

THE
Byron Festival Recital

FRIDAY 19 APRIL 2024



PROGRAMME

I

Felix Mendelssohn 7
There be none of Beauty's daughters
Sun of the sleepless!

Reading 1 7
from *Childe Harold III*

II

Hugo Wolf 8
Keine gleicht von allen Schönen
Words by Otto Gildemeister

Byron
Stanzas for Music

Hugo Wolf 8
Sonne der Schlummerlosen
Words by Otto Gildemeister

Byron
Sun of the sleepless!

Reading 2 9
Soliloquy of Lioni, a patrician, in his palazzo
from Byron's *Marino Faliero, Doge of Venice*

III

Robert Schumann 10
Die Tochter Jephthas
Words by Theodor Körner

Byron
Jephtha's Daughter

Mily Balakirev 10
ЕВРЕЙСКАЯ МЕЛОДИЯ
Words by Mikhail Lermontov

Byron
My soul is dark

Robert Schumann 11
Dem Helden
Words by Theodor Körner

Byron
Thy days are done

Reading 3 11
from *Childe Harold IV*

IV

Judith Weir 12
Bright be the place of thy soul!
first performance

Hugh Wood 12
Lines to Mr Hodgson written
on board the Lisbon Packet

Reading 4 13
Juan and Haidee
from *Don Juan II*

V

Hubert Parry 14
There be none of Beauty's daughters

Charles Gounod 14
Vierge d'Athènes
Words by Alexis Paulin Pâris

Byron
Maid of Athens

Reading 5 15
She walks in beauty

VI

Maude Valerie White 15
So we'll go no more a-roving



INTRODUCTION

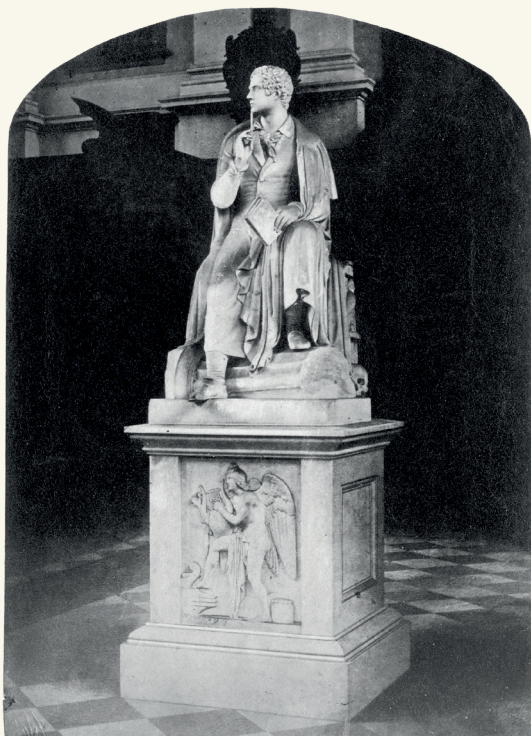
Great enduring figures as the other British Romantic poets have proved to be, the names of Wordsworth, Coleridge, Shelley and Keats have never achieved the global currency of Byron's. A 'scandalous celebrity', to be sure (to borrow the title of a fine recent study by Clara Tuite), one that depended on a life-style for which the euphemism 'transgressive' might have been invented. Whatever we choose to call it, the force of 'Byron' crossed boundaries without which the nineteenth century in the West, to go no further, would have looked and sounded drastically different.

These boundaries were both national and artistic. There is the special case of Greece, on whose history Byron has left an indelible mark. With Italy too he has a strong connection, particularly Venice. But there is also the massive impact he had on the artistic life of France, Germany and Russia, on painters such as Delacroix and writers such as Pushkin and Lermontov. Goethe hailed him as 'the greatest genius of our century'. For better or worse, 'the Byronic hero' became across virtually the whole of the Western world a household word, if not a cliché, at least up until the late-Victorian years when Oscar Wilde took up recognisable parts of his legacy.

