

Träumend spielt er auf der Glatze
Mit groteskem Riesenbogen.

Dreaming he plays on the baldspot
With a grotesque giant bow.

20. Heimfahrt

Der Mondstrahl ist das Ruder,
Seerose dient als Boot;
Drauf fährt Pierrot gen Süden
Mit gutem Reisewind.

Der Strom summt tiefe Skalen
Und wiegt den leichten Kahn.
Der Mondstrahl ist das Ruder,
Seerose dient als Boot.

Nach Bergamo, zur Heimat,
Kehrt nun Pierrot zurück;
Schwach dämmert schon im Osten
Der grüne Horizont.
- Der Mondstrahl ist das Ruder.

20. Journey Home

The moonbeam is the rudder,
The water lily serves as boat:
So Pierrot sails toward the south
With a fair wind for his passage.

The stream hums deep scales
And rocks the light dory.
The moonbeam is the rudder,
A water lily serves as boat.

To Bergamo, his homeland,
Pierrot now returns;
Weak gleams in the east
The green horizon
-The moonbeam is the rudder.

21. O alter Duft

O alter Duft aus Märchenzeit,
Berauschest wieder meine Sinne;
Ein närrisch Heer von Schelmerein
Durchschwirrt die leichte Luft.

Ein glückhaft Wünschen macht mich froh
Nach Freuden, die ich lang verachtet:
O alter Duft aus Märchenzeit,
Berauschest wieder mich!

All meinen Unmut gab ich preis;
Aus meinem sonnumrahmten Fenster
Beschau ich frei die liebe Welt
Und träum hinaus in selge Weiten . . .
O alter Duft - aus Märchenzeit!

21. O old Perfume

O old perfume from fabled times,
Ravish again my senses!
A crazy swarm of vagaries
Buzzes through the easy air.

A happy impulse brings me to
Those joys I've long looked down on:
O old perfume from fabled times
Ravish me again

All my ill humor I let slide,
Out my sun-framed window
I see the clear and lovely world
And dream beyond for blissful stretches . . .
O old perfume--from fabled times!

THE PIERROT PROJECT



Saturday, April 21st, 2012
7:00 pm
CPMC Black Box Theatre

Program

Poems of sheer nothingness (2012)

II. Una chansoneta fera

Alice Teyssier, soprano

Star and Moon, Cloud and You (2012) Yeung-ping Chen

Jessica Aszodi, soprano

JPOPERA, MEGAMIX (2012)

Andrew Allen

Bonnie Lander, soprano

Light from Outside (2012)

Paul Hembree

Tiffany DuMouchelle, soprano

pause

Pierrot Lunaire (1912)

Arnold Schoenberg

Project Ensemble

Rachel Beetz, flute

Samuel Ekkehardt Dunscombe, clarinet

Travis Maril, violin/viola

Jennifer Bewerse, cello

Stephen Lewis, piano

Jonathan Hepfer, conductor

Susan Narucki and Philippe Manoury, Project Directors

Sitzt die Duenna murmelnd,
Im roten Röckchen da.

Sie wartet in der Laube,
Sie liebt Pierrot mit Schmerzen,
Stricknadeln, blank und blinkend,
In ihrem grauen Haar.

Da plötzlich - horch! - ein Wispern!
Ein Windhauch kichert leise:
Der Mond, der böse Spötter,
Äfft nach mit seinen Strahlen -
Stricknadeln, blink und blank.

18. Der Mondfleck

Einen weißen Fleck des hellen Mondes
Auf dem Rücken seines schwarzen Rockes,
So spaziert Pierrot im lauen Abend,
Aufzusuchen Glück und Abenteuer.

Plötzlich stört ihn was an seinem Anzug,
Er beschaut sich rings und findet richtig -
Einen weißen Fleck des hellen Mondes
Auf dem Rücken seines schwarzen Rockes.

Warte! denkt er: das ist so ein Gipsleck!
Wischt und wischt, doch - bringt ihm nicht
herunter!
Und so geht er, giftgeschwollen, weiter,
Reibt und reibt bis an den frühen Morgen -
Einen weißen Fleck des hellen Mondes.

19. Serenade

Mit groteskem Riesenbogen
Kratzt Pierrot auf seiner Bratsche,
Wie der Storch auf einem Beine,
Knipst er trüb ein Pizzicato.

