

Upcoming Events

UAM: Exhibition: <i>Selections from the Permanent Collection</i>	1/24 - 3/28	University Art Museum	10 AM - 6 PM
UAM: Exhibition: <i>Goya's War: Los Desastres de la Guerra</i>	1/24 - 3/28	University Art Museum	10 AM - 6 PM
Music: Virtuoso Series Concert: Faculty Barbara Thiem, Cello and Joel Bacon, Organ	1/26	Organ Recital Hall	7:30 PM
Music: Virtuoso Series Concert: Faculty Gary Moody, Oboe	2/3	Organ Recital Hall	7:30 PM
UAM: First Friday Extended Hours	2/6	University Art Museum	6 - 8 PM
Hatton: Exhibition: <i>Observations and Collections: National Juried Exhibition</i>	2/9 - 3/6	Clara Hatton Gallery, Visual Arts Building	10 AM - 4 PM
UAM: Exhibition: <i>Keeping Body and Soul Together - an installation by Larry Bob Phillips and David Leigh</i>	2/11 - 3/28	University Art Museum	10 AM - 6 PM
UAM: Visiting Artist Lecture and Opening Reception	2/11	University Art Museum	5 PM
Music: University Symphony Orchestra Concert: Hints of Spring	2/11	Griffin Concert Hall	7:30 PM
Dance: High School Visit Day	2/13	University Center for the Arts	9 AM - 4 PM
Theatre: High School Visit Day	2/13	University Center for the Arts	9 AM - 4 PM
Theatre: Freshman Showcase	2/13, 2/14, 2/15	Studio Theatre	7:30 PM
Music: Voice Area Recital	2/18	Organ Recital Hall	7:30 PM

event calendar • e-newsletter registration

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Meet Me at the UCA

Guest Artist Series Concert

Matthew Hoch, baritone
Ben Harris, piano

January 21, 2015
Organ Recital Hall
6:00 pm

Liederkreis, Op. 39 (1840)

- I. In der Fremde
- II. Intermezzo
- III. Waldesgespräch
- IV. Die Stille
- V. Mondnacht
- VI. Schöne Fremde
- VII. Auf einer Burg
- VIII. In der Fremde
- IX. Wehmut
- X. Zwielicht
- XI. Im Walde
- XII. Frühlingsnacht

Robert Schumann
(1810–1856)

~~ intermission ~~

Histoires naturelles (1906)

- I. Le paon
- II. Le grillon
- III. Le cygne
- IV. Le martin-pêcheur
- V. La pintade

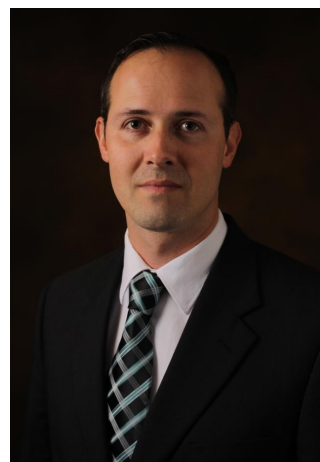
Maurice Ravel
(1875–1937)

Don Quichotte à Dulcinée (1933)