If this was true of writing and painting, it was no less true of the most free-travelling of the arts. Berlioz was inspired by the first of Byron's modern epics to compose *Harold in Italy* and Tchaikovsky by his best-known drama, *Manfred*, to write the symphony named after the title-character. Schumann also was prompted to write incidental music for *Manfred*, with whose protagonist he seems to have felt perilous affinities.

On the smaller scale of the song recital, Byron's short lyrics afforded endless opportunities to composers as celebrated as Schumann, Mendelssohn and Wolf. There are innumerable settings of 'There be none of Beauty's daughters', for example: we shall hear three this evening. So culturally and commercially persuasive was his name that poems set to music in other languages could be eagerly claimed as 'after Byron'. We had programmed one such by Rimsky-Korsakov alleged to be a version of 'My soul is dark', until we realised that the Russian had nothing whatever to do with Byron. Balakirev came to the rescue.

Particularly seminal for Byron's afterlives in song was the volume of poems entitled *Hebrew Melodies*, first published in 1815. The composer Isaac Nathan was looking for a high-profile writer to provide words for music, to be sung by the tenor John Braham. Sir Walter Scott declined but, after hesitating, Byron accepted. The Byron Society website (from which some of the following phrases are taken) describes the title as misleading because many of the poems are 'not on a theme exclusively Jewish' or even 'not on a Jewish theme at all'. They include 'She walks in beauty' and 'Bright be the place'. In so far as some poems give expression to the experience of the outcast and the oppressed, a theme to which Byron warmed both in his artistic practice and political commitment, they drew on 'a vogue for nationalist airs from minority cultures or oppressed peoples in all corners of the globe'. 1815 was of course the year of Waterloo. Byron's whole life was shadowed by the oppression of war and its aftermath; he was particularly drawn to images of heroism, humiliation and revenge, both to figures and tales from the Old Testament and, in all too living history, the career of Napoleon and those caught up in his triumphs and disaster.



Photograph of the Byron statue by Danish sculptor Bertel Thorvaldsen shortly after its installation in the Wren Library in 1845
TRINITY COLLEGE CAMBRIDGE

As for British composers, we shall hear late Victorian settings by Hubert Parry and Maude Valerie White, with the latter's popular version of 'So we'll go no more a-roving' closing the recital. Before that however we have works by two composers of whom special mention must be made.

In 1988 Trinity celebrated the bicentenary of Byron's birth by a recital with music and words very similar to the one this evening. Hugh Wood came up with a wonderfully exuberant setting of the poem Byron wrote to mark the first of his two farewells to his homeland in 1809, 'Lines to Mr Hodgson written on board the Lisbon Packet'. Hugh's song was premiered by Lorna Anderson and Malcolm Martineau, and it is mirrored this evening, thirty-six years later, by the first performance of the song that Judith Weir has chosen, sung this time by Florian Störtz with Malcolm Martineau again at the piano.

Dame Judith was Fellow Commoner in Creative Arts at Trinity, 1983–5, and she is now an Honorary Fellow. In an interview on the College website, she comments on her choice of Byron's short poem 'Bright be the place of thy soul!':

'In that small space, Byron creates an extraordinary atmosphere. It's a graveside scene; but the poet speaks only with geniality and warmth, no funereal sentiments. Yet the imagery is all about burial and tombs, while Byron is addressing the dead person as if they are still alive. I found this momentarily shocking, particularly the verse that begins "Light be the turf of thy tomb!" I should also say that the rhythms are perfect for music; the words simply dance off the regular triplet metre. It's a poem that already felt like a song.'

This is far from the only poem of Byron's that already feels like a song. But a last word should be found for the words of Byron's that we shall hear *without* music, by way of diversifying the voices and tongues in which Byron can still speak and sing. In Shakespeare's *Twelfth Night* Viola vows that she can sing and speak 'in many sorts of music'. Byron would have admired and applauded. Let us hope that his ghost does so this evening, listening in to his own words and the songs to which they have given rise.

