full-orb'd glory, yonder moon divine
Rolls through the dark blue depths.
Beneath her steady ray
The desert-circle spreads
Like the round ocean, girdled with the sky.
How beautiful is night!

II. Let it be forgotten

Sara Teasdale (1884-1933)

Let it be forgotten, as a flower is forgotten,
Forgotten as a fire that once was singing gold,
Let it be forgotten for ever and ever,
Time is a kind friend, he will make us old.

If anyone asks, say it was forgotten
Long and long ago,
As a flower, as a fire, as a hushed footfall
In a long forgotten snow.

III. Wind Elegy

Sara Teasdale (1884-1933)

Only the wind knows he is gone,
Only the wind grieves,
The sun shines, the fields are sown,
Sparrows mate in the eaves;

But I heard the wind in the pines he planted
And the hemlocks overhead,
"His acres wake, for the year turns,
But he is asleep," it said.

An awakening of a different sort comes through the consumption of a delicious stimulant, which is the subject of Nicolas Bernier's *Coffee Cantata*. After this newest culinary delight arrived in Europe in the 17th century, it enthralled the taste buds of the aristocracy, literati and conversationalists alike. This piece shares a place alongside the more famous *Coffee Cantata* of J.S. Bach. In this charming cantata, with texts by Louis Fuzelier, the virtues of coffee are praised to be far greater than the very nectar of the gods. With each movement the poet falls deeper under the brew's exotic spell. I have a great affection for coffee, its aroma and rich flavor, and at various points in my collegiate career I have identified with these exaggerated sentiments of endearment towards this illustrious beverage. Beginning with an instrumental prelude, each movement (*Air*) is based on a French dance rhythm: Sarabande, Allemande and Gigue, which are separated by an *Air de cour* in which emotions are more explicitly delineated. The flute and the bassoon parts are equally as important as the vocal line and often share melodic motives that are passed, overlapped and completed by one another.

Le Café

Louis Fuzelier (1672-1752)

Recitatif

Agréable Café, quel climats inconnus
ignorent les beaux feux que ta vapeur inspire.
Ah! tu contes dans ton empire
des lieux rebelles à Bacchus.

Pleasurable Coffee, which unknown
climates do not know the lovely fires your aroma inspires.
Ah! You count in your empire
places rebellious to Bacchus.

Air

Favorable liqueur dont mon âme est ravie,
par tes enchantements augmente nos beaux jours.
Nous domptons le sommeil par ton heureux secours
tu nous rends les moments qu'il dérobe à la vie.

Favorable drink by which my soul is enraptured,
by your enchantments increases our happy days.
We subdue sleep by your favorable aid,
you give us the moments that it steals from our lives.

Recitatif

L'astre dont chaque nuit la clarté douce
et pure vient du soleil absent consoler le nature,
te doit souvent les regards des humains.
Les feux de sa lumière aux yeux savant,
par toi devenus plus certains,
découvrent leur vaste carrière.
Que Minèrve et ses favoris des tes attraits
connaissent bien le prix.

The star whose sweet and pure light every night
Comes from the absent sun to console nature,
humans frequently gaze upon you.
The fires of her radiance in clever eyes,
by you become more certain
and uncover their vast quarry.
Minerva and her favorites know well
the value of your divine traits.

Air

Café, du jus de la bouteille tu combats le fatal poison.
Tu ravis au Dieu de te treille le buveur
que ton charme éveille et tu le rends à la raison.

Coffee, you combat the fatal poison of the bottle's liquor.
You ravish from the god of the vine the drinker
that your charm awakens and you restore him to reason.

Le sage s'il s'amuse à boire ne se livre qu'à tes
douceurs. Tu sers les filles de mémoire
qu'Apollon célèbre ta gloire:
la sienne a croît par tes faveurs.

The wise man if he enjoys drinking has only to surrender
himself to your sweetness. You serve the daughters of
memory so that Apollo sings your praises: her own has
grown by your favors.

Recitatif

Quand une main habile t'apréte
quel plaisir est égal à celui que tu fais?
Ton odeur seulement te promet la conquête
des mortelles qui n'ont pas éprouvé tes attraits.

When a smart hand prepares you
what pleasure is equal to that which you give?
By your aroma alone you promise the conquest
of mortals who have not experienced your allurements.

Air

O toi liqueur que j'aime, regne, coule en tous lieux.
Bannis le nectar même de la table des Dieux.
Fais sans cesse la guerre au jus séditieux.
Fais goûter à la terre doux calme des cieux.