Plötzlich naht Cassander - wütend
Ob des nächtgen Virtuosen -
Mit groteskem Riesenbogen
Kratzt Pierrot auf seiner Bratsche.

Von sich wirft er jetzt die Bratsche:
Mit der delikaten Linken
Faßt den Kahlkopf er am Kragen -

The duenna sits muttering
There in a small red dress.

She's waits in the arbor;
She loves Pierrot painfully,
Knitting needles, bright and gleaming
In her gray hair.

The suddenly--hark!--a whisper!
A wind breath giggles softly:
The moon, that nasty mocker
Apes her with his rays--
Knitting needles, bright and gleaming.

18. The Moonspot

One white spot from the bright moon
On the back of his black coat,
So Pierrot walks in mild evening
Searching for luck and adventure.

Instantly he's troubled by something on his su
He looks himself over and finds sure enough-
One white spot from the bright moon
On the back of his black coat.

Wait! he thinks: that's a spot of plaster!
Wipes and wipes, but-can't get it out!

So on he goes, swollen with fury, farther,
Rubs and rubs until early morning--
One white spot from the bright moon.

19. Serenade

With a grotesque giant bow
Pierrot scrapes on his viola.
Like the stork on one leg,
He dully plucks a pizzicato.

Suddenly Cassander comes-frenzied
By the nocturne virtuoso--
With a grotesque giant bow
Pierrot saws on his viola.

Fast he throws down the viola,
With his delicate left hand
He grasps the bald head by the collar--

Fern, verweht der Lärm des Pöbels.
Langsam sinkt die Sonne nieder,
Eine rote Königskrone. -
Heilige Kreuze sind die Verse!

15. Heimweh

Lieblich klagend - ein krystallnes Seufzen
Aus Italiens alter Pantomime,
Klingts herüber: wie Pierrot so holzern,
So modern sentimental geworden

Und es tönt durch seines Herzens Wüste,
Tönt gedämpft durch alle Sinne wieder,
Lieblich klagend - ein krystallnes Seufzen
Aus Italiens alter Pantomime.

Da vergißt Pierrot die Trauermienen!
Durch den bleichen Feuerschein des
Mondes,
Durch des Lichtmeers Fluten - schweift die
Sehnsucht
Kühn hinauf, empor zum Heimathimmel
Lieblich klagend - ein krystallnes Seufzen!

16. Gemeinheit!

In den blanken Kopf Cassanders,
Dessen Schrein die Luft durchzeteret,
Bohrt Pierrot mit Heuchermienen,
Zärtlich - einen Schädelbohrer!

Darauf stopft er mit dem Daumen
Seinen echten türkischen Taback
In den blanken Kopf Cassanders,
Dessen Schrein die Luft durchzeteret!

Dann dreht er ein Rohr von Weichsel
Hinten in die glatte Glatze
Und behäbig schmaucht und pafft er
Seinen echten türkischen Taback
Aus dem blanken Kopf Cassanders!

17. Parodie

Stricknadeln, blank und blinkend,
In ihrem grauen Haar,

Far the scattered noise of rabble.
Slowly the sun sinks below,
A red king's crown.--
Holy crosses are the verses!

15. Homesickness

Sweetly plaintive--acystal sighing
From an old Italian pantomime,
Tinkles over: how Pierrot's become so
Wooden, so modern sentimental.

And it chimes through his heart's desert,
Chimes subdued through his senses again,
Sweetly plaintive--acystal sighing
From an old Italian pantomime.

So Pierrot forgets the dream faces!
By the moon's faint firelight,

By the light sea's flood--longing strays

Brave upwards, up to the home sky
Sweetly plaintive--a crystal sighing.

16. Mean Trick!

In Cassander's polished skull
While his cries shriek through the air
Pierrot, the hypocrite, bores
Tenderly,--with a trepan!

Then he tamps down with his thumbs
His genuine Turkish tobacco
In Cassander's polished skull
While his cries shriek through the air!

Then he twists a perfumed cherry pipestem
Into the glossy baldspot
And comfortably smokes and puffs on
His genuine Turkish tobacco
In Cassander's polished skull.

17. Parody

Knitting needles, bright and gleaming
In her gray hair,

About the music...

