



SAN FRANCISCO
PERFORMANCES

presents...

IAN BOSTRIDGE | Tenor
WENWEN DU | Piano

Saturday, October 21, 2023 | 7:30pm

Herbst Theatre

SCHUBERT

Winterreise, D.911

Gute Nacht
Die Wetterfahne
Gefrorne Tränen
Erstarrung
Der Lindenbaum
Wasserflut
Auf dem Flusse
Rückblick
Irrlicht
Rast
Frühlingstraum
Einsamkeit
Die Post
Der greise Kopf
Die Krähe
Letzte Hoffnung
Im Dorfe
Der stürmische Morgen
Täuschung
Der Wegweiser
Das Wirtshaus
Mut
Die Nebensonnen
Der Leiermann

Ian Bostridge is represented by Opus 3 Artists
WorkLife Office, Suite 313, 250 West 34th Street, New York, NY, 10119

opus3artists.com

Wenwen Du wendwendu.ca

Hamburg Steinway Model D, Pro Piano, San Francisco

For Tickets and More: sfperformances.org | 415.392.2545

ARTIST PROFILES

San Francisco Performances presents Ian Bostridge for the fourth time. He made his SF Performances debut in October 2005.

Wenwen Du appears for the second time. She made her SF Performances debut in May 2016.



Ian Bostridge's international recital career has taken him to the foremost concert halls of Europe, Southeast Asia, and North America as well as to the Salzburg, Edinburgh, Munich, Vienna, St. Petersburg, Aldeburgh and Schwarzenberg Schubertiade Festivals. He has held artistic residencies at the Vienna Konzerthaus and Schwarzenberg Schubertiade (2003–04), the Barbican, London (2008), the Luxembourg Philharmonie (2010–11), the Wigmore Hall (2011/12), and Hamburg Laeiszhalle (2012/13). Ian has also participated in a Carte-Blanche series with Thomas Quasthoff at the Amsterdam Concertgebouw (2004–05) and a Perspectives series at Carnegie Hall (2005–06). In the 2018–19 season Ian undertook an auspicious Artistic Residency with the Seoul Philharmonic Orchestra: the first of its kind for the ensemble.

He has worked with the Berliner Philharmoniker, Wiener Philharmoniker, Chicago, Boston, London and BBC Symphony orchestras, the London, New York, Los Angeles Philharmonic orchestras and the Rotterdams Philharmonisch Orkest and Royal Concertgebouw Orchestra, Amsterdam under Sir Simon Rattle, Sir Colin Davis, Sir Andrew Davis, Seiji Ozawa, Sir Antonio Pappano, Riccardo Muti, Mstislav Rostropovich, Daniel Barenboim, Daniel Harding, and Donald Runnicles.

His operatic appearances have included Aschenbach *Death in Venice* for the Deutsche Oper, Peter Quint *The Turn of the Screw* for the Teatro alla Scala, Handel's *Jeptha* for Opéra National de Paris, Nerone *L'Incoronazione di Poppea* and Tom Rakewell for the Bayerische Staatsoper, Renaud *Armide* for Opéra Comique, Don Ottavio *Don Giovanni* for the Wiener Staatsoper, Tamino *Die Zauberflöte* and Jupiter *Semele* for the English National Opera, and Caliban *The Tempest* for the Royal Opera House.

His many recordings have won all the major international record prizes and been nominated for 15 Grammys®. His recording for Pentatone of Schubert's *Winterreise* with Thomas Adès won the Vocal Recording of the Year 2020 in the International Classical Music Awards. Recent recordings for Pentatone include *Folly of Desire* with Brad Mehldau, *Schwanengesang* with Lars Vogt, and *Respighi Songs* and *Die schöne Mullerin* with Saskia Giorgini, while recent recordings for Warner Classics include *Tormento d'amore* with Capella Neapolitana, *Shakespeare Songs* (Grammy® Award, 2017) and *Requiem: The Pity of War* cond. Pappano.

His book *Schubert's Winter Journey: Anatomy of an Obsession* was published by Faber and Faber in the UK and Knopf in the USA in 2014, and his most recent book *Song and Self* was published in 2023. He was made a CBE in the 2004 New Year's Honours.



Wenwen Du is one of Canada's most accomplished young pianists. Born in China and trained by Dan Zhaoyi at the renowned Shenzhen Art School, Du was also mentored by the master pianist Lee Kum Sing at Vancouver Academy of Music.

Du has given piano recitals on three continents, Europe, North America, and Asia. In the summer of 2018, she recorded solo piano works of Schubert, Rachmaninov, and others, for CBC Radio.

