



Texts & Translations

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Purcell Songs

If Music be the food of love

Sing on till I am fill'd with joy;
For then my list'ning soul you move
To pleasures that can never cloy.
Your eyes, your mien, your tongue declare
That you are music ev'rywhere.

Pleasures invade both eye and ear,
So fierce the transports are, they wound,
And all my senses feasted are,
Tho' yet the treat is only sound,
Sure I must perish by your charms,
Unless you save me in your arms.

What a sad fate is mine,

My love is my crime;
Or why should she be,
More easy and free
To all than to me?

But if by disdain
She can lessen my pain,
'Tis all I implore,
To make me love less,
Of herself to love more.

Sweeter than roses, or cool evening breeze
On a warm flowery shore, was the dear kiss,
First trembling made me freeze,

Then shot like fire all o'er.
What magic has victorious love!
For all I touch or see since that dear kiss,
I hourly prove, all is love to me.

She that would gain a faithful lover

Must at a distance keep the slave;
Not by a look her heart discover,
Men should but guess the thoughts we have.
Whilst they're in doubt their flame increases,
And all attendance they will pay;
When once confess'd their ardour ceases,
And vows like smoke soon fly away.

Then, fond Aurelia, cease complaining,
All thy reproaches useless prove;
Beauties may conquer whilst disdain,
But lose their value when they love.
So when a comet does appear,
Men do with trembling view the blaze;
The sun too common none does fear,
Nor on his beams with wonder gaze.

Fairest isle, all isles excelling,
Seat of pleasure and of love
Venus here will choose her dwelling,
And forsake her Cyprian grove.
Cupid from his fav'rite nation
Care and envy will remove;
Jealousy, that poisons passion,
And despair, that dies for love.

Gentle murmurs, sweet complaining,
Sighs that blow the fire of love
Soft repulses, kind disdain,
Shall be all the pains you prove.
Ev'ry swain shall pay his duty,
Grateful ev'ry nymph shall prove;
And as these excel in beauty,
Those shall be renown'd for love.

An evening hymn

Now, now that the sun hath veil'd his light
And bid the world goodnight;
To the soft bed my body I dispose,
But where shall my soul repose?
Dear, dear God, even in Thy arms,

And can there be any so sweet security!
Then to thy rest, O my soul!
And singing, praise the mercy
That prolongs thy days.
Hallelujah!

Bach Arias

Komm in mein Herzenshaus,
Herr Jesu, mein Verlangen!

Treib Welt und Satan aus
Und lass dein Bild in mir erneuert prangen!
Weg, schnöder Sündengraus!

Wer ein wahrer Christ will heißen,
Muss der Demut sich befleißigen;
Demut stammt aus Jesu Reich.

Hoffart ist dem Teufel gleich;
Gott pflegt alle die zu hassen,
So den Stolz nicht fahrenlassen.

Öffne dich, mein ganzes Herze,
Jesus kömmt und ziehet ein.

Bin ich gleich nur Staub und Erde,
Will er mich doch nicht verschmähn,
Seine Lust an mir zu sehn,
Daß ich seine Wohnung werde.
O wie selig werd ich sein!

Phoebus eilt mit schnellen Pferden
Durch die neugeborne Welt.

Ja, weil sie ihm wohlgefällt,
Will er selbst ein Buhler werden.

Come into my heart's house,
Lord Jesus, my desire!

Drive out the world and Satan
and let your image renewed within me shine in
splendour!
Away, loathsome horror of sin!

Whoever wants to be called a true Christian
Must be concerned with humility;
Humility comes from Jesus's kingdom.

Haughtiness is like the devil;
God is accustomed to hate all those
Who do not abandon arrogance.

Open, my whole heart
Jesus comes and enters within.

Though I am only like dust and earth,
he does not want to scorn me
but to see his pleasure in me
so that I become his dwelling.
Oh how blessed I shall be!

Phoebus hurries with swift horses
through the newborn world.

Yes, since this delights him so much,
he himself wants to become a lover.

Translations of Bach arias by Francis Browne, reprinted by permission of the translator and bach-cantatas.com

Handel Arias

Süße Stille,
sanfte Quelle,
ruhiger Gelassenheit!

Sweet silence,
gentle spring,
Quiet calm!

Selbst die Seele wird erfreut,
wenn ich mir nach dieser Zeit,
arbeitsamer Eitelkeit
jene Ruh vor Augen stelle,
die uns ewig ist bereit.

Ah, crudele!

E pur ten vai,
e mi lasci in preda al duolo,
e pur sai che sei tu solo
il diletto del mio cor.

Come, ingrato,
e come puoi involare a questo sen,
il seren de' lumi tuoi,
se per te son tutta ardor?

Intendimi, ben mio,

E pur ten vai,
Che tutto il mio desio
Sempre revolto a te;

Se parlo o taccio amore,
Parla per il mio core,
E scopre la mia fè.

Per te lasciai la luce,

ed or che mi conduce amor per rivederti,
tu vuoi partir da me.

Deh, ferma i passi incerti,
o pur se vuoi fuggir,
dimmi perché?

Quel fior che all'alba ride

Il sole poi l'uccide,
E tomba ha nella sera.

È un fior la vita, la vita ancora.

L'ocaso ha nell'aurora,
E perde in un sol dì la primavera.

Voglio darti a mille,

a mille dolci baci,
Cara Fille, perchè servan di catene
A restar sempre con me.

The soul will be pleased,
If I, after this time
of hard-working vanity
see, before my eyes, that rest
that is eternally ready for us.

Ah, cruel one!

And still you go,
and leave me prey to pain,
and yet you know that only you
are the delight of my heart.

How, ungrateful one,
and how can you take from this breast,
the light of your eyes,
If I am burning with passion for you?

Understand me, my beloved,

That all my desires
Always are directed to you;

Whether I speak or keep silent about my love,
My heart speaks for me,
And you will discover my faith.

For you I left the light,

and now that love drives me to see you again,
you want to leave me.

Ah, stop your uncertain steps,
or at least, if you want to leave,
tell me why?

That flower that laughs at dawn

Can be killed by the sun,
And is in the tomb by evening.

Life is a flower.

Within the dawn it has its sunset,
And in just one day it loses its spring.

I want to give you a thousand,
a thousand sweet kisses,
Dear Phyllis, so that they serve as chains
To make you stay with me forever.

E vuò farti a cento a cento
Tali vezzi in un momento,
Che soffir dovrai ben pene,
Se lontanne porti il piè.

Il suol che preme,
L'aura che spira
L'empio romano
S'apra, s'infetti.

Se il passo move,
Se il guardo gira,
Incontri larve,
Ruine aspetti.

Handel translations by Kathryn Mueller

And I want to give you hundreds upon hundreds
Of such caresses in one moment,
So that you will suffer greatly,
If your feet carry you far from me.

May the ground that he walks upon,
May the air that he breathes
-- the wicked Roman --
open up, become infected.

If he walks about,
If he turns his gaze,
May he be met with larvae,
May ruins await him.