Poems of sheer nothingness

Aaron Helgeson

II. Una chansoneta fera

Note:

Poems of sheer nothingness is a collection of songs that set texts from early French troubadour poetry. Presented here as fragments in their native language of Occitan, the texts were originally employed as introductions to the love songs they accompanied. These preambles (themselves sung, though little notated evidence survives) serve as an explanation of the troubadour's intentions, or of singing and songwriting in general. About these brief treatises, the composer writes:

"If music could speak to words, what would it say? When language encounters other sounds, what secrets do they keep from each other? Indeed, how can they respond at all when one seems concrete and the other abstract? When one seems so close to meaning as to be indistinguishable, and the other seems so far from it that it constantly threatens to disappear into the fog of ineffability? Over such a great distance, what kind of poetry would music write to the words it sets? Would it ask forgiveness? As a preliminary repentance? An apology for singing? Perhaps. For we who make song must remember that we sing to the ears of others. That the price of being listened to is being heard. That we must be careful when we whisper nothings, for they are not always so sweet as we'd wish them to be."

-Aaron Helgeson

Text:

Una chansoneta fera voluntiers,

Laner'a dir

Don tem que m'er a murir,
E far l'ai tal que sen sela.

Ben la poira leu entendre

Si tot s'es en aital rima;

Li mot seran descubert
Alques de razon deviza.

- Raimbaut d'Orange

I would willingly make up a little
song,

Simple to say,
But of it I fear that I'll die;
So I'll make it such that it conceals
its sense.

She indeed will be able to
understand it easily,
Even though it's on this kind of
rhyme;

The things I say will be revealed
Somewhat incoherently.

- translation by Alan R. Press

Stars and Moon. Cloud and You

Yeung-ping Chen

Note:

I selected two poems, *The Origin Of Moon And Stars* 《星月的來由》 and *Near And Far* 《遠和近》, which are about the moon, star, night and distance, for composing a short piece that responds to Schoenberg's composition, *Pierrot Lunaire*. Both of them are written by the Chinese poet Gu Cheng 顧成 (1956-1993). The texts from the two poems are fragmented and intertwined together. This juxtaposition of the text enhances the illusion of distances between sonic and linguistic perceptions.

Although the logic of text is distorted, the music itself reconstructs the original flow and contextual meanings of these two poems. It also expresses the poet's unbearable solitude, panic and desire about obtaining the eternity of love.

-Yeun-ping Chen

Text:

The Origin Of Moon And Stars (1968)

Tree branches wished to tear the heavens asunder
but only poked some tiny holes.

Through them shone a light beyond their sky
which men named "moon and stars".

Near And Far (1980)

You are watching
-me
-a cloud

gazing at me
you are far away,

watching at cloud
I feel you near.

(Translated by Gordon T. Osing and De-An Wu Swihart)

gazing at me
you are far away,

watching at cloud
I feel you near.

gazing at me
you are far away,

watching at cloud
I feel you near.

gazing at me
you are far away,

watching at cloud
I feel you near.

gazing at me
you are far away,

watching at cloud
I feel you near.

12. Galgenlied

Die dürre Dirne
Mit langem Halse
Wird seine letzte
Geliebte sein.

In seinem Hirne
Steckt wie ein Nagel
Die dürre Dirne
Mit langem Halse.

Schlank wie die Pinie,
Am Hals ein Zöpfchen -
Wollüstig wird sie
Den Schelmen umhalsen,
Die dürre Dirne!

13. Enthaauptung

Der Mond, ein blankes Türkenschwert
Auf einem schwarzen Seidenkissen,
Gespenstisch groß - dräut er hinab
Durch schmerzendunkle Nacht.

Pierrot irrt ohne Rast umher
Und starrt empor in Todesängsten
Zum Mond, dem blanken Türkenschwert
Auf einem schwarzen Seidenkissen.

Es schlöttern unter ihm die Knie,
Ohnmächtig bricht er jäh zusammen.
Er wähnt: es sause strafend schon
Auf seinen Sünderhals hernieder
Der Mond, das blanke Türkenschwert.

14. Die Kreuze

Heilige Kreuze sind die Verse,
Dran die Dichter stumm verbluten,
Blindgeschlagen von der Geier
Flatterndem Gespensterschwarze!

In den Leibern schwelgten Schwerter,
Prunkend in des Blutes Scharlach!
Heilige Kreuze sind die Verse,
Dran die Dichter stumm verbluten.

Tot das Haupt - erstarrt die Locken -

12. Gallows Song

The withered whore
With stringy neck
Will be his last
Beloved.

In his brains
Stuck like a nail
The withered whore
With stringy neck.