Du has given recitals with tenor Ian Bostridge in cities including Daegu, Shanghai, New York City, Atlanta, and Vancouver. Their performances received critical acclaim. "Du and Bostridge are not just on the same page, they anticipate each other's every nuance in perfect synchronization." (*Vancouver Sun*) The duo was "superb [in their] devastating concert" of music of World War I. (*New York Times*)

Du has been mentored as a conductor by the Maestro Tang Muhai, himself a protegee of Herbert von Karajan. After she served as primary artistic coach for Tianjin Opera House's premiere of Tang Kang Nian's *Thunderstorm*, Maestro Tang invited her to be Primary Artist Coach for *Die Walküre* with the Tianjin Symphony Orchestra, and then Assistant Conductor for China National Opera House and Opera Australia's joint tour of *Madama Butterfly*, and primary artistic coach of Harbin Grand Theatre's *Tosca*.

In September 2020, Du gave a live-streamed solo recital for Müzewest which was the first performance of classical music in Vancouver since the beginning of quarantine, during which she premiered Jacquie Leggatt's *This Rabble World*, a reflection on a year of social and political upheaval.

In 2021, Du appeared in multiple performances in China, including a recital of *Dichterliebe* with tenor Mingus Zhang at the Beijing National Library Concert Hall. She was twice presented in recital by Dame Caroline Wilson, the British Ambassador to China.

Du maintains a private piano studio in Vancouver where she is also an adjunct professor at the University of British Columbia, working as a vocal coach for the Opera Programme and Summer Vocal Workshop and assisting conductors such as Norbert Baxa and Leslie Dala on operas including *Rusalka*, *The Merry Wives of Windsor*, and the annual *Bard on the Beach* performance.



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Program Notes, Texts, and Translations

Please hold your applause until the end of the program. Please turn pages quietly.

Winterreise, D. 911

FRANZ SCHUBERT

(1797–1828)

Schubert's *Winterreise* ("Winter Journey") was one of the first song cycles ever composed, and many feel that it is the finest. In early 1827 Schubert came upon 12 poems by the German romantic poet Wilhelm Müller (1794–1827) and very quickly set them for baritone and piano, believing that this was a complete work. But during that summer Schubert discovered 12 more Müller poems and wrote 12 more songs, slightly altering the poet's original order in the process. The bleakness of the subject and mood of these songs dismayed early listeners more accustomed to a sunnier side of Schubert, but *Winterreise* has become one of the most important—and beautiful and moving—creations of romantic music.

Winterreise has no plot, no development, no rising action, and no satisfying conclusion. The central figure has no name, and we know nothing about him except that he has been rejected in love and has now set out upon a solitary winter journey. As he makes his way along icy roads and over frozen streams, with snow crunching beneath his feet and winds blowing about his head, he reflects on his devastation. The wintry world around him mirrors his mental state: the frozen streams hide flowing water beneath their ice, just as his frozen exterior masks the pain he feels within. It is a lonely journey. The traveler encounters almost no other living creatures—only a solitary crow wheeling overhead, distant barking dogs in a village he passes, the hurdy-gurdy man in the last song—and gradually we realize that there can be no release for this traveler, even in death: he is doomed to continue his lonely, icy journey.

This is a grim subject, but Schubert's settings turn these dark meditations into something wonderful. Rejection in love—and the devastation that comes with it—is a universal experience, and Schubert was deeply affected by these poems. Now at age 30 and only a year from his own death Schubert brought his full resources as a creator of songs to these settings. Far from being bleak and unrelieved, the *Winterreise* songs create a varied world that ranges from innocence and gaiety to the darkest depression. And these songs are full of that astonishing fusion of psychological insight and musical invention that marks Schubert's greatest work: he puts us inside the soul of this wandering young man and then makes his world come alive in these 24 songs.

No discussion can fully lay out the wonders of this music, and in any case such discoveries should be left to listeners themselves. A few notes, however: throughout, listeners should pay careful attention to the piano, which not only paints scenes quickly and brilliantly (a weathervane banging in gusty winds, a crow wheeling darkly over snowy fields, wind howling through leaves), but more importantly can tell us things that even the singer does not know. The sudden changes of key, the quietly dissonant accompaniments, the dance rhythms that can seem so at odds with the texts—all these are a key to what is really taking place in these songs.