- I. Chanson Romanesque
- II. Chanson épique
- III. Chanson à boire

Performer Biographies

Matthew Hoch is Assistant Professor of Voice at Auburn University, where he teaches applied voice, diction, and opera workshop. Prior to this position, he spent six years as Assistant Professor of Voice at Shorter College, where he taught applied voice, vocal literature, and served as Coordinator of Vocal Studies. Dr. Hoch's students have gone on to successful careers in both classical and musical theatre genres and have won awards from the Metropolitan Opera National Council (MONC), NATS, MTNA, ACTF, and others. As a professional baritone, he has appeared as a soloist with the Oregon Bach Festival, Atlanta Baroque Orchestra, Trinity Church Boston, Santa Fe Desert Chorale, and with the Hartford, Nashua, and Rome Symphony Orchestras. Dr. Hoch's book, *A Dictionary for the Modern Singer*, was released by Rowman & Littlefield in April of 2014. Additional books under contact include *Welcome to Church Music & The Hymnal 1982* (Morehouse/Church Publishing, 2015) and *Oratorio: A Singer's Guide* (Rowman & Littlefield, 2016). His articles have appeared in the *Journal of Singing*, *Opera Journal* and the *Journal of the Association of Anglican Musicians*. Since 2008, he has served as Editor-in-Chief of *VOICEPrints: The Official Journal of NYSTA*. Additionally, Dr. Hoch has presented his research at conferences of the National Association of Teachers Singing (NATS), Voice Foundation (VF), National Opera Association (NOA), College Music Society (CMS), Hawaii International Conference on Arts and Humanities (HICAH), Acoustical Society of America (ASA), American Speech-Language-Hearing Association (ASHA), International Horn Symposium (IHS), Southeastern Theatre Conference (SETC), and the Eighth International Congress of Voice Teachers (ICVT8) in Brisbane, Queensland, Australia. He is a "double alumnus" of the NATS Intern Program, completing the program as an intern in 2006 and hosting the program at Shorter College in 2009. Dr. Hoch earned the BM (*summa cum laude*) from Ithaca College with a triple major in vocal performance, music education, and music theory; the MM from the Hartt School in vocal performance and music history; and the DMA from the New England Conservatory in vocal performance. He has pursued additional studies in voice science with Scott McCoy, Johann Sundberg, and Ingo Titze and is a three-level graduate of Somatic VoiceWork™ with Jeannette LoVetri. In addition to his academic life, Dr. Hoch serves as Choirmaster and Minister of Music at Holy Trinity Episcopal Church in Auburn, Alabama, where he lives with his wife, Theresa, and three children, Hannah, Sofie, and Zachary.



Ben Harris is Senior Lecturer in Vocal Music and Vocal Coach at Vanderbilt University's Blair School of Music. He received his MM degree in accompanying from Baylor University. He holds a BM degree in piano performance from Oklahoma Baptist University and an AA degree in piano/organ performance from Frank Phillips College. In 2002–2003, a Rotary Scholarship enabled him to study Lied accompaniment and German in Vienna, Austria. As opera coach/accompanist, Harris has assisted in the musical preparation of *Dialogues of the Carmelites* (Baylor University), *Madama Butterfly* and *Susannah* (Opera in the Ozarks), *Hansel and Gretel* (Western Illinois University and Shorter University), *Cendrillon*, *The Old Maid and the Thief*, *The Medium*, *The Merry Widow*, *La Divina*, *La canterina*, *The Ballad of Baby Doe*, *Die Zauberflöte*, *The Telephone*, and *La voix humaine* (Shorter University), *Later the Same Evening*, and *Three Decembers* (Vanderbilt University).

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TEXTS AND TRANSLATIONS

Liederkreis, Op. 39 (1840) [Eichendorff]

Robert Schumann
(1810–1856)

I. In der Fremde

Aus der Heimat hinter den Blitzen roth
da kommen die Wolken her,
aber Vater und Mutter sind lange todt,
es kennt mich dort keiner mehr.

Wie bald, ach wie bald kommt die stille Zeit,
da ruhe ich auch, da ruhe ich auch,
und über mir rauscht die schöne Waldeinsamkeit,
und Keiner kennt mich mehr hier.

II. Intermezzo

Dien Bildnis wunderselig
hab' ich im Herzensgrund,
das sieht so Frisch und fröhlich
mich an zu jeder Stund'.

Mein Herz still in sich singet
ein altes, schönes Lied,
das in die Luft sich schwinget
und zu dir eilig zieht.