Slim, like the stonpine
On her neck a small tuft--
Lustfully will she
Circle the rogue's neck,
The withered whore!

13. Beheading

The moon, a shining scimitar
On a black silk cushion,
Ghastly huge--it slices down
Through the pained dark night.

Pierrot stumbles about the rest
And stares up in the fear of death
At the moon, a shining scimitar
On a black silk cushion.

His knees chatter under him,
Swooning he headlong collapses.
He fancies: he hears whizzing punitive down
On his sinner's neck slicing
The moon, the shining scimitar.

14. The Crosses

Holy crosses are the verses
That the poet mutely bleeds for,
Stricken blind by the vulture
Flapping swarm of ghosts.

Swords gorged upon corpses,
On parade in blood scarlet!
Holy crosses are the verses
That the poet mutely bleeds for.

Dead the head-stiff the ringlets--

Pierrot! Mein Lachen
Hab ich verlernt!

O gieb mir wieder,
Roßarzt der Seele,
Schneemann der Lyrik,
Durchlaucht vom Monde,
Pierrot - mein Lachen!

10. Raub

Rote, fürstliche Rubine,
Blutige Tropfen alten Ruhmes,
Schlummern in den Totenschreinen,
Drunten in den Grabgewölben.

Nachts, mit seinen Zechkumpanen,
Steigt Pierrot hinab - zu rauben
Rote, fürstliche Rubine,
Blutige Tropfen alten Ruhmes.

Doch da - strauben sich die Haare,
Bleiche Furcht bannt sie am Platze:
Durch die Finsternis - wie Augen! -
Stieren aus den Totenschreinen
Rote, fürstliche Rubine.

Pierrot! My laughter
I've unlearned!

O give me again,
Horse-doctor of the soul,
Snowman of Lyric,
Highness of the moon,
Pierrot--my laughter!

10. Theft

Red, princely rubies,
Bloody drops of old fame,
Sleep in the deads' caskets,
Below in the grave vaults.

Nights, with his cronies,
Pierrot descends--to rob
Red, princely rubies,
Bloody drops of old fame.

But there--their hair on end,
Pale fear charms them to the spot:
Through the gloom--like eyes--
Stare from the deads' caskets
Red, princely rubies.

11. Rote Messe

Zu grausem Abendmahle,
Beim Blendeglanz des Goldes,
Beim Flackerschein der Kerzen,
Naht dem Altar - Pierrot!

Die Hand, die gottgeweihte,
Zerreißt die Priesterkleider
Zu grausem Abendmahle,
Beim Blendeglanz des Goldes

Mit segnender Geberde
Zeigt er den bangen Seelen
Die triefend rote Hostie:
Sein Herz - in blutigen Fingern -
Zu grausem Abendmahle!

11. Red Mass

For a terrible Last Supper,
By the murk gleam of gold,
By flickering candlelight
Near the altar--Pierrot

His hand, the anointed,
Rips up the priest's vestments
For a terrible Last Supper
By the murk gleam of gold.

With consecrated bearing
He shows the anxious souls
The dripping red Host:
His heart--in bloodied fingers--
For a terrible Last Supper

JPOPERA:_MEGAMIX

Andrew Allen

Note:

JPOPERA:_MEGAMIX is piece I've working on that explores regret, loss, beauty, anger and love. It involves noise improvisation and japanese pop music-flavors in a pseudo-mixtape presentation. It was written with the improvisors Bonnie Lander (soprano) and Sam Dunscombe (bass clarinet) in mind along with talented performance from Rachel Beetz (flute), Jennifer Bewerse (cello), Travis Maril (violin) and Steve Lewis (piano). Lyrics were written in collaboration with Robert Pierzak (assistant lyricist). I'm so happy to have had the opportunity to work so enthusiastically with such fantastic people. I hope you enjoy tonight's mixtape.

-Andrew Allen

Text:

-- *Improvisation #1* --

Song #1:

She waited for me.

I left.

She waited some more.

-- *Improvisation #2* --

Song #2:

In this dream,

I'm alone,

Without any home.

In this dream,

I will go,

I will fade away.

I could not fully see the light drifting away,
This mask keeps me under, unable to breath.

I could not hear the call to rise,

My thoughts swirl in disarray in my mind;

Always knowing I'm alone here.

Watashi wa kiri ni keitei ku. (I have disappeared into the fog)

Still I wait,

For another sun.

Though I know,

In this dark,

No more cherry blooms fall.