The opening “Gute Nacht” sets the mood instantly, and the singer’s first words tell the story in small: “A stranger I came, and a stranger I depart.” The steady tread of the piano echoes the sound of the young man’s footsteps through the snow, and the regular “walking” pulse of this duple meter will recur in many of the songs. “Der Lindenbaum” has become one of the most famous of the cycle: in German folklore the linden tree symbolizes home and happiness, but here that traditional meaning is undercut as the winds gradually rush through the branches of the tree upon which the singer had carved his love’s name. “Einsamkeit” (“Loneliness”) was to have been the original ending of *Winterreise* when Schubert had not yet discovered the remaining 12 poems. Again, the steady tread of slow footsteps furnishes the background as the singer sees blue skies overhead and wishes for a return of the storm, a better mirror of what is in his heart. In “Der Wegweiser”, a signpost points him toward civilization, but the singer knows that his own internal signpost drives him away from all community—the piano’s steady pulse lifts the song gently through some of Schubert’s most magical key shifts as the singer wavers between the two worlds before him. The final song, “Der Leiermann”, is overwhelming. At the very end, the singer finally confronts another human being, and it is this pathetic man, an outcast standing barefoot in the snow and playing his simple instrument with an empty plate before him. Schubert gives the hurdy-gurdy tune to the piano and has the singer contemplate this horrifying image of himself between these simple, lonely phrases. It is a shattering end to a journey that has gone nowhere.

While several of the songs from *Winterreise* have become famous on their own, they make much better sense as part of a larger whole: the 24 individual songs as a group create a complete—and overpowering—portrait, and individual songs lose a great deal when performed outside that context. Schubert himself knew how well he had written in this music, and Josef von Spaun recounts the composer’s presentation of *Winterreise* to his close friends: “Schubert had been moody and unwell for some time...One day he said, ‘Come along to Schober’s and I will sing over a ghastly bunch of songs to you. I shall be curious to hear what you think of them. They have taken more out of me than any other songs I have ever written.’ He then sang to us the whole *Winterreise* through, with much emotion in his voice. The gloom of the songs quite baffled us...All Schubert replied was, ‘I like them more than any of my other songs, and some day you will like them too.’” He was right.

—Program notes by Eric Bromberger

Gute Nacht

Fremd bin ich eingezogen,
Fremd zieh ich wieder aus.
Der Mai war mir gewogen
Mit manchem Blumenstrauß.
Das Mädchen sprach von Liebe,
Die Mutter gar von Eh—
Nun ist die Welt so trübe,
Der Weg gehüllt in Schnee.

Ich kann zu meiner Reisen
Nicht wählen mit der Zeit:
Muß selbst den Weg mir weisen
In dieser Dunkelheit.
Es zieht ein Mondenschatten
Als mein Gefährte mit,
Und auf den weißen Matten
Such ich des Wildes Tritt.

Was soll ich länger weilen,
Bis man mich trieb’ hinaus?
Laß irre Hunde heulen
Vor ihres Herren Haus!
Die Liebe liebt das Wandern,
Gott hat sie so gemacht—
Von einem zu dem andern—
Fein Liebchen, gute Nacht!

Good night

A stranger I came,
a stranger I depart.
The month of May blessed me
with many a bouquet of flowers.
The girl spoke of love,
her mother of marriage even—
and now the world is so bleak
the road concealed in snow.

I cannot choose the time
for my journey:
I must find my own way
in this darkness.
A shadow thrown by the moon
keeps me company
and on the white meadows
I watch for tracks of deer.

Why should I tarry longer
and wait to be driven out?
Let stray dogs howl
before their master’s house!
Love delights in wandering,
God has made it so—
wandering from one to another—
my sweetest love, good night!

Will dich im Traum nicht stören,
Wär schad um deine Ruh,
Sollst meinen Tritt nicht hören—
Sacht, sacht die Türe zu!
Schreib' im Vorübergehen
Ans Tor dir gute Nacht,
Damit du mögest sehen,
An dich hab ich gedacht.

Die Wetterfahne

Der Wind spielt mit der Wetterfahne
Auf meines schönen Liebchens Haus.
Da dacht ich schon in meinem Wahne,
Sie pfiß' den armen Flüchtling aus.

Er hätt es eh'r bemerken sollen,
Des Hauses aufgestecktes Schild,
So hätt er nimmer suchen wollen
Im Haus ein treues Frauenbild.

Der Wind spielt drinnen mit den Herzen
Wie auf dem Dach, nur nicht so laut.
Was fragen sie nach meinen Schmerzen?
Ihr Kind ist eine reiche Braut.

Gefrorne Tränen

Gefrorne Tropfen fallen
Von meinen Wangen ab:
Ob mir es denn entgangen,
Daß ich geweinet hab?

