

### **3. Im Treibhaus - In the Hothouse**

High-vaulted crowns of leaves,  
Canopies of emerald,  
You children of distant zones,  
Tell me, why do you lament?

Silently you bend your branches,  
Draw signs in the air,  
And the mute witness to your anguish -  
A sweet fragrance - rises.

In desirous longing, wide  
You open your arms,  
And embrace through insane predilection  
The desolate, empty, horrible void.

I know well, poor plants,  
A fate that we share,  
Though we bathe in light and radiance,  
Our homeland is not here!

And how gladly the sun departs  
From the empty gleam of the day,  
He veils himself, he who suffers truly,  
In the darkness of silence.

It becomes quiet, a whispered stirring  
Fills uneasily the dark room:  
Heavy drops I see hovering  
On the green edge of the leaves.

### **5. Träume - Dreams**

Tell me, what kind of wondrous dreams are embracing my senses,  
that have not, like sea-foam, vanished into desolate Nothingness?

Dreams, that with each passing hour, each passing day, bloom fairer,  
and with their heavenly tidings roam blissfully through my heart!

Dreams which, like holy rays of light sink into the soul,  
there to paint an eternal image: forgiving all, thinking of only One.

Dreams which, when the Spring sun kisses the blossoms from the snow,  
so that into unsuspected bliss they greet the new day,

so that they grow, so that they bloom, and dreaming, bestow their fragrance,  
these dreams gently glow and fade on your breast, and then sink into the grave.

### **4, Schmerzen - Anguish**

Sun, each evening you weep  
Your pretty eyes red,  
When, bathing in the mirror of the sea  
You are seized by early death.

Yet you rise in all your splendor,  
Glory of the gloomy world,  
Newly awakening in the morning  
Like a proud, victorious hero!

Ah, why should I then lament,  
Why, my heart, are you so heavy,  
If the sun itself must despair,  
If the sun must set?

And if Death gives rise only to Life,  
And pain gives way only to bliss,  
O how thankful I am, that  
Nature gives me such anguish!

**Amanda Atlas, Soprano    Tim Emerson, Piano**  
**Nut Point 30 April 2016**  
**Robert Schumann - Frauenliebe und Leben**

Schumann's *Frauenliebe und Leben* is a masterpiece of a song cycle, demonstrating Schumann's depth of skill in marrying his talent for piano composition to his talent for vocal composition. The piano accompaniment provides the emotional underpinning for each song, expressing joy, despair, hope, resolve just as much as the vocal line does.

**1. Seit ich ihn gesehen - Since I Saw Him**

Since I saw him  
I believe myself to be blind;  
Where I but cast my gaze  
I see him alone:  
As in waking dreams  
His image floats before me,  
dipped from deepest darkness,  
Brighter in ascent.

All else is dark and colourless  
Everywhere around me,  
For my sisters' games  
I no longer yearn.  
I would rather weep,  
Silently in my little chamber;  
Since I saw him,  
I believe myself to be blind.

**2. Er, der Herrlichste von Allen -  
He, the Most Glorious of All**

He, the most glorious of all,  
O how mild, so good!  
Lovely lips, clear eyes,  
Bright mind and steadfast courage.  
Just as yonder in the blue depths,  
Bright and glorious, that star,  
So is he in my heavens,  
Bright and glorious, lofty and distant.

Meander, meander your paths,  
Only to observe your gleam,  
Only to observe in meekness,  
Only to be blissful and sad!  
Hear not my silent prayer,  
To your happiness only consecrated,  
You may not know me, this lowly maid,  
You lofty star of glory!

Only the worthiest of all  
May make happy your choice,  
And I will bless that holy one,  
Many thousand times.  
I will rejoice then and weep,  
Blissful, blissful I will be there;  
Should my heart also break,

**5. Helft mir ihr Schwestern -**

**3. Ich kann's nicht fassen, nicht  
Glauben - I Can't Grasp it, Nor Believe it**

I can't grasp it, nor believe it,  
A dream has bewitched me,  
How should he, among all the others  
Lift up and make happy poor me?  
It seemed to me, as if he spoke:  
"I am yours eternally"  
It seemed - I dream on and on,  
It can never be so.  
O let me die in this dream,  
Cradled on his breast,  
Let the most blessed death drink me up  
In tears of unending bliss.

**4. Du Ring an meinem Finger -  
Your Ring on my Finger**

Your ring on my finger,  
My little golden ring,  
I press you piously upon my lips,  
Piously upon my heart.

I had dreamt it,  
The tranquil lovely dream of childhood,  
I found myself alone and lost  
In barren, unending space.

Your ring on my finger,  
You have taught me for the first time,  
You have opened my gaze into  
Life's endless, deep value.

I want to serve him, live for him,  
To him belong entirely,  
To give myself and find myself  
Transfigured in his radiance.

Your ring on my finger,  
My little golden ring,  
I press you piously upon my lips,  
Piously upon my heart.

**7. An meinem Herzen, an meinem Brust**

**5. Helft mir ihr Schwestern -  
Help me, sisters**

Help me, sisters,  
Friendly, adorn me,  
Serve me, today's fortunate one,  
Busily wind about my brow  
The adornment of blooming myrtle.