Oh you liqueur which I love, reign, flowing everywhere.
Banish the very nectar of the gods.
Make war against that seditious juice.
Let the earth taste your sweet, heavenly calm.

German poets have long written on the mysterious and mystic qualities of nature. After living in the Hudson Valley for two years, I have also come to appreciate nature through the wild, untamed majesty of the Catskill Mountains and the Hudson River, and have found endless pleasure in exploring the environment that has inspired painters for centuries. Each poem and song I have selected in this set focuses on the pastoral wonder of either being soothed, terrified, or inspired by the beauty of nature. I was interested in exploring how each composer musically characterized elements of nature. In *Gott im Frühlinge*, one cannot help but praise God for the arrival of new life and the return of the joyous songbirds in Schubert's charming setting. You'll hear in the accompaniment a rising staccato motive in the right hand, which evokes the upward motion of the blooming trees and flower blossoms. The contemporary Finnish composer Einojuhani Rautavaara set Rainer Maria Rilke's mystical poem *O ihr Zärtlichen* in a modal harmonic sound world with a chant-like vocal line. The piano accompaniment depicts the wide-open spaces with large intervallic leaps between the right and left hand. Rautavaara highlights the heaviness of the trees, mountains and seas as the accompaniment is grounded deeper and deeper in the lower registers of the piano, and dense harmonies illustrate the complexity and depth of tree roots and mountain valleys. The composers of the next three songs find their own texture and timbre to evoke the more active elements of nature in the wind and the sea. In *Schöne Fremde*, Robert Schumann's syncopated accompaniment mimics the sound of rustling trees and bushes as well as the quick palpitations of the heart of the poet as he wanders in the glow of the sunset. There is a sense of excited anticipation of an uncertain future as the poet finds comfort in his solo walk under the stars. The rustling of tree branches can also be heard in Richard Strauss' *Waldseligkeit*, and are strikingly similar to the texture of the Schumann with counter melodies in both the right and left hand. However, Strauss' harmonic language is more advanced and surprises the listener with every new harmony. The vocal line soars above the active accompaniment with a calm lyricism, much like an instrumental obbligato, depicting the sense of relief when nature allows the poet to be completely himself in solitude. Finally, in *Wie froh und frisch* the ocean is heard through Johannes Brahms' use of agitated arpeggios in the piano accompaniment that cover a wide intervallic range, from the depths of the bass to the highs in the treble. As the poem progresses, Brahms brings a sense of calm to the sea by decreasing the rhythmic action in the piano accompaniment, and the vocal line becomes sustained, with smaller intervallic leaps. In the final poetic stanza, the poet exclaims how relieved and joyous he will be when the sea will finally carry him to the threshold of his home. Brahms creates a musical metaphor for "endlich" through the relentless waves of the sea depicted in the rolling arpeggios in the piano.

Gott im Frühlinge

Johann Peter Uz (1720 - 1796)

In seinem schimmernden Gewand
Hast du den Frühling uns gesandt,
Und Rosen um sein Haupt gewunden.
Holdlächelnd kömmt er schon!
Es führen ihn die Stunden,
O Gott, auf seinem Blumenthron.

In his gleaming robe
you have sent spring to us,
and twisted roses around his head.
Sweetly smiling, here he comes!
The Hours attend him,
O God, on his flowery throne.

Er geht in Büschen, und sie blühn;
Den Fluren kommt ihr frisches Grün,
Und Wäldern wächst ihr Schatten wieder,
Der West liebkosend schwingt
Sein tauendes Gefieder,
Und jeder frohe Vogel singt.

He goes to the bushes, and they blossom;
the meadows turn green again,
and the woods prosper in the shadows once more,
the west wind, softly caressing,
swings his thawing wings,
and every happy bird sings.

Mit eurer Lieder süßem Klang,
Ihr Vögel, soll auch mein Gesang
Zum Vater der Natur sich schwingen.
Entzückung reißt mich hin!
Ich will dem Herrn lobsingen,
Durch den ich wurde, was ich bin!

With your sweet-sounding song,
oh birds, my song will also soar
I will sing praises to the Lord
to the Father of all nature.
Rapture transports me!
To whom I owe my being!

O ihr Zärtlichen

Rainer Maria Rilke (1875 - 1926)
from *Die Sonette an Orpheus 1*, no. 4

O ihr Zärtlichen, tretet zuweilen
in den Atem, der euch nicht meint,
laßt ihn an eueren Wangen sich teilen,
hinter euch zittert er, wieder vereint.