III. Waldesgespräch

“Es ist schon spat, es ist schon kalt,
was reit'st du einsam durch den Wald?
Der Wald is lang, du bist allein,
du schöne Braut! ich führ dich heim!”—

“Gross ist der Männer Trug und List,
vor Schmerz mein Herz gebrochen ist,
wohl irrt das Waldhorn her und hin,
o flieh! du weisst nicht, wer ich bin.”—

“So reich geschmückt ist Ross und Weib,
so wunderschön der junge Leib;
jetzt kenn' ich dich, Gott steh' mir bei!
du bist die Hexe Lorelei.”

“Du kennst mich wohl von hohem Setien
shaut still mien Schloss tief in den Rhein.
Es ist schon spat, es ist schon kalt,
kommst nimmermehr aus diesem Wald!”

IV. Die Stille

Es weiss und räth es doch Keiner,
wie mir so wohl ist, so wohl!
Ach, wüsst es nur Einer, nur Einer,
kein Mensch es sonst wissen sollt!

So still ist's nicht draussen im Schnee,
so stumm und verschweigen
sind die Sterne nicht in der Höh',
als meine Gedanken sind,

Ich wüsch't, ich wär ein Vöglein
und zöge über das Meer,
wohl über das mehr und weiter,
bis dass ich im Himmel wär!

I. In a Foreign Land

From my homeland beyond the lightening red
the clouds come drifting in,
but father and mother are long since dead,
now no one remembers me there.

How soon, oh, how soon till that quiet time
when I too shall rest, and above me
will rustle the lovely, lonely wood,
and no one will remember me here.

II. Intermezzo

Your blissful image
I have deep in my heart,
gazing so joyously
at me always.

My heart sings silently
a beautiful song,
that soars to the sky
and hastens to you.

III. Wood dialogue

“It is late, it is cold
why ride you lonely through the wood?
The wood is long, you are alone,
lovely bride! I will lead you home!”—

“Great are men's deceit and guile,
sorrow has broken my heart;
the horn sounds here, sounds there,
oh flee! You know not who I am.”—

“So richly decked are steed and lady,
so young and fair of figure is she.
now—God preserve me—I know you!
You are the Sorceress Lorelei!”

“You know me indeed—from lofty rock
my castle gazes silent into the Rhine.
It is late, it is cold,
nevermore shall you leave this wood.”

IV. Silence

Not a soul know or guesses
how happy, happy I am!
Oh, if only one were to know it,
then no other should.

The snow outside's not so silent,
nor so mute and silent
the stars on high,
as are my thoughts.

Would I were a bird
and might fly over the sea,
over the sea and on,
until I were in heaven!

V. Mondnacht

Es war, als hätt' her Himmel
die Erde still geküsst,
dass sie im Blütenschimmer
von ihm nur träumen must.

Die Luft ging durch die Felder,
die Ähren wogten sacht,
es rauschten leis' die Wälder,
so sternklar war die Nacht.

Und meine Seele spannte
weit ihre Flügel aus,
flog durch die stillen Lande,
als flöge sie nach Haus.

VI. Schöne Fremde

Es rasuchen die Wipfel und schauern,
als machten zu dieser Stund'
um die halb versunkenen Mauern
die alten Götter die Rund'.

Hier hinter den Myrthenbäumen
in heimlich dämmernder Pracht,
was sprichst du wirr, wie in Träumen,
zu mir, phantische Nacht?

Es funkeln auf mich alle Sterne
mit glühendem Liebesblick,
es redet trunken die Ferne
wie von künftigen grossen Glück!

VII. Auf einer Burg

Eingeschlafen auf der Lauer
oben ist der alte Ritter;
drüben gehen Regenschauer,
und der Wald rauscht durch das Gitter.

Eingewachsen Bart und Harre,
und versteiner Brust und Krause,
sitzt er viele hundert Jahre
oben in der stillen Klause.

Draussen ist es still und friedlich,
alle sind ins Thal gezogen,
Waldesvögel einsam singen
in den leeren Fensterbogen.