Otherwise, gratified, of joyful heart,  
I would have lain in the arms of the beloved,  
Ever he called out, yearning in his heart,  
Impatient for the present day.

Help me, sisters,  
Help me to banish  
a foolish anxiety,  
So that I with clear eyes receive him,  
Him, the source of joyfulness

.  
Do you, my beloved, appear to me,  
Do you give to me, Sun, your shine?  
Let me in devotion,  
Let me in meekness,  
Let me curtsy before my Lord.

Strew him, sisters,  
Strew him with flowers,  
Bring him budding roses,  
But you, sisters,  
I greet with melancholy,  
Joyfully departing from your midst.

**6. Süßer Freund, du blickest mich -  
Sweet Friend, you look at me...**

Sweet friend, you look at me in wonderment,  
You cannot grasp it, why I can weep;  
Let the moist pearls' unaccustomed adornment  
Tremble joyful-bright in my eyes.

How anxious my bosom, how rapturous!  
If I only knew with words how I should say it;  
Come and bury your visage here in my breast,  
I want to whisper in your ear all my happiness.

Do you know the tears that I can weep?  
Should you not see them, you beloved man?  
Stay by my heart, feel its beat,  
That I may, fast and faster, hold you.  
Here at my bed the cradle will have room,  
Where it silently conceals my lovely dream,  
Comes the morning where the dream awakes,  
And from there your image shall smile at me.

**7. An meinem Herzen, an meinem Brust  
At my Heart, at my Breast**

At my heart, at my breast,  
You my rapture, my happiness!  
The joy is the love, the love is the joy,  
I have said it, and won't take it back.

I've thought myself rapturous,  
But now I'm happy beyond that.  
Only she that suckles, only she that loves  
The child, to whom she gives nourishment;  
Only a mother knows alone  
What it is to love and be happy.

O how I pity then the man  
Who cannot feel a mother's joy!

You look at me and smile,  
You dear, dear angel, you!

**8. Nun hast du mir den ersten Schmerz  
getan- Now Have You Given Me Pain**

Now have you given me, for the first time, pain  
How it struck me.  
You sleep, you hard, merciless man,  
The Death-sleep.

The abandoned one stares straight ahead,  
the world is empty, empty.  
I have loved and lived, I am  
No longer living.

I withdraw silently into myself,  
The veil falls,  
There I have you and my lost happiness,  
You my world!

## Richard Wagner - Wesendonck Lieder

Richard Wagner wrote these five songs to poems written by Mathilde Wesendonck, the wife of one of Wagner's patrons. Wagner and his wife Minna were living on the Wesendonck estate, and it is widely rumoured that Richard and Mathilde had a passionate affair. Whether true or not, their relationship certainly contributed to the intensity in this cycle, and in Wagner's masterpiece on illicit love, *Tristan und Isolde*, which he composed while living on the estate.

The first of these songs, 'Der Engel', depicts angels descending to earth to gently ease the passage of each suffering mortal to the carefree existence of heaven. 'Stehe Still' depicts the frantic pace of life in the restless piano accompaniment and angular and anguished vocal line. Wagner specifically identified the third song, 'Im Treibhaus', as a musical study for the prelude to Act III of *Tristan*. Homesick flowers, although transplanted to a palatial hothouse setting, yearn for their homeland. The fourth, rather triumphant song, with strains of the Siegfried hero theme from the Ring Cycle, likens our experience to that of the sun - it must set every day but always rises in splendour - we too can overcome our pain and misery and be radiant with the expectation of better things to come. The final song in the set, 'Träume', another study for *Tristan*, examines the nature of dreams, and how they relate to us and our life cycles.. Dreams endow everything with an expectation of wondrous beauty, yet ultimately succumb to time and become dust.

### 1. Der Engel - The Angel

In childhood's early days,  
I often heard them speak of angels  
Who would exchange Heaven's sublime bliss  
For the Earth's sun

So that, when an anxious heart in dread  
Is full of longing, hidden from the world;  
So that, when it wishes silently to bleed  
And melt away in a trickle of tears;  
So that, when its prayer ardently  
Pleads only for release,  
Then the angel floats down  
And gently lifts it to Heaven.

Yes, an angel has come down to me,  
And on glittering wings  
It leads, far away from every pain,  
My soul now heavenward!

### 2. Stehe still! - Stay still!

Roaring and rushing wheel of time,  
You are the measurer of Eternity;  
Shining spheres in the wide universe,  
You who surround the world globe,  
Eternal creation, halt!  
Enough development, let me be!

Cease, generative powers,  
The primal thoughts which you are ever  
creating!  
Slow your breathing, still your urge  
Silently, only for a second long! Swelling pulses,  
fetter your beating,  
End, o eternal day of willing!  
That in blessed, sweet forgetfulness,  
I may measure all my bliss!

When one eye another drinks in bliss,  
And one soul into another sinks,  
One nature in another finds itself again,  
And when each hope's fulfillment is finished,  
When the lips are mute in astounded silence,  
And no wish more does the heart invent,  
Then man recognizes the sign of Eternity,  
And solves your riddle, holy Nature!