Lorna Anderson
Soprano

Lorna was born in Glasgow and studied with Patricia MacMahon at the Royal Scottish Academy of Music and Drama. In 1984 she won First Prize in the Peter Pears and Royal Overseas League Competitions and two years later the most highly regarded English vocal award, the Purcell-Britten Prize for Concert Singers. She has appeared in opera, concert and recitals with major orchestras and festivals throughout Europe and elsewhere. As a renowned performer of the Baroque repertoire she has sung with the Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment, Les Arts Florissants, The Sixteen, The English Concert, St. James Baroque Players, London Baroque, Collegium Musicum 90, The King's Consort, London Classical Players, La Chapelle Royale and The Academy of Ancient Music.

Lorna has a particular interest in early opera, having sung leading roles in Purcell's *The Fairy Queen*, Handel's *Alcina and Theodora*, and Mozart's *La Clemenza di Tito*. She has also established an important reputation in the standard concert repertoire, having sung with national and international orchestras including the BBC Philharmonic Orchestra, BBC Symphony Orchestra, National Symphony Orchestra (Washington), Ensemble Intercontemporain under Pierre Boulez, London Sinfonietta under Sir Simon Rattle, Kammerchor Stuttgart and at the Salzburg, Edinburgh and Aldeburgh Festivals among others.

Her numerous recordings include *The Fairy Queen* under Harry Christophers, Haydn Masses under Richard Hickox, and with Malcolm Martineau, Britten Folksong settings, songs by Poulenc and (released later this year) Ravel. In 1988 she premiered the Hugh Wood piece we shall hear this evening, and in 2009 James MacMillan's *Lament for Mary Queen of Scots*.

Florian Störtz
Baritone

Florian was the winner of the 2023 International Handel Singing Competition as well as the 2023 Helmut Deutsch Song Competition. This season sees him perform under the baton of Masaaki Suzuki on a European tour of Bach's *Weihnachtsoratorium* with the OAE, a UK tour of the *Johannespassion* with Oxford Bach Soloists as well as his debut at the Händel-Festspiele Halle. He recently returned to the London Handel Festival in a production of *Esther* under the direction of Laurence Cummings. His recording of Duruflé's *Requiem* with the Choir of Trinity College, Cambridge is published by Hyperion.

On the recital stage, Florian is performing at song festivals in Leeds and Lewes, also at Brig (Switzerland) and Zell am See (Austria), alongside pianist Helmut Deutsch. Recent appearances include a concert of German song at Carnegie Hall with Renée Fleming's SongStudio, as well as French song concerts at Salle Cortot, Paris and Wigmore Hall as part of the Wigmore Hall French Song Exchange. Together with pianist Mark Rogers, he has won the Prix de mélodie at the 2023 International Voice-Piano Competition 'Lili et Nadia Boulanger' in Paris. Operatic roles include Bartolo in Mozart's *Marriage of Figaro*, Masetto & Commendatore in *Don Giovanni* (Orchestra VOX/Hannah von Wiehler) and Sir Thomas in Jonathan Dove's *Mansfield Park*.

A Cambridge alumnus, Florian sang for three years in the Trinity College choir. He went on to the Royal Academy of Music, where he was awarded first prizes for both opera and song recitals, as well as the Britten Pears Young Artist Programme. Having enjoyed his musical upbringing in the vocal music scene around Trier Cathedral (Germany), he is now based in London.

Malcolm Martineau

Piano

Malcolm was born in Edinburgh, read music at St Catharine's College, Cambridge (where he is now an Honorary Fellow), and studied at the Royal College of Music.

Recognised as one of the leading accompanists of his generation, he has over the years worked with many of the world's greatest singers including Sir Thomas Allen, Dame Janet Baker, Ian Bostridge, Angela Gheorghiu, Susan Graham, Thomas Hampson, Simon Keenlyside, Magdalena Kožená, Christopher Maltman, Karita Mattila, Anna Netrebko, Anne Sofie von Otter, Michael Schade, Frederica von Stade, and Bryn Terfel; more recently with Elina Garanča, Sonya Yoncheva, Florian Boesch, Günther Groissböck, Dame Sarah Connolly, as well as singers from the next generation such as Johanna Wallroth, Patricia Nolz and Konstantin Krimmel.