Eine Hochzeit fährt da unten
auf dem Rhein in Sonnenscheine,
Musikanten spielen munter,
und die schöne Braut, die weinet.

VIII. In der Fremde

Ich hör' die Bächlein rauschen
Im Walde her und hin,
im Walde in dem Rauschen
ich weiss nicht, wo ich bin.

Die Nachtigallen schlagen
hier in der Einsamkeit,
als wollten sie was sagen
von der alten schönen Zeit.

V. Moonlit Night

It was as though the sky
has softly kissed the earth,
so that she, in a gleam of blossom,
had now to dream of him.

The breeze ran through the fields,
the ears of corn gently swayed,
the woods rustled faintly,
the night was so starry and clear.

And my soul spread
wide its wings,
flew over the silent land,
as if it were flying home.

VI. Beautiful Foreign Land

The tree-tops murmur and shiver,
as thought at this hour
the half-sunken walls
were paced by gods of old.

Here, beyond the myrtles,
in secretly darkening splendor,
what do you murmur, as in a dream,
to me, fantastic night?

The stars all sparkle upon me
with glowing and loving gaze,
rapturous the distance speaks
as of great happiness to come.

VII. In a Castle

Asleep at his lookout
up there is the old knight;
overhead go rain squalls,
through the gill roars the wood.

Beard and hair grown into one,
ruff and breast turned to stone,
for centuries he has sat
up there in his silent cell.

Outside is calm and quiet,
all have gone to the valley,
woodbirds sing, lonely,
in the empty window arches.

Below, a wedding passes
in the sunshine on the Rhine,
minstrels play merrily,
and the lovely bride—weeps.

VIII. In a Foreign Land

I hear brooklets
murmur through the wood.
Amidst wood and murmur
I know not where I am.

Nightingales sing
here in solitude,
as if wishing to tell
of fair days now past.

II. Chanson épique

Bon Saint Michel qui me donnez loisir
De voir ma Dame et de l'entendre,
Bon Saint Michel qui me daignez choisir
Pour lui complaire et la défendre,
Bon Saint Michel veuillez descendre
Avec Saint Georges sur l'autel
De la Madone au bleu mantel.

D'un rayon du ciel bénissez ma lame
Et son égale en pureté
Et son égale en piété
Comme en pudeur et chasteté: ma Dame.

(Ô grands Saint Georges et Saint Michel)
L'ange qui veille sur ma veille,
Ma douce Dame si pareille
À Vous, Madone au bleu mantel!
Amen.

III. Chanson à boire

Foin du bâtard, illustre Dame,
Qui pour me perdre à vos doux yeux
Dit que l'amour et le vin vieux
Mettent en deuil mon coeur, mon âme!

Ah! Je bois à la joie!
La joie est le seul but
Où je vais droit...
lorsque j'ai bu!

Foin du jaloux, brune maîtresse,
Qui géint, qui pleure et fait serment
D'être toujours ce pâle amant
Qui met de l'eau dans son ivresse!

Ah! Je bois à la joie!
La joie est le seul but
Où je vais droit...
lorsque j'ai bu!

II. Epic Song

Good Saint Michael who gives me liberty
to see my Lady and to hear her,
Good Saint Michael who deigns to elect me
to please her and defend her,
Good Saint Michael, I pray you descend
with Saint George upon the alter
of the Madonna of the blue mantle.

With a beam from heaven bless my sword
and its equal in purity
and its equal in piety
as in modesty and chastity: my Lady.

(O great Saint George and Saint Michael)
the angel who watches over my vigil,
my gentle Lady so much resembling
you, Madonna of the blue mantle!
Amen.