O ihr Seligen, o ihr Heilen,
die ihr der Anfang der Herzen scheint.
Bogen der Pfeile und Ziele von Pfeilen,
ewiger glänzt euer Lächeln verweint.

Fürchtet euch nicht zu leiden, die Schwere,
gebt sie zurück an der Erde Gewicht:
schwer sind die Berge, schwer sind die Meere.

Selbst die als Kinder ihr pflanztet, die Bäume,
wurden zu schwer längst; ihr trüget sie nicht.
Aber die Lüfte... aber die Räume...

O you tender ones: step from time to time
into the air that does not know you.
let it break upon your cheeks,
it trembles behind you, whole again.

O you blessed ones, o you sacred ones,
you who seem to be the beginning of hearts.
Bows of arrows and targets of arrows,
your smile is always stained with tears.

Do not be afraid to suffer, give heaviness
back to the weight of the earth:
heavy are the mountains, heavy are the seas.

Even those trees you planted as children
have long since become too heavy; you cannot bear them.
But the winds... but the spaces...

Schöne Fremde

Josef Karl Benedikt von Eichendorff (1788 - 1857)
from *Gedichte*, in 1. *Wanderlieder*

Es rauschen die Wipfel und schauern,
Als machten zu dieser Stund
Um die halbversunkenen Mauern
Die alten Götter die Rund.

Hier hinter den Myrtenbäumen
In heimlich dämmernder Pracht,
Was sprichst du wirr wie in Träumen
Zu mir, phantastische Nacht?

Es funkeln auf mich alle Sterne
Mit glühendem Liebesblick,
Es redet trunken die Ferne
Wie vom künftigen, großem Glück.

The tree-tops rustle and shudder
As if at this very hour
The ancient gods were circling
These half-sunken walls.

Here beyond the myrtle trees
In secret twilit splendor,
What are you saying,
marvelous night, obscurely, as in a dream?

The glittering stars gaze down on me,
With fiery loving gaze,
The distant horizon speaks
with rapture of some great happiness to come!

Waldseligkeit

Richard Fedor Leopold Dehmel (1863 - 1920)

Der Wald beginnt zu rauschen,
den Bäumen naht die Nacht,
als ob sie selig lauschen,
berühren sie sich sacht.

Und unter ihren Zweigen,
da bin ich ganz allein,
da bin ich ganz mein eigen :
ganz nur Dein!

The forest begins to rustle,
Night surrounds the trees
As if blissfully listening,
They brush each other gently.

And under their branches,
I am entirely alone,
There I am entirely myself,
Entirely and completely yours!

Wie froh und frisch mein Sinn sich hebt

Johann Ludwig Tieck (1773 - 1853)

From *Liebesgeschichte der schönen Magelone und des Grafen Peter von Provence*

Wie froh und frisch mein Sinn sich hebt,
Zurück bleibt alles Bangen,
Die Brust mit neuem Mute strebt,
Erwacht ein neu Verlangen.

How joyous and fresh my mind rises up,
all fear is behind me,
my breast strives with new courage,
and a new longing awakens.

Die Sterne spiegeln sich im Meer,
Und golden glänzt die Flut.
Ich rannte taumelnd hin und her,
Und war nicht schlimm, nicht gut.

The stars are reflected in the sea,
and the golden tide gleams.
I ran staggering here and there,
and was neither bad nor good.

Doch niedergezogen
Sind Zweifel und wankender Sinn;
O tragt mich, ihr schaukelnden Wogen,
Zur längst ersehnten Heimat hin.

Still downtrodden
are doubt and wavering thought;
O carry me, you rocking waves,
to the homeland I have long desired.

In lieber, dämmernder Ferne,
Dort rufen heimische Lieder,
Aus jeglichem Sterne
Blickt sie mit sanftem Auge nieder.

In the dear, twilit distance
the songs of home are calling;
from every star
they gaze down with gentle eyes.

Ebne dich, du treue Welle,
Führe mich auf fernen Wegen
Zu der viel geliebten Schwelle,
Endlich meinem Glück entgegen!

Smooth yourself, you faithful waves,
bring me on the long path
to the threshold I love so dearly,
to my happiness at last!