Malcolm has appeared throughout Europe including London's Wigmore Hall, Barbican, Queen Elizabeth Hall and Royal Opera House; La Scala, Milan; the Chatelet, Paris; the Liceu, Barcelona; Berlin's Philharmonie and Konzerthaus; Amsterdam's Concertgebouw and the Vienna Konzerthaus and Musikverein, North America, Australia and at the Aix en Provence, Vienna, Edinburgh, Schubertiade, Munich and Salzburg Festivals. His many recordings include Schubert, Schumann and English song recitals with Bryn Terfel; Schubert and Strauss recitals with Simon Keenlyside; recital recordings with Angela Gheorghiu and Barbara Bonney, Magdalena Kožená and Solveig Kringelborn; Schubert, Schumann and Mahler with Florian Boesch.

Malcolm is an Honorary Doctor and International Fellow of Accompaniment at the Royal Conservatoire of Scotland. He was Artistic Director of the 2011 Leeds Lieder Festival and he is the Artist Director of Oxenfoord International. His awards include the Walther Gruner International Lieder competition. He was awarded an OBE in the New Year's Honours in December 2015.

Pip Torrens

Reader

Pip read English at Trinity College; he has been an actor since 1982.

His theatre work has included *Another Country*, *Absolute Hell* and *Stanley*. He has taken roles in many films including *A Handful of Dust*, *Patriot Games*, *Mountains of the Moon*, *The Remains of the Day*, *Star Wars – The Force Awakens*, *Tomorrow Never Dies*, *Warhorse*, *Pride and Prejudice*, *Anna Karenina*, *Gambit*, *Easy Virtue*, *Dorian Gray*, *My Week with Marilyn*, *The Iron Lady*, *The Aftermath*, *Darkest Hour* and *Joy*. On television he has featured in *Dr Who*, *Shackleton*, *The Chatterley Affair*, *Miss Austen Regrets*, *Jeeves and Wooster*, *War and Peace*, *Poldark*, *Versailles*, *Patrick Melrose*, *The Crown*, *Preacher*, *Roadkill*, *Sherwood*, *The Nevers*, *Des*, *Succession*, *Mr Bates vs the Post Office* and *Renegade Nell*.

Felix Mendelssohn

There be none of Beauty's daughters and Sun of the sleepless!

Byron

Stanzas for Music

There be none of Beauty's daughters
 With a magic like thee;
 And like music on the waters
 Is thy sweet voice to me:
 When, as if its sound were causing
 The charmed ocean's pausing,
 The waves lie still and gleaming,
 And the lulled winds seem dreaming.

And the midnight moon is weaving
 Her bright chain o'er the deep;
 Whose breast is gently heaving,
 As an infant's asleep.
 So the spirit bows before thee,
 To listen and adore thee;
 With a full but soft emotion,
 Like the swell of Summer's ocean.

Byron

Sun of the sleepless!

Sun of the sleepless! Melancholy star!
 Whose tearful beam glows tremulously far,
 That show'st the darkness thou canst not dispel,
 How like art thou to joy remembered well!
 So gleams the past, the light of other days,
 Which shines, but warms not with its powerless rays;
 A night-beam Sorrow watcheth to behold,
 Distinct, but distant—clear—but, oh how cold!



Reading 1

from *Childe Harold III*

I have not loved the world, nor the world me;
 I have not flattered its rank breath, nor bowed
 To its idolatries a patient knee,—
 Nor coined my cheek to smiles, nor cried aloud
 In worship of an echo; in the crowd
 They could not deem me one of such; I stood
 Among them, but not of them; in a shroud
 Of thoughts which were not their thoughts, and still could,
 Had I not filed my mind, which thus itself subdued.

I have not loved the world, nor the world me,—
 But let us part fair foes; I do believe,
 Though I have found them not, that there may be
 Words which are things,—hopes which will not deceive,
 And virtues which are merciful, nor weave
 Snares for the falling; I would also deem
 O'er others' griefs that some sincerely grieve;
 That two, or one, are almost what they seem,—
 That goodness is no name, and happiness no dream.