Drinking Song

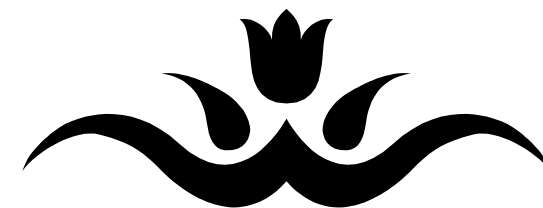
A fig for the bastard, illustrious Lady,
who to shame me in your sweet eyes,
says that love and old wine
will bring misery to my heart, my soul!

I drink to joy!
Joy is the one aim
to which I go straight...
when I am drunk!

A fig for the jealous fool, dark-haired mistress,
who whines, who weeps and vows
ever to be this pallid lover
who waters the wine of his intoxication!

I drink to joy!
Joy is the one aim
to which I go straight...
when I am drunk!

[Translation: Winifred Radford]



V. La pintade

C'est la bossue de ma cour.
Elle ne rêve que plaies à cause de sa bosse.
Les poules ne lui disent rien:
Brusquement, elle se précipite et les harcèle.
Puis elle baisse sa tête, penche le corps,
et, de toute la vitesse de ses pattes maigres,
elle court frapper, de son bec dur,
juste au centre de la roue d'une dinde.

Cette poseuse l'agaçait.
Ainsi, la tête bleuie, ses barbillons à vif,
cocardière, elle rage du matin au soir.
Elle se bat sans motif,
peut-être parce qu'elle s'imagine
toujours qu'on se moque de sa taille,
de son crâne chauve et de sa queue basse.
Et elle ne cesse de jeter un cri discordant
qui perce l'aire comme un pointe.
Parfois elle quitte la cour et disparaît.
Elle laisse aux volailles pacifiques
un moment de répit.
Mais elle revient plus turbulente et plus criarde.
Et, frénétique, elle se vautre par terre.
Qu'a-t'elle donc?
La sournoise fait une farce.
Elle est allée pondre son oeuf à la campagne.
Je peux le chercher si ça m'amuse.
Et elle se roule dans la poussière
comme une bossue.

Don Quichotte à Dulcinée (1933) [Morand]

I. Chanson romanesque

Si vous me disiez que la terre
À tant tourner vous offensa,
Je lui dépêcherais Pança:
Vous la verriez fixe et se taire.

Si vous me disiez que l'ennui
Vous vient du ciel trop fleuri d'astres,
Déchirant les divins cadastres,
Je faucherais d'un coup la nuit.

Si vous me disiez que l'espace
Ainsi vidé ne vous plaît point,
Chevalier dieu, la lance au poing,
J'étoilerais le vent qui passe.

Mais si vous disiez que mon sang
Est plus à moi qu'à vous, ma Dame,
Je blêmirais dessous le blame
Et je mourrais, vous bénissant.

Ô Dulcinée.

V. The Guinea-Fowl

She is the hunchback of my courtyard.
She thinks of nothing but fighting because of her hump.
The fowls say nothing to her:
suddenly she sets on them and harasses them.
Then she lowers her head, leans forward,
and with all the speed of her skinny feet,
she runs and smites with her hard beak.
the exact center of a turkey's tail.

This poseur provoked her.
Thus, with her head bluish, her wattles lively,
fiercely aggressive, she rages from morning to night.
She fights for no reason,
perhaps because she is always imagining
that they are laughing at her figure,
at her bald head, and her mean low tail.

And incessantly she utters her discordant cry
that pierces the air like a needle point.

At times she leaves the courtyard and disappears.
She gives the peace-loving fowls
a moment of respite.

But she returns more boisterous and more peevish.
And in a frenzy, she wallows in the earth.
Whatever is the matter with her?
The crafty creature has played a prank.
She went to lay her egg in the open country.
I may look for it if I like.
And she rolls in the dust
like a hunchback.

[Translation: Winifred Radford, modified Hoch]

Maurice Ravel (1875–1937)

I. Romanesque Song

Were you to tell me that the earth
offended you with so much turning,
speedily would I dispatch Panza:
you should see it motionless and silent.