Ei Tränen, meine Tränen,
Und seid ihr gar so lau,
Daß ihr erstarrt zu Eise
Wie kühler Morgentau?

Und dringt doch aus der Quelle
Der Brust so glühend heiß,
Als wolltet ihr zerschmelzen
Des ganzen Winters Eis.

I'll not disturb your dreams,
a shame to spoil your rest!
You shall not hear my footsteps,
as I softly close the door!
I'll write 'Good night' on your gate,
as I pass by,
so that you may see
I have thought of you.

The weather-vane

The wind plays with the weather-vane
on my beloved's house.
In my folly I thought it mocked
the wretched fugitive.

He should have noticed it sooner,
this sign fixed on the house,
he'd never then have thought
to find a faithful woman there.

Inside, the wind is playing with hearts,
as on the roof, but not so loud.
What is my torment to them?
Their child is a rich bride.

Frozen tears

Frozen drops fall
from my cheeks:
did I, then, not notice
that I've been weeping?

O tears, my tears,
are you so tepid
that you turn to ice
like cool morning dew?

And yet you spring
from my heart as scaldingly,
as if you would melt
all the winter's ice.

program continues on next page →

Erstarrung

Ich such im Schnee vergebens
Nach ihrer Tritte Spur,
Wo sie an meinem Arme
Durchstrich die grüne Flur.

Ich will den Boden küssen,
Durchdringen Eis und Schnee
Mit meinen heißen Tränen,
Bis ich die Erde seh.

Wo find ich eine Blüte,
Wo find ich grünes Gras?
Die Blumen sind erstorben,
Der Rasen sieht so blaß.

Soll denn kein Angedenken
Ich nehmen mit von hier?
Wenn meine Schmerzen schweigen,
Wer sagt mir dann von ihr?

Mein Herz ist wie erstorben,
Kalt starrt ihr Bild darin:
Schmilzt je das Herz mir wieder,
Fließt auch ihr Bild dahin.

Der Lindenbaum

Am Brunnen vor dem Tore
Da steht ein Lindenbaum:
Ich träumt' in seinem Schatten
So manchen süßen Traum.

Ich schnitt in seine Rinde
So manches liebe Wort;
Es zog in Freud und Leide
Zu ihm mich immerfort.

Ich mußst' auch heute wandern
Vorbei in tiefer Nacht,
Da hab ich noch im Dunkel
Die Augen zugemacht.

Und seine Zweige rauschten,
Als riefen sie mir zu:
Komm her zu mir, Geselle,
Hier findest du deine Ruh!

Die kalten Winde bliesen
Mir grad ins Angesicht,
Der Hut flog mir vom Kopfe,
Ich wendete mich nicht.

Nun bin ich manche Stunde
Entfernt von jenem Ort,
Und immer hör ich's rauschen:
Du fändest Ruhe dort!

Numbness

In vain I seek
her steps in the snow,
here, where she walked on my arm
through the green field.

I shall kiss the ground,
pierce ice and snow
with my hot tears,
until I see the earth.

Where shall I find a flower,
where shall I find green grass?
The flowers have died,
the grass looks so pale.

Is there no keepsake, then,
for me to take from here?
Who, when my grief is silent,
will speak to me of her?

My heart seems dead,
her image numb within:
should my heart ever thaw,
even her image will flow away.

The linden-tree

By the well, before the gate,
there stands a linden-tree:
I used to dream in its shade
so many a sweet dream.

I carved in its bark
so many a word of love;
I felt ever drawn to it
in joy and in sorrow.

Today too I had to pass it
at the dead of night,
and though it was dark,
I closed my eyes.

And its branches rustled,
as though calling to me:
come to me, my friend,
here you shall find rest!

The cold winds blew
full into my face,
my hat flew from my head,
I did not turn back.

Now I have journeyed
many hours from that place,
yet still I hear the rustling:
there shall you find rest!

Wasserflut

Manche Trän' aus meinen Augen
Ist gefallen in den Schnee;
Seine kalten Flocken saugen
Durstig ein das heiße Weh.

Wenn die Gräser sprossen wollen,
Weht daher ein lauer Wind,
Und das Eis zerspringt in Schollen,
Und der weiche Schnee zerrinnt.

Schnee, du weißt von meinem Sehnen:
Sag mir, wohin geht dein Lauf?
Folge nach nur meinen Tränen,
Nimmt dich bald das Bächlein auf.

Wirst mit ihm die Stadt durchziehen,
Muntre Strassen ein und aus:
Fühlst du meine Tränen glühen,
Da ist meiner Liebsten Haus.