Byron engraving, 1824,
 by T Lupton after T Phillips (1813)
 TRINITY COLLEGE CAMBRIDGE

Hugo Wolf
Keine gleicht von allen Schönen
 Words by Otto Gildemeister

Keine gleicht von allen Schönen,
 Zauberhafte, dir!
 Wie Musik auf Wassern tönen
 Deine Worte mir;
 Wenn das Meer vergisst zu rauschen,
 Um entzückt zu lauschen,
 Lichte Wellen leise schäumen,
 Eingelullte Winde träumen:

Wenn der Mond die Silberkette
 Über Fluten spinnt,
 Deren Brust im stillen Bette
 Atmet, wie ein Kind:
 Also liegt mein Herz versunken,
 Lauschend, wonnetrunken,
 Sanft gewiegt und voll sich labend,
 Wie des Meeres Sommerabend.

Byron
Stanzas for Music

There be none of Beauty's daughters
 With a magic like thee;
 And like music on the waters
 Is thy sweet voice to me:
 When, as if its sound were causing
 The charmed ocean's pausing,
 The waves lie still and gleaming,
 And the lulled winds seem dreaming.

And the midnight moon is weaving
 Her bright chain o'er the deep;
 Whose breast is gently heaving,
 As an infant's asleep.
 So the spirit bows before thee,
 To listen and adore thee;
 With a full but soft emotion,
 Like the swell of Summer's ocean.



Hugo Wolf
Sonne der Schlummerlosen
 Words by Otto Gildemeister

Sonne der Schlummerlosen, bleicher Stern!
 Wie Tränen zittern, schimmerst du von fern;
 Du zeigst die Nacht, doch scheuchst sie nicht zurück,
 Wie ähnlich bist du dem entschwunden Glück,
 Dem Licht vergangner Tage, das fortan nur leuchten,
 Aber nimmer wärmen kann!
 Die Trauer wacht, wie es durchs Dunkel wallt,
 Deutlich doch fern, hell, aber o wie kalt!

Byron
Sun of the sleepless!

Sun of the sleepless! melancholy star!
 Whose tearful beam glows tremulously far,
 That show'st the darkness thou canst not dispel,
 How like art thou to joy remembered well!
 So gleams the past, the light of other days,
 Which shines, but warms not with its powerless rays;
 A night-beam Sorrow watcheth to behold,
 Distinct, but distant—clear—but, oh how cold!

Byron engraving, date unknown,
 by J T Wedgwood after W E West (1822)
 TRINITY COLLEGE CAMBRIDGE

Reading 2

Soliloquy of Lioni, a patrician, in his palazzo

from Byron's *Marino Faliero, Doge of Venice*, Act IV, Scene I

Though my breast feels too anxious; I will try
Whether the air will calm my spirits: 'tis
A goodly night; the cloudy wind which blew
From the Levant hath crept into its cave,
And the broad moon hath brightened. What a stillness!

[...]

Around me are the stars and waters –
Worlds mirrored in the ocean, goodlier sight
Than torches glared back by a gaudy glass;
And the great element, which is to space
What Ocean is to Earth, spreads its blue depths,
Softened with the first breathings of the spring;
The high moon sails upon her beauteous way,
Serenely smoothing o'er the lofty walls
Of those tall piles and sea-girt palaces,
Whose porphyry pillars, and whose costly fronts,
Fraught with the orient spoil of many marbles,
Like altars ranged along the broad canal,
Seem each a trophy of some mighty deed
Reared up from out the waters, scarce less strangely
Than those more massy and mysterious giants
Of architecture, those Titanian fabrics,
Which point in Ægypt's plains to Times that have
No other record. All is gentle: nought
Stirs rudely; but, congenial with the night,
Whatever walks is gliding like a spirit.
The tinklings of some vigilant guitars
Of sleepless lovers to a wakeful mistress,
And cautious opening of the casement, showing
That he is not unheard; while her young hand,
Fair as the moonlight of which it seems part,
So delicately white, it trembles in
The act of opening the forbidden lattice,
To let in love through music, makes his heart
Thrill like his lyre-strings at the sight; the dash
Phosphoric of the oar, or rapid twinkle
Of the far lights of skimming gondolas,
And the responsive voices of the choir
Of boatmen answering back with verse for verse;
Some dusky shadow checkering the Rialto;
Some glimmering palace roof, or tapering spire,
Are all the sights and sounds which here pervade
The ocean-born and earth-commanding city –
How sweet and soothing is this hour of calm!
I thank thee, Night! for thou hast chased away
Those horrid bodements which, amidst the throng,
I could not dissipate: and with the blessing
Of thy benign and quiet influence,
Now will I to my couch, although to rest
Is almost wronging such a night as this.