Were you to tell me that you are weary
of the sky too much adorned with stars,
destroying the divine order,
with one blow I would sweep them from the night.

Were you to tell me that space
thus made empty does not please you,
god-like knight, lance in hand,
I would stud the passing wind with stars.

But were you to tell me that my blood
belongs more to myself than to you, my Lady,
I would pale beneath the reproach
and I would die, blessing you.

O Dulcinea.

Die Mondesschimmer fliegen,
als säh' ich unter mir
das Schloss im Thale liegen,
und ist doch so weit von hier!

Als müsste in dem Garten
voll Rosen weiss und roth,
meine Liebste auf mich warten,
und ist doch so lange todt.

IX. Wehmut

Ich kann wohl manchmal singen,
also och ich fröhlich sei,
doch Heimlich Thränen dringen,
da wird das Herz mir frei.

Es lassen Nachtigallen,
spielt draussen Frühlingsluft,
der Sehnsucht Lied erschallen
aus ihres Kerkers Gruft.

Da lauschen alle Herzen,
und Alles ist erfreut,
doch Keiner fühlt die Schmerzen,
im Lied das tiefe Leid.

X. Zweilicht

Dämm' rung will die Flügel spreiten,
schaurig rühren sich die Bäume,
Wolken zieh'n wie schwere Träume—
was will dieses Grau'n bedeuten?

Hast ein Reh du, lieb vor andern,
lass es nicht alleine grasen,
Jäger ziehn im Wald und blasen,
Stimmen him und wieder wandern.

Hast du einen Freund hienieden,
trau' ihm nicht zu dieser Stunde,
freundlich wohl mit Aug' und Munde,
sinnt er Krieg im tück'schen Frieden.

Was heut' gehet müde unter,
hebt sich morgen neugeboren.
Manches geht in Hact verloren
hüte dich, sei wach und munter.

XI. In Walde

Es zog eine Hochzeit in Berg entlang,
ich hörte die Vögel schlagen,
da blitzen viel Reiter das Waldhorn klang,
das war ein lustiges Jagen!

Und eh' ich's gedacht, war alles verhallt,
die Nacht dedecket die Runde,
nur von den Bergen noch rasuchet der Wald,
und mich schauert's im Herzensgrunde.

XII. Frühlingsnacht

Über'm Garten durch die Lüfte
hört ich Wandervögel zieh'n,
das bedeutet Frühlingsdüfte,
unten fängt's schon an zu blühn.

In the darling moonbeams
I need to see below me
in the valley the castle
which is so far from here!

It is as if in the garden
full of roses white and red,
my beloved were waiting
who is so long since dead.

IX. Sadness

Sometimes I can sing
as if I were glad,
yet secretly tears well
and free my heart.

Nightingales, when, outside,
spring breezes play, let
sound their song of longing
from their dungeon's depth.

At which all hearts hearken,
and everyone delights,
yet no one feel the pain,
the deep sorrow in the song.

X. Twilight

Dusk makes to spread its wings,
the trees stir awesomely,
clouds come like heavy dreams—
what means this dusk and dread?

If you have a fawn you favor,
let her not graze alone;
hunters range the forest, bugling,
voices flit here and there.

If on earth you have a friend,
do not trust him at this hour;
friendly both in look and speech,
in scheming peace he schemes for war.

What, today, goes weary down,
rises newly born on the morrow.
Much in the night goes astray—
be wary, watchful, wide-awake!

XI. In the Wood

Across the hill a wedding went,
I heard birds singing,
then—a flash of riders, a sounding horn,
a merry hunt!

And before I knew, all had died away,
night covers all around,
only from the hills—a forest murmur,
and deep in my heart—a shudder.

XII. Spring Night

Above the garden across the sky
I heard the birds of passage wing,
a sign that spring is in the air,
that blossom time is come.

Jauchzen möcht ich, möchte weinen,
ist mir’s doch, als könnt’s nicht sein!
Alte Wunder wieder scheinen
mit dem Mondesglanz herein.