Auf dem Flusse

Der du so lustig rauschtest,
Du heller, wilder Fluß,
Wie still bist du geworden,
Gibst keinen Scheidegruß.

Mit harter, starrer Rinde
Hast du dich überdeckt,
Liegst kalt und unbeweglich
Im Sande ausgestreckt.

In deine Decke grab ich
Mit einem spitzen Stein
Den Namen meiner Liebsten
Und Stund und Tag hinein:

Den Tag des ersten Grußes,
Den Tag, an dem ich ging;
Um Nam' und Zahlen windet
Sich ein zerbrochener Ring.

Mein Herz, in diesem Bache
Erkennst du nun dein Bild?
Ob's unter seiner Rinde
Wohl auch so reißend schwillt?

Flood

Many a tear has fallen
from my eyes into the snow;
the cold flakes eagerly
suck in my burning grief.

When the grass is ready to shoot,
a warm wind blows,
and the ice breaks up,
and the soft snow melts.

Snow—you know of my longing:
tell me where your path leads?
You've only to follow my tears
for the brook to gather you in.

You'll flow with the brook
through the town's busy streets:
when you feel my tears burning,
that will be my love's house.

On the river

You who babbled so merrily,
you clear, raging stream,
how still you have become,
you bid me no farewell.

You have covered yourself
with a hard stiff crust,
you lie cold and motionless,
stretched out in the sand.

With a sharp stone
I carve on your surface
the name of my love,
the hour and the day:

The day we first met,
the day I went away;
a broken ring encircles
the date and the name.

My heart, do you now see
your image in this stream?
Is there such a raging torrent
beneath its surface too?

program continues on next page →

Rückblick

Es brennt mir unter beiden Sohlen,
Tret ich auch schon auf Eis und Schnee.
Ich möcht nicht wieder Atem holen,
Bis ich nicht mehr die Türme seh.

Hab mich an jedem Stein gestoßen
So eilt' ich zu der Stadt hinaus;
Die Krähen warfen Bäll' und Schloßen
Auf meinen Hut von jedem Haus.

Wie anders hast du mich empfangen,
Du Stadt der Unbeständigkeit!
An deinen blanken Fenstern sangen
Die Lerch' und Nachtigall im Streit.

Die runden Lindenbäume blühten,
Die klaren Rinnen rauschten hell,
Und ach, zwei Mädchenaugen glühten!—
Da war's geschehn um dich, Gesell!

Kommt mir der Tag in die Gedanken,
Möcht ich noch einmal rückwärts sehn,
Möcht ich zurücke wieder wanken,
Vor ihrem Hause stille stehn.

Irrlicht

In die tiefsten Felsengründe
Lockte mich ein Irrlicht hin:
Wie ich einen Ausgang finde,
Liegt nicht schwer mir in dem Sinn.

Bin gewohnt das Irregehen,
'S führt ja jeder Weg zum Ziel:
Unsre Freuden, unsre Leiden,
Alles eines Irrlichts Spiel!

Durch des Bergstroms trockne
Wind' ich ruhig mich hinab—
Jeder Strom wird's Meer gewinnen,
Jedes Leiden auch sein Grab.

Rast

Nun merk ich erst, wie müd ich bin,
Da ich zur Ruh mich lege;
Das Wandern hielt mich munter hin
Auf unwirtbarem Wege.

Die Füße frugen nicht nach Rast,
Es war zu kalt zum Stehen,
Der Rücken fühlte keine Last,
Der Sturm half fort mich wehen.

A backward glance

The ground blazes beneath my feet,
though I walk on ice and snow.
I shall not pause for breath,
till the towers are out of sight.

I've stumbled over every stone
in my haste to leave the town;
the crows shied snow and hail
at my hat from every roof.

How differently you received me,
city of inconstancy!
Lark and nightingale vied in song
at your gleaming windows.

Round linden trees were in blossom,
clear fountains babbled brightly,
and ah! when that girl's eyes glowed,
your fate, my friend, was sealed!

When that day comes to mind,
I should like to look back once more,
should like to stumble back again
to stand before her house.

Will-o'-the-wisp

A will-o'-the-wisp lured me
into the deepest chasm:
how I shall find a way out
does not greatly concern me.

I am used to straying,
every path leads to one goal:
our joys, our sorrows
are all a will-o'-the-wisp's game!

I calmly descend the dry gullies
of the mountain stream—
every river will reach the sea,
every sorrow reach its grave.

Rest

Only now as I lie down to rest,
do I notice how tired I am;
walking had kept me cheerful
on the desolate road.