The Byron statue as it can be seen in the Wren Library today
TRINITY COLLEGE CAMBRIDGE

Robert Schumann
Die Tochter Jephthas
 Words by Theodor Körner

Da die Heimat, o Vater, da Gott
 Von der Tochter verlangst den Tod,
 Dein Gelübde vom Feind uns befreit,
 Durchbohr' mich, ich stehe bereit!

Und die Stimme der Klagen ist stumm,
 Und mein Werk auf den Bergen ist um!
 Wird die Hand, die ich liebe, mich weihn,
 Kann der Tod ja nicht schmerzlich mir sein.

Und das schwör ich dir treulich und gut,
 Daß so rein ist mein kindliches Blut,
 Als der Segen, den strömend es fleht,
 Als hienieden mein letztes Gebet!

Ob die Jungfrau Jerusalems klagt,
 Sei der Richter, der Held nicht verzagt!
 Der Triumph kam durch mich euch herbei,
 Und mein Vater, die Heimat sind frei!

Wenn das Blut, das du gabst, ist entwallt,
 Die du liebtest, die Stimme verhallt,
 Denk' meiner, die Ruhm dir erwarb,
 Und vergiß nicht, daß lächelnd ich starb.

Byron
Jephtha's Daughter

Since our Country, our God—Oh, my Sire!
 Demand that thy Daughter expire;
 Since thy triumph was bought by thy vow—
 Strike the bosom that's bared for thee now!

And the voice of my mourning is o'er,
 And the mountains behold me no more:
 If the hand that I love lay me low,
 There cannot be pain in the blow!

And of this, oh, my Father! be sure—
 That the blood of thy child is as pure
 As the blessing I beg ere it flow,
 And the last thought that soothes me below.

Though the virgins of Salem lament,
 Be the judge and the hero unbent!
 I have won the great battle for thee,
 And my Father and Country are free!

When this blood of thy giving hath gush'd,
 When the voice that thou lovest is hush'd.
 Let my memory still be thy pride,
 And forget not I smiled as I died!

Mily Balakirev
My Soul is Dark

ЕВРЕЙСКАЯ МЕЛОДИЯ
 Words by Mikhail Lermontov

Душа моя мрачна. Скорей, певец, скорей!
 Вот арфа золотая:
 Пускай персты твои, промчавшись по ней,
 Пробудят в струнах звуки рая.
 И если не навек надежды рок унес,
 Они в груди моей проснутся,
 И если есть в очах застывших капля слез —
 Они растают и прольются.

Пусть будет песнь твоя дика. Как мой венец,
 Мне тягостны веселья звуки!
 Я говорю тебе: я слез хочу, певец,
 Иль разорвется грудь от муки.
 Страданиями была упитана она,
 Томилась долго и безмолвно;
 И грозный час настал — теперь она полна,
 Как кубок смерти яда полный.

Byron
My soul is dark

My soul is dark—Oh! quickly string
 The harp I yet can brook to hear;
 And let thy gentle fingers fling
 Its melting murmurs o'er mine ear.
 If in this heart a hope be dear,
 That sound shall charm it forth again;
 If in these eyes there lurk a tear,
 'Twill flow, and cease to burn my brain:

But bid the strain be wild and deep,
 Nor let thy notes of joy be first:
 I tell thee, minstrel, I must weep,
 Or else this heavy heart will burst;
 For it hath been by sorrow nurst,
 And ach'd in sleepless silence long;
 And now 'tis doom'd to know the worst,
 And break at once—or yield to song.

Robert Schumann

Dem Helden

Words by Theodor Körner

Dein Tag ist aus, dein Ruhm fing an,
Es preist des Volks Gesang
Dich Hoher auf des Sieges Bahn,
Dein Schwert im Feindesdrang,
Die Taten all, die du getan,
Jauchzt dir der Freiheit Dank!