Und der Mond, die Sterne sagen’s,
und im Traume rauscht’s der Hain,
und die Nachtigallen schlagen’s:
„Sie ist deine, sie ist dein!”

Histoires naturelles (1906) [Renard]

I. Le paon

Il va sûrement se marier aujourd'hui.
Ce devait être pour hier.
En habit de gala, il était prêt.
Il n'attendait que sa fiancée.
Elle n'est pas venue.
Elle ne peut tarder.
Glorieux, il se promène avec une
allure de prince indien
et porte sur lui les riches
présents d'usage.
L'amour avive l'éclat de ses couleurs
et son aigrette tremble
comme une lyre.

La fiancée n'arrive pas.
Il monte au haut du toit et regarde
du côté du soleil.
Il jette son cri diabolique: Léon! Léon!
C'est ainsi qu'il appelle sa fiancée.
Il ne voit rien venir et personne ne répond.
Les volailles habituées ne lèvent
même point la tête.
Elles sont lasses de l'admirer.
Il redescend dans la cour,
si sûr d'être beau
qu'il est incapable de rancune.
Son mariage sera pour demain.
Et, ne sachant que faire
du reste de la journée,
il se dirige vers le perron.
Il gravit les marches,
comme des marches de temple,
d'un pas officiel.
Il relève sa robe à queue toute
lourde des yeux
qui n'ont pu se détacher d'elle.
Il répète encore une fois la cérémonie.

II. Le grillon

C'est l'heure où, las d'errer, l'insecte
nègre revient de promenade
et répare avec soin le désordre de son domaine.
D'abord il ratisse ses étroites allées de sable.
Il fait du bran de scie qu'il écarte
au seuil de sa retraite.
Il lime la racine de cette grande herbe
propre à le harceler.

could shout for joy, could weep,
I feel it cannot be.
Old wonders reappear,
with the gleaming moon.

And the moon and stars say it,
and the wood, dreaming, murmurs it,
and the nightingales sing it:
“She is yours, she is yours!”

[Translation: Richard Stokes]

Maurice Ravel (1875–1937)

I. The Peacock

He will certainly be married today.
It should have been yesterday.
In his gala attire he was ready.
He was only waiting for his fiancée.
She has not come.
She cannot be long.
Magnificent, he walks with the
demeanor of an Indian prince
bearing about him the customary
rich gifts.

Love enhances the brilliance of his colours
and his crest trembles
like a lyre.

His fiancée does not come.
He mounts to the top of the roof
and looks toward the sun.

He utters his fiendish cry: Léon! Léon!
It is thus that he calls his fiancée.
He sees nothing coming and no one replies.
The fowls that are accustomed to him
never even raise their heads.

They are tired of admiring him.
He descends again to the courtyard,
so sure of his beauty
that he is incapable of resentment.
His marriage will take place tomorrow.
And not knowing what to do
for the rest of the day,
he turns toward the flight of steps.

He ascends as though they were
the steps of a temple
with an official tread.

He spreads open his tail, heavy with
all the eyes
that could not leave it.
Once more he repeats the ceremony.

II. The Cricket

This is the hour when, tired of wandering,
the black insect returns from his outing.
and carefully tidies the disorder of his home.
First he rakes his narrow sandy paths.
He makes some sawdust that he spreads
on the threshold of his retreat.
He files the root of this tall grass
likely to annoy him.

Il se repose.
Puis il remonte sa minuscule montre.
A-t-il fini? Est-elle cassée?
Il se repose encore un peu.
Il rentre chez lui et ferme sa porte.
Longtemps il tourne sa clé
dans la serrure délicate.
Et il écoute:
Point d'alarme dehors.
Mais il ne se trouve pas en sûreté.
Et comme par une chaînette
dont la poulie grince,
il descend jusqu'au fond de la terre.
On n'entend plus rien.
Dans la campagne muette,
es peupliers se dressent
comme des doigts en l'air
et désignent la lune.