My feet demanded no rest,
it was too cold for standing still,
my back felt no burden,
the storm helped to drive me on.

In eines Köhlers engem
Hab Obdach ich gefunden;
Doch meine Glieder ruhn nicht aus,
So brennen ihre Wunden.

Auch du, mein Herz, im Kampf und Sturm
So wild und so verwegen,
Fühlst in der Still erst deinen Wurm
Mit heißem Stich sich regen!

Frühlingstraum

Ich träumte von bunten Blumen,
So wie sie wohl blühen im Mai,
Ich träumte von grünen Wiesen,
Von lustigem Vogelgeschrei.

Und als die Hähne krächten,
Da ward mein Auge wach;
Da war es kalt und finster,
Es schrien die Raben vom Dach.

Doch an den Fensterscheiben
Wer malte die Blätter da?
Ihr lacht wohl über den Träumer,
Der Blumen im Winter sah?

Ich träumte von Lieb um Liebe,
Von einer schönen Maid,
Von Herzen und von Küssen
Von Wonne und Seligkeit.

Und als die Hähne krächten,
Da ward mein Herze wach;
Nun sitz ich hier alleine
Und denke dem Traume nach.

Die Augen schließ ich wieder
Noch schlägt das Herz so warm.
Wann grünt ihr Blätter am Fenster?
Wann halt ich mein Liebchen im Arm?

Einsamkeit

Wie eine trübe Wolke
Durch heitre Lüfte geht,
Wenn in der Tanne Wipfel
Ein mattes Lüftchen weht:

So zieh ich meine Straße
Dahin mit tragem Fuß,
Durch helles, frohes Leben,
Einsam und ohne Gruß.

Ach, daß die Luft so ruhig!
Ach, daß die Welt so licht!
Als noch die Stürme tobten,
War ich so elend nicht.

I have found shelter
in a charcoal-burner's cramped hut;
but my limbs cannot rest
with all their burning wounds.

And you too, my heart,
so wild and bold in storm and strife,
now feel in this lull
the fierce pangs of anguish stir!

Dream of spring

I dreamt of bright flowers,
just as they might bloom in May,
I dreamt of green meadows
and happy birdsong.

And when the cocks crowed,
my eyes awoke;
it was dark and cold,
the ravens cawed from the roof.

But who painted those leaves
on the window-panes?
Are you mocking the dreamer
who saw flowers in winter?

I dreamt of love requited,
dreamt of a beautiful girl ...
Of caressing and of kissing,
of rapture and of joy.

And when the cocks crowed,
my eyes awoke;
now I sit here alone,
and reflect upon my dream.

I close my eyes again,
my heart still beats so warm.
When will you leaves on my window turn green?
When shall I hold my love in my arms?

Loneliness

Like a dark cloud
drifting across clear skies,
when a faint breeze
blows through the fir-tops,

I go on my way
with weary steps,
through bright joyous life
alone and ignored.

Alas, the air is so calm!
Alas, the world is so bright!
While storms were still raging,
I was not so wretched.

Die Post

Von der Straße her ein Posthorn klingt.
Was hat es, daß es so hoch aufspringt,
Mein Herz?

Die Post bringt keinen Brief für dich:
Was drängst du denn so wunderbarlich,
Mein Herz?

Nun ja, die Post kommt aus der Stadt,
Wo ich ein liebes Liebchen hatt',
Mein Herz!

Willst wohl einmal hinübersehn
Und fragen, wie es dort mag gehn,
Mein Herz?

Der greise Kopf

Der Reif hat eine weißen Schein
Mir übers Haar gestreuet.
Da glaubt' ich schon ein Greis zu sein,
Und hab' mich sehr gefreuet.

Doch bald ist er hinweggetaut,
Hab wieder schwarze Haare,
Daß mir's vor meiner Jugend graut—
Wie weit noch bis zur Bahre!

Vom Abendrot zum Morgenlicht
Ward mancher Kopf zum Greise.
Wer glaubt's? Und meiner ward es nicht
Auf dieser ganzen Reise!

Die Krähe

Eine Krähe war mit mir
Aus der Stadt gezogen,
Ist bis heute für und für
Um mein Haupt geflogen.

Krähe, wunderliches Tier,
Willst mich nicht verlassen?
Meinst wohl bald als Beute hier
Meinen Leib zu fassen?

Nun, es wird nicht weit mehr gehn
An dem Wanderstabe.
Krähe, laß mich endlich sehn
Treue bis zum Grabe!

The post

A posthorn sounds from the road.
Why do you surge so violently,
my heart?