(flute solo)

Watashi wa kiri ni keitei ku. (I have disappeared into the fog)

Wide awake,

In this hollow glade.
 Emptied out,
 Blackened trees
 Are all that remain.

I heard just one sound, but I didn't call back,
 Nightingale beckoning. And calling softly,
 This I've heard; It had to be your voice.
 But the moment won't last.

Watashi wa kiri ni keitei ku. (I have disappeared into the fog)
 Watashi wa anata no tame ni shōjimasu ([But] you pulled me from the fog)

- *Improvisation #3 --*

Song #3:
 Everywhere I'm always on the run,
 Machi no kō so kuo hashiru. (Running all over town)
 With the winds up in my hair,
 Kaze ga watashi wa tobunari. (I am flying on the wind).
 Say my name,
 When you look at me
 From up above the moon.
 What a moon!
 Sing with me now:
 "Kono ni itsuwa tokubetsu desu: ("I have an anecdote to tell you:)
 Sono seimei iwau. (Celebrate your given name.)
 Shindearu! (It's true!)
 Sore kare wa jiko deki imasen." (It's not an accident.)
 When I'm always on the move,
 To watashi wa kinishi nai. (I will not care.)
 And the lightness of my skirt,
 Hito no okane o ataeru. (I will give people money).
 Say my name,
 When you look at me
 From up below the sea.
 What a sea!
 Sing with me now, yeah!
 Sing with me:
 "Kono ni itsuwa tokubetsu desu: ("I have an anecdote to tell you:)
 Sono seimei iwau. (Celebrate your given name.)
 Ataeru. Sore wa imaka?" (Give. Is it now?)
 Cherish all our times and space.
 We've had all of the moons we've shared.
 Cherish and just smile at all the love.

7. Der kranke Mond
 Du nächtig todeskranker Mond
 Dort auf des Himmels schwarzem Pfühl,
 Dein Blick, so fiebernd übergroß,
 Bannt mich wie fremde Melodie.

An unstillbarem Liebesleid
 Stirbst du, an Sehnsucht, tief erstickt,
 Du nächtig todeskranker Mond
 Dort auf des Himmels schwarzem Pfühl.

Den Liebsten, der im Sinnenrausch
 Gedankenlos zur Liebsten schleicht,
 Belustigt deiner Strahlen Spiel -
 Dein bleiches, qualgeborenes Blut,
 Du nächtig todeskranker Mond.

8. Nacht (Passacaglia)
 Finstre, schwarze Riesenfalte
 Töteten der Sonne Glanz.
 Ein geschlossnes Zauberbuch,
 Ruht der Horizont - verschwiegen.

Aus dem Qualm verlorner Tiefen
 Steigt ein Duft, Erinnerung mordend!
 Finstre, schwarze Reisenfalter
 Töteten der Sonne Glanz.

Und vom Himmel erdenwärts
 Senken sich mit schweren Schwingen
 Unsichtbar die Ungetume
 Auf die Menschenherzen nieder...
 Finstre, schwarze Reisenfalter.

9. Gebet an Pierrot
 Pierrot! Mein Lachen
 Hab ich verlernt!
 Das Bild des Glanzes
 Zerfloß - Zerfloß!

Schwarz weht die Flagge
 Mir nun vom Mast.
 Streckt sie nieder in die Flut.

7. The sick moon
 You nocturnal deathsick moon
 There on the sky's black pillow.
 Your gaze, gross with fever
 Enchants me like alien melody.

On insatiable love's body
 You die, of longing, buried deep,
 Your nocturnal deathsick moon
 There on the sky's black pillow

The beloved, who in senses' riot
 Thoughtless creeps to the beloved,
 Is amused by your beams' play--
 Your pale blood wrung from torment,
 Your nocturnal deathsick moon.

8. Night
 Obscure, black giant moths
 Killed the sun's splendour.
 A closed book of spells,
 The horizon settles--hushed

From the mists of lost depths
 Wafts a scent--remembrance murdered!
 Obscure, black giant moths
 Killed the sun's splendour.

And from the sky earthwards
 Sinking on heavy wings
 Unseeable the monsters (glide)
 Down into the human . . .
 Obscure, black giant moths.

9. Prayer to Pierrot
 Pierrot! My laughter
 I've unlearned!
 Splendour's image
 Dispersed--dispersed!

Black the flag flaps
 At me now from the mast.
 She stretches down into the flood.