III. Le cygne

Il glisse sur le bassin, comme un traîneau blanc,
de nuage en nuage.
Car il n'a faim que des nuages floconneux
qu'il voit naître, bouger,
et se perdre dans l'eau.
C'est l'un d'eux qu'il désire.
Il le vise du bec,
et il plonge tout à coup son col vêtu de neige.
Puis, tel un bras de femme sort
d'une manche, il retire.
Il n'a rien.
Il regarde: les nuages effarouchés ont disparu.
Il ne reste qu'un instant désabusé,
car les nuages tardent peu à revenir, et
là-bas, où meurent les ondulations de l'eau,
en voici un qui se reforme.

Doucement, sur son léger coussin de plumes,
le cygne rame et s'approche...
Il s'épuise à pêcher de vains reflets,
et peut-être qu'il mourra,
victime de cette illusion, avant d'attraper
Mais qu'est-ce que je dis?
Chaque fois qu'il plonge, il fouille du bec
la vase nourissante et ramène un ver.
Il engraisse comme une oie.
un seul morceau de nuage.
Mais qu'est-ce que je dis?
Chaque fois qu'il plonge, il fouille du bec
la vase nourissante et ramène un ver.
Il engraisse comme une oie.

IV. Le martin-pêcheur

Ça n'a pas mordu, ce soir,
mais je rapporte une rare émotion.
Comme je tenais ma perche de ligne tendue,
un martin-pêcheur est venu s'y poser.
Nous n'avons pas d'oiseau plus éclatant.
Il semblait une grosse fleur bleue
au bout d'une longue tige.
La perche pliait sous le poids.
Je ne respirais plus, tout fier d'être pris
pour un arbre par un martin-pêcheur.
Et je suis sûr qu'il ne s'est pas envolé de peur,
mais qu'il a cru qu'il ne faisait que passer
d'une branche à une autre.

He rests.
Then he rewinds his tiny watch.
Has he finished? Is it broken?
He rests again for a moment.
He goes inside and shuts the door.
For a long time he turns the key
in the delicate lock.
And he listens:
Not a sound outside.
But he does not feel safe.
And as though by a little chain
with a creaking pulley,
he lets himself down into the bowels of the earth.
Nothing more is to be heard.
In the silent countryside,
the poplars rise
like fingers in the air
pointing at the moon.

III. The Swan

He glides on the lake, like a white sleigh,
from one cloud to another.
For the only hunger he feels is for the fleecy clouds
that he sees appearing, moving,
and vanishing in the water.
It is one of these that he wants.
He takes aim with his beak,
and suddenly plunges his snowy neck into the water.
Then, like a woman’s arm emerging
from a sleeve, he draws it back.
He has caught nothing.
He looks: the startled clouds have disappeared.
He is disillusioned only for a moment,
for the clouds are not slow to return, and
yonder, where the undulations of the water are
dying away, there is one that is re-forming.
Softly, upon a light cushion of feathers,
the swan paddles and draws near.
He is exhausted by fishing for empty reflections
and perhaps he will die
a victim of this illusion, before catching
But what am I saying?
Each time he plunges in, he burrows his beak
in the nourishing mud and brings out a worm.
He is growing fat as a goose.
a single piece of cloud.

But what am I saying?
Each time he plunges in, he burrows his beak
in the nourishing mud and brings out a worm.
He is growing fat as a goose.

IV. The Kingfisher

Not a bite this evening,
but I had a thrilling experience.
As I was holding out my fishing rod,
a kingfisher came and perched on it.
We have no bird more brilliant.
He seemed like a big blue flower
on the end of a long stalk.
The rod bent under the weight.
I held my breath, quite proud to be taken
to be taken for a tree by a kingfisher.
And I am sure that he did not fly away out of fear,
but believed that he was only passing
from one branch to another.