There will be no letter for you:
why do you throb so strangely,
my heart?

Because the post comes from the town,
where once I had a sweetheart,
my heart!

Do you want to look in there
and ask how things are,
my heart?

The hoary head

The frost has sprinkled a white sheen
on my head.
I believed I was an old man
and was overjoyed.

But soon it melted away,
my hair is black again,
so that I shudder at my youth—
how far still to the grave!

Between dusk and dawn,
many a head has turned grey.
Yet mine, would you believe it, has not,
throughout this whole journey!

The crow

One crow came with me
from the town,
and to this day
has circled my head.

O crow, strange creature,
do you not wish to leave me?
Do you intend soon
to seize my body as prey?

Well, I don't have much further
to walk with my staff.
O crow, let me at last see
faithfulness unto death!

Letzte Hoffnung

Hie und da ist an den Bäumen
Manches bunte Blatt zu sehn,
Und ich bleibe vor den Bäumen
Oftmals in Gedanken stehn.

Schaue nach dem einen Blatte,
Hänge meine Hoffnung dran;
Spielt der Wind mit meinem Blatte,
Zittr' ich, was ich zittern kann.

Ach, und fällt das Blatt zu Boden,
Fällt mit ihm die Hoffnung ab,
Fall ich selber mit zu Boden,
Wein' auf meiner Hoffnung Grab.

Im Dorfe

Es bellen die Hunde, es rasseln die Ketten,
Es schlafen die Menschen in ihren Betten,
Träumen sich manches, was sie nicht haben,
Tun sich im Guten und Argen erlaben:

Und morgen früh ist alles zerflossen
Je nun, sie haben ihr Teil genossen
Und hoffen, was sie noch übrig liessen,
Doch wieder zu finden auf ihren Kissen.

Bellt mich nur fort, ihr wachen Hunde,
Laßt mich nicht ruhn in der Schlummerstunde!
Ich bin zu Ende mit allen Träumen—
Was will ich unter den Schläfern säumen?

Der stürmische Morgen

Wie hat der Sturm zerrissen
Des Himmels graues Kleid!
Die Wolkenfetzen flattern
Umher in mattem Streit.

Und rote Feuerflammen
Ziehn zwischen ihnen hin.
Das nenn ich einen Morgen
So recht nach meinem Sinn!

Mein Herz sieht an dem Himmel
Gemalt sein eignes Bild—
Es ist nichts als der Winter,
Der Winter kalt und wild!

Last hope

Here and there on the trees
many coloured leaves can be seen,
and by those trees
I often stand lost in thought.

I look at the one remaining leaf,
and hang my hopes on it;
if the wind plays with my leaf,
I tremble in every limb.

Ah, and if the leaf falls to the ground,
my hope falls with it,
I too fall to the ground,
and weep on my hope's grave.

In the village

Dogs bark, chains rattle,
people are asleep in their beds,
dreaming of much they do not possess,
consoling themselves with the good and the bad:

And by morning all will have vanished.
Still—they have enjoyed their share
and hope to find in their dreams
what is still left to enjoy.

Bark me on my way, you watchful dogs,
allow me no rest in this hour of sleep!
I'm finished with all dreaming—
why should I linger among slumberers?

The stormy morning

How the storm has rent
the grey garment of the sky!
Ragged clouds fly about
in listless strife.

And red flames of fire
dart between them.
That's what I call a morning
after my own heart!

My heart sees its own likeness
painted on the sky—
it is nothing but winter,
cold and savage winter!

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Täuschung

Ein Licht tanzt freundlich vor mir her,
Ich folg ihm nach die Kreuz und Quer,
Ich folg ihm gern, und seh's ihm an
Daß es verlockt den Wandersmann.

Ach, wer wie ich so elend ist,
Gibt gern sich hin der bunten List,
Die hinter Eis und Nacht und Graus
Ihm weist ein helles, warmes Haus,
Und eine liebe Seele drin—
Nur Täuschung ist für mich Gewinn!

Der Wegweiser

Was vermeid ich denn die Wege,
Wo die andern Menschen gehn,
Suche mir versteckte Stege
Durch verschneite Felsenhöhn?

Habe ja doch nichts begangen,
Daß ich Menschen sollte scheun—
Welch ein törichtes Verlangen
Treibt mich in die Wüstenein?

Weiser stehen auf den Wegen,
Weisen auf die Städte zu,
Und ich wandre sonder Maßen,
Ohne Ruh, und suche Ruh.

Einen Weiser seh ich stehen
Unverrückt vor meinem Blick;
Eine Straße muß ich gehen,
Die noch keiner ging zurück.