Durch die Lichtung schleichen Winde,
Leis bewegen sie den Strom.
Eine blasse Wäscherin
Wäsch't zur Nachtzeit bleiche Tücher.

Und die sanfte Magd des Himmels,
Von den Zweigen zart umschmeichelt,
Breitet auf die dunklen Wiesen
ihre lichtgewobnen Linnen -
Eine blasse Wäscherin.

5. Valse de Chopin

Wie ein blasser Tropfen Bluts
Färbt die Lippen einer Kranken
Also ruht auf diesen Tönen
Ein vernichtungssüchtiger Reiz.

Wilder Lust Accorde stören
Der Verzweiflung eisgen Traum
Wie ein blasser Tropfen Bluts
Färbt die Lippen einer Kranken

Heiß und jauchzend, süß und schmachtend,
Melancholisch düstrer Walzer,
Kommst mir nimmer aus den Sinnen!
Hafest mir an den Gedanken,
Wie ein blasser Tropfen Bluts!

6. Madonna

Steig, o Mutter aller Schmerzen,
Auf den Altar meiner Verse!
Blut aus deinen magren Brusten
Hat des Schwertes Wut vergossen.

Deine ewig frischen Wunden
Gleichen Augen, rot und offen.
Steig, o Mutter aller Schmerzen,
Auf den Altar meiner Verse!

In den abgezehrten Händen
Hältst du deines Sohnes Leiche.
Ihn zu zeigen aller Menschheit -
Doch der Blick der Menschen meidet
Dich, o Mutter aller Schmerzen!

Through the clearing creeping winds
Slightly agitate the stream.
A faded laundress
Washes nighttime's pale clothes.

And the calm maid of the sky
By twigs tenderly flattered
Spreads across the dark meadows
Her light-woven linen--
A faded laundress.

5. Chopin Waltz

Like a pallid drop of blood
Colors a sick man's lips
So reposes in these tones
A charm seeking annihilation.

Wild air's accords disorder
Despair's glacial dream-
Like a pallid drop of blood
Colors a sick man's lips

Hot and jocund, sweet and tasty
Melancholic dusty waltzes,
Never come into my senses!
Hasten me on my conception
Like a pallid drop of blood.

6. Madonna

Rise, o mother of all sorrows
The altar of my verses!
Blood from your meager breasts
The sword's anger has spilled

Your eternally fresh wounds
Resemble eyes, red and open.
Rise, o mother of all sorrows
On the altar of my verses!

In emaciated hands
You hold your son's corpse
To show all mankind--
But the gaze of men shuns
You, o mother of all sorrows!

Light from Outside

Paul Hembree

Note:

Light from Outside is a re-presentation of shattered pieces of Rainer Maria Rilke's poem *Die Erblindende* (The Woman Going Blind). Rilke depicts his characters from the perspective of an outsider looking in upon them; the setting is a banal and gentle one: afternoon tea. Yet there is something wrong with one of the women at the table, and Rilke reveals slowly, through a series of sudden realizations (in collusion with the title of the poem), that she is going blind. I took this text, broke it, removed the narrator, and observed the way the internal components and characters could reveal different affects by changing perspectives, as if shining a light upon the stage from different angles, silhouetting one character while spotlighting another. The woman going blind and the others at the table each observe and relate upon the other, retaining Rilke's words but shifting pronouns, or inverting certain adjectives. For instance, though the woman going blind moves slowly throughout the house from the perspective of the narrator, to her, the others move throughout the rooms of the house quickly and with an ease that she has lost. Rilke depicts this stricken woman as attaining a sort of grace despite her ailment, which I was extremely attracted to when I found this poem. Yet I was left wanting by that the way Rilke glosses over this truly horrible situation – impending blindness – without addressing the potential for danger, panic, and despair. The shattered remains of the poem allowed me to more thoroughly juxtapose the tragedy and transcendence of the situation.

Text:

Die Erblindende (1906)

Sie saß so wie die anderen beim Tee.
Mir war zuerst, als ob sie ihre Tasse
ein wenig anders als die andern fasse.
Sie lächelte einmal. Es tat fast weh.

Und als man schließlich sich erhob
und sprach
und langsam und wie es der Zufall
brachte
durch viele Zimmer ging (man sprach
und lachte),
da sah ich sie. Sie ging den andern

The Woman Going Blind

She sat like the others drinking tea.
I felt at first as if she held her cup
a little different from the others.
She smiled once. It pained me.