Dein Name sei dem Heer Signal,
Rüstet's zum Kampfe sich,
Und Jungfraun künden's im Choral,
Daß unser Held erblich!
Es netze keine Trän dein Mal,
Wir klagen nicht um dich!

Und ob du felst, so lang wir frei,
Sollst du den Tod nicht sehn,
Dein Blut, so edel, rein und treu
Darf nicht zur Erde gehn,
In unsern Adern fließt es neu,
Dein Geist mög in uns wehn!

Reading 3

from *Childe Harold IV*

There is a pleasure in the pathless woods,
There is a rapture on the lonely shore,
There is society where none intrudes,
By the deep Sea, and music in its roar:
I love not Man the less, but Nature more,
From these our interviews, in which I steal
From all I may be, or have been before,
To mingle with the Universe, and feel
What I can ne'er express, yet cannot all conceal.

Roll on, thou deep and dark blue Ocean—roll!
Ten thousand fleets sweep over thee in vain;
Man marks the earth with ruin—his control
Stops with the shore;—upon the watery plain
The wrecks are all thy deed, nor doth remain
A shadow of man's ravage, save his own,
When for a moment, like a drop of rain,
He sinks into thy depths with bubbling groan,
Without a grave, unknelled, uncoffined, and unknown.

His steps are not upon thy paths,—thy fields
Are not a spoil for him,—thou dost arise
And shake him from thee; the vile strength he wields
For earth's destruction thou dost all despise,
Spurning him from thy bosom to the skies,
And send'st him, shivering in thy playful spray
And howling, to his gods, where haply lies
His petty hope in some near port or bay,
And dashest him again to earth:—there let him lay.

The armaments which thunderstrike the walls
Of rock-built cities, bidding nations quake,
And monarchs tremble in their capitals.
The oak leviathans, whose huge ribs make
Their clay creator the vain title take
Of lord of thee, and arbiter of war;
These are thy toys, and, as the snowy flake,
They melt into thy yeast of waves, which mar
Alike the Armada's pride, or spoils of Trafalgar.

Byron

Thy days are done

Thy days are done, thy fame begun;
Thy country's strains record
The triumphs of her chosen Son,
The slaughters of his sword!
The deeds he did, the fields he won,
The freedom he restored!

Though thou art fall'n, while we are free
Thou shalt not taste of death!
The generous blood that flowed from thee
Disdain'd to sink beneath:
Within our veins its currents be,
Thy spirit on our breath!

Thy name, our charging hosts along,
Shall be the battle-word!
Thy fall, the theme of choral song
From virgin voices poured!
To weep would do thy glory wrong;
Thou shalt not be deplored.

Thy shores are empires, changed in all save thee—
Assyria, Greece, Rome, Carthage, what are they?
Thy waters washed them power while they were free
And many a tyrant since: their shores obey
The stranger, slave, or savage; their decay
Has dried up realms to deserts: not so thou,
Unchangeable save to thy wild waves' play—
Time writes no wrinkle on thine azure brow—
Such as creation's dawn beheld, thou rollest now.

Thou glorious mirror, where the Almighty's form
Glasses itself in tempests; in all time,
Calm or convulsed—in breeze, or gale, or storm,
Icing the pole, or in the torrid clime
Dark-heaving;—boundless, endless, and sublime—
The image of Eternity—the throne
Of the Invisible; even from out thy slime
The monsters of the deep are made; each zone
Obeyes thee: thou goest forth, dread, fathomless, alone.

And I have loved thee, Ocean! and my joy
Of youthful sports was on thy breast to be
Borne like thy bubbles, onward: from a boy
I wantoned with thy breakers—they to me
Were a delight; and if the freshening sea
Made them a terror—'twas a pleasing fear,
For I was as it were a child of thee,
And trusted to thy billows far and near,
And laid my hand upon thy mane—as I do here.

Judith Weir
Bright be the place of thy soul!
first performance
commissioned for this bicentenary

Byron
Bright be the place of thy soul!

Bright be the place of thy soul!
 No lovelier spirit than thine
 E'er burst from its mortal control,
 In the orbs of the blessed to shine.
 On earth thou wert all but divine,
 As thy soul shall immortally be;
 And our sorrow may cease to repine,
 When we know that thy God is with thee.

Light be the turf of thy tomb!
 May its verdure like emeralds be:
 There should not be the shadow of gloom,
 In aught that reminds us of thee.
 Young flowers and an evergreen tree
 May spring from the spot of thy rest;
 But not cypress nor yew let us see;
 For why should we mourn for the blest?

Hugh Wood
Lines to Mr Hodgson written on board the Lisbon Packet
commissioned for the bicentenary of Byron's birth, 1988

Huzza! Hodgson, we are going,
 Our embargo's off at last;
 Favourable breezes blowing
 Bend the canvass o'er the mast.
 From aloft the signal's streaming,
 Hark! the farewell gun is fir'd;
 Women screeching, tars blaspheming,
 Tell us that our time's expir'd.
 Here's a rascal
 Come to task all,
 Prying from the custom-house;
 Trunks unpacking
 Cases cracking,
 Not a corner for a mouse
 'Scapes unsearch'd amid the racket,
 Ere we sail on board the Packet.

Now our boatmen quit their mooring,
 And all hands must ply the oar;
 Baggage from the quay is lowering,
 We're impatient—push from shore.
 “Have a care! that case holds liquor—
 Stop the boat—I'm sick—oh Lord!”
 “Sick, ma'am, damme, you'll be sicker,
 Ere you've been an hour on board.”
 Thus are screaming
 Men and women,
 Gemmen, ladies, servants, Jacks;
 Here entangling,
 All are wrangling,
 Stuck together close as wax.—
 Such the genial noise and racket,
 Ere we reach the Lisbon Packet.

Now we've reach'd her, lo! the captain,
 Gallant Kidd, commands the crew;
 Passengers their berths are clapt in,
 Some to grumble, some to spew.
 “Hey day! call you that a cabin?
 Why 'tis hardly three feet square;
 Not enough to stow Queen Mab in—
 Who the deuce can harbour there?”
 “Who, sir? plenty—
 Nobles twenty
 Did at once my vessel fill.”
 “Did they? Jesus,
 How you squeeze us!
 Would to God they did so still:
 Then I'd 'scape the heat and racket
 Of the good ship, Lisbon Packet.”

Fletcher! Murray! Bob! where are you?
 Stretch'd along the deck like logs—
 Bear a hand, you jolly tar, you!
 Here's a rope's end for the dogs.
 Hobhouse muttering fearful curses,
 As the hatchway down he rolls,
 Now his breakfast, now his verses,
 Vomits forth—and damns our souls.
 “Here's a stanza
 On Braganza—
 Help!”—“A couplet?”—“No, a cup
 Of warm water—”
 “What's the matter?”
 “Zounds! my liver's coming up;
 I shall not survive the racket
 Of this brutal Lisbon Packet.”

Now at length we're off for Turkey,
 Lord knows when we shall come back!
 Breezes foul and tempests murky
 May unship us in a crack.
 But, since life at most a jest is,
 As philosophers allow,
 Still to laugh by far the best is,
 Then laugh on—as I do now.
 Laugh at all things,
 Great and small things,
 Sick or well, at sea or shore;
 While we're quaffing,
 Let's have laughing—
 Who the devil cares for more?—
 Some good wine! and who would lack it,
 Ev'n on board the Lisbon Packet?

... days. —
... here on you.
... what he
I hope he don't
— you cannot
... delay in our
... than I do
... days or weeks
... fatality has
I trust he should
... mine me truly
yours
Byron

Reading 4

Juan and Haidee

from *Don Juan*, II

Alas! they were so young, so beautiful,
So lonely, loving, helpless, and the hour
Was that in which the heart is always full,
And, having o'er itself no further power,
Prompts deeds eternity can not annul,
But pays off moments in an endless shower
Of hell-fire—all prepared for people giving
Pleasure or pain to one another living.

Alas! for Juan and Haidee! they were
So loving and so lovely—till then never,
Excepting our first parents, such a pair