Das Wirtshaus

Auf einen Totenacker
Hat mich mein Weg gebracht;
Allhier will ich einkehren,
Hab' ich bei mir gedacht.
Ihr grünen Totenkränze
Könnt wohl die Zeichen sein,
Die müde Wand'rer laden
Ins kühle Wirtshaus ein.

Sind denn in diesem Hause
Die Kammern all besetzt?
Bin matt zum Niedersinken,
Bin tödlich schwer verletzt.

O unbarmherzige Schenke,
Doch weisest du mich ab?
Nun weiter denn, nur weiter,
Mein treuer Wanderstab!

Delusion

A friendly light dances before me,
I follow it this way and that,
I follow it gladly, and see
that it lures the wanderer from his path.

Ah, any man as wretched as I
gladly yields to such garish guile,
that shows him, beyond ice and night and terror
a bright warm house,
and a dear one within—
delusion is all I profit from!

The signpost

Why do I avoid the roads
that other wanderers tread,
seek out hidden paths
through rocky snow-bound heights?

I have, after all, done no wrong,
so why should I shun mankind?
What foolish yearning
drives me into the wilderness?

Signposts stand along the way,
pointing towards the towns,
and I wander on and on
restlessly in search of rest.

One signpost I see standing,
firmly before my eyes;
one road I must travel
from which no one has ever returned.

The inn

My journey has brought me
to a graveyard.
Here, I thought, is where
I shall rest for the night.

You green funeral wreaths
must be the inn-signs
that invite weary travelers
into the coolness within.

Are all the rooms
in this house, then, taken?
I am faint with weariness,
wounded unto death.

O pitiless inn,
will you yet turn me away?
On, then, ever onwards,
my trusty staff!

Mut

Fliegt der Schnee mir ins Gesicht,
Schüttl' ich ihn herunter.
Wenn mein Herz im Busen spricht,
Sing ich hell und munter.

Höre nicht, was es mir sagt,
Habe keine Ohren;
Fühle nicht, was es mir klagt,
Klagen ist für Toren.

Lustig in die Welt hinein
Gegen Wind und Wetter!
Will kein Gott auf Erden sein,
Sind wir selber Götter.

Die Nebensonnen

Drei Sonnen sah ich am Himmel stehn,
Hab lang und fest sie angesehen,
Und sie auch standen da so stier,
Als wollten sie nicht weg von mir.

Ach, meine Sonnen seid ihr nicht!
Schaut andren doch ins Angesicht!
Ja, neulich hatt' ich auch wohl drei:
Nun sind hinab die besten zwei.

Ging nur die dritt erst hinterdrein!
Im Dunkeln wird mir wohler sein.

Courage

If snow drives into my face,
I shake it off,
if my heart speaks in my breast,
I sing loudly and cheerfully.

I do not hear what it tells me,
I have no ears;
I do not feel what it laments,
lamenting is for fools.

Cheerfully out into the world
against the wind and weather!
If there's no god on earth,
then we ourselves are gods!

Phantom suns

I saw three suns in the sky,
I stared at them long and hard,
and they too stood there so fixedly,
as though loath to leave me.

Alas, you are not my suns!
You gaze into other faces!
Lately, yes, I did have three,
but the best two now are down.

If only the third would follow,
I should fare better in the dark.

program continues on next page →

Der Leiermann

Drüben hinterm Dorfe
Steht ein Leiermann,
Und mit starren Fingern
Dreht er, was er kann.

Barfuß auf dem Eise
Wankt er hin und her,
Und sein kleiner Teller
Bleibt ihm immer leer.

Keiner mag ihn hören,
Keiner sieht ihn an,
Und die Hunde knurren
Um den alten Mann.

Und er läßt es gehen,
Alles, wie es will,
Dreht, und seine Leier
Steht ihm nimmer still.

Wunderlicher Alter,
Soll ich mit dir gehn?
Willst zu meinen Liedern
Deine Leier drehn?

—*Texts by Wilhelm Müller*

The organ-grinder

There, beyond the village,
an organ-grinder stands,
and with numb fingers
he plays as best he can.

Barefoot on the ice
he staggers to and fro,
his little plate
stays forever empty.

No one cares to listen,
no one looks at him,
and the dogs snarl
around the old man.

And he lets it happen,
happen as it will,
and he turns the handle,
his hurdy-gurdy's never still.

Strange old man!
Shall I go with you?
Will you grind your music
to the songs I sing?

—*Translation of Winterreise by Richard Stokes © 2003*