And when they eventually got up and spoke
and slowly and how chance brought them
through many rooms (they spoke and laughed),
there I saw her. She went after the

nach,
verhalten, so wie eine, welche gleich
wird singen müssen und vor vielen
Leuten;
auf ihren hellen Augen die sich
freutnen
war Licht von außen wie auf einem
Teich.

Sie folgte langsam und sie brauchte
lang,
also wäre etwas noch nicht
überstiegen;
und doch: als ob, nach einem
Übergang,
sie nicht mehr gehen würde, sondern
fliegen.

-Rainer Maria Rilke

others,
restrained, like one who will
have to sing before many people;

on her pale eyes, they were happy,

was light from outside, as from a lake.

She followed slowly and she took
long,
as if something had not been
overcome;
and yet: as though, after a transition,

she would walk no more, but fly.

-Translation by Petra Watzke

Pierrot Lunaire, Op. 21

Text:

1. Mondestrunken

Den Wein, den man mit Augen trinkt,
Gießt Nachts der Mond in Wogen nieder,
Und eine Springflut überschwemmt
Den stillen Horizont.

Gelüste schauerlich und süß,
Durchschwimmen ohne Zahl die Fluten!
Den Wein, den man mit Augen trinkt,
Gießt Nachts der Mond in Wogen nieder.

Der Dichter, den die Andacht treibt,
Berauscht sich an dem heilgen Tranke,
Gen Himmel wendet er verzückt
Das Haupt und taumelnd saugt und schlürft
er
Den Wein, den man mit Augen trinkt.

Arnold Schoenberg

1. Moonstruck

The wine that one drinks with the eyes
The moon spills nights into the waves,
And a Springflood overflows
The silent horizon.

Desires, visible and sweet
Countless swim across the flood.
The wine that one drinks with the eyes
The moon spills nights into the waves.

The poet, who practices devotion,
Enraps himself on the holy drink,
He turns against the sky ecstatic
Headlong reeling sucks and slurps

The wine, that one drinks with the eyes.

2. Colombine

Des Mondlichts bleiche Blüten,
Die weißen Wunderrosen,
Blühn in den Julinachten -
O brach ich eine nur!

Mein banges Leid zu lindern,
Such ich am dunklen Strom
Des Mondlichts bleiche Blüten,
Die weißen Wunderrosen.

Gestillt war all mein Sehnen,
Dürft ich so märchenheimlich,
So selig leis - entblättern
Auf deine brauenen Haare
Des Mondlichts bleiche Blüten!

2. Columbine

Moonlight's pale blossoms,
The white wonder-roses,
Bloom in July evenings--
O I'd pluck just one!

To ease anxious suffering,
I search on dark streams
Moonlight's pale blossoms,
The white wonder-roses.

All my longings would be stilled,
If I might, fabled, stalk
Slightly tipsy--strew petals
In your brown hair (of)
The moonlight's pale blossoms.

3. Der Dandy

Mit einem phantastischen Lichtstrahl
Erleuchtet der Mond die krystallnen Flacons
Auf dem schwarzen, hochheiligen
Waschtisch
Des schweigenden Dandys von Bergamo.

In tönender, bronzer Schale
Lacht hell die Fontaine, metallischen Klangs.
Mit einem phantastischen Lichtstrahl
Erleuchtet der Mond die krystallnen Flacons.

Pierrot mit dem wächsernen Antlitz
Steht sinnend und denkt:
Wie er heute sich schminkt?
Fort schiebt er das Rot und das Orients
Grün
Und bemalt sein Gesicht in erhabenem Stil
Mit einem phantastischen Mondstrahl.

3. The Dandy

With one phantastical light beam
The moon lights the crystal flacons
On the black, high holy washstand

Of the silent dandy from Bergamo

In the resonant bronze basin
The fountain laughs light, metal clangs
With one phantastical light beam
The moon lights the crystal flacons

Pierrot of the waxen countenance
Stands musing and thinks:
How shall he make-up today?
Shoves aside the rouge and the Orient green

And paints his face--sublime style
With one phantastical moonbeam.

4. Eine blasse Wäscherin

Eine blasse Wäscherin
Wäscht zur Nachtzeit bleiche Tücher;
Nackte, silberweiße Arme

4. A Faded Laundress

A faded laundress
Washes nighttime's pale clothes
Naked, silver white arms