The final songs were chosen out of my desire to share three perspectives on the journey to awakening of one's sense of self. These are songs that express an awakening to a sexual self-awareness, resulting from self-confidence and the realization that one possesses the innate ability to affect the way people react. Someone who possesses a strong sense of self can command the space wherever they are, and these songs explore the process of that discovery, all while maintaining a sense of humor in the situation. *The Lorelei* by George Gershwin tells the tale a woman wishing to emulate the behavior of the mythical siren, Lorelei. In German folklore, the Lorelei threw herself into the Rhine River after learning that her lover was unfaithful. Upon her death she was transformed into a river siren and would lure the sailors to death using her hypnotic songs. Perhaps the Lorelei is not the greatest of role models; however, she expresses the desire to possess a greater power to affect those around her and longs to have the kind of magnetic charm that would grant her more agency in her life. In William Bolcom's *Amor*, we hear the story of a woman who possesses the power to affect those around her while she day trips to a new town. The attitude of this woman is punctuated with the syncopated, Pechanga dance rhythms and jazz-inspired scat runs. There is a certain *laissez faire* in the way she carries herself, but she knows full well her ability to capture the attention of those with whom she interacts. Finally, in *Phenomenal Woman* Maya Angelou describes all the ways a woman can attract attention simply through one's "inner mystery" and inherent qualities of being a woman. David Garner's setting highlights the innate musicality of Angelou's poetry with jazz harmonies, and syncopated rag rhythms reminiscent of Scott Joplin. Each poetic stanza is punctuated by the declaration, "*I'm a woman phenomenally, phenomenal woman, that's me.*"

The Lorelei

Ira Gershwin (1896-1983)
George Gershwin (1898-1937)

Back in the days of knights in armor
There once lived a lovely charmer;
Swimming in the Rhine,
Her figure was divine.
She had a yen for all the sailors,
Fishermen and gobs and whalers;
She had a most immoral eye
They called her Lorelei;
She created quite a stir
And I want to be like her.

I want to be like that gal on the river
Who sang her songs to the ships passing by;
She had the goods and how she could deliver
The Lorelei!

She used to love in a strange kind of fashion,
With lots of hey! Ho-de-ho! Hi-de-hi!
And I can guarantee I'm full of passion
Like the Lorelei!

I'm treacherous Ja! Ja!
Oh, I just can't keep myself in check.
I'm lecherous Ja! Ja!
I want to bite my initials in a sailor's neck!

Each affair has a kick and wallop,
For what they crave I can always supply
I want to be just like that other trollop
The Lorelei!

Amor

Arnold Weinstein (1927-2005)

It wasn't the policeman's fault
In all the traffic roar
Instead of shouting halt when he saw me
He shouted Amor.

Even the ice cream man
(free ice creams by the score)
Instead of shouting Butter Pecan
One look at me
He shouted Amor.

All over town it went that way
Everybody took off the day
Even philosophers understood
How good was the good
'Cuz I looked so good!

The poor stopped taking less
The rich stopped needing more.
Instead of shouting no and yes
Both looking at me shouted Amor!

My stay in town was cut short
I was dragged to court.
The judge said I disturbed the peace
And the jury gave him what for!

The judge raised his hand
And instead of Desist and Cease
Judgie came to the stand
Took my hand
And whispered Amor.

Night was turning into day
I walked alone away.
Never see that town again.
But as I passed the church house door
Instead of singing Amen
The choir was singing Amor.

Phenomenal Woman

Maya Angelou (1928-2014)

Pretty women wonder where my secret lies.
I'm not cure or built to suit a fashion model's size.
But when I start to tell them,
they think I'm telling lies.

I say,
It's in the reach of my arms,
The span of my hips,
The stride of my step,
The curl of my lips,
I'm a woman,
Phenomenally.
Phenomenal Woman,
That's me.

I walk into a room
Just as cool as your please
And to a man,
The fellows stand or
Fall down on their knees.
Then they swarm around
A hive of honey bees.

I say,
It's in the fire of my eyes,
And the flash of my teeth
The swing in my waist,
And the joy in my feet.
I'm a woman,
Phenomenally.
Phenomenal woman ,
That's me.

Men themselves have wondered
What they see in me
They try so much
But they can't touch
My inner mystery.
When I try to show them
They say they still can't see.

I say,
It's in the arch in my back,
The sun of my smile,
The ride of my breasts,
The grace of my style.
I'm a woman,
Phenomenally.
Phenomenal woman,
That's me.

Now you understand
Just why my head's not bowed.
I don't shout or jump about
Or have to talk real loud.
When you see me passing,
It ought to make you proud.

I say,
It's in the click of my heels,
The bend of my hair,
The palm of my hand,
The need for my care.
'Cause I'm a woman,
Phenomenally.
Phenomenal woman,
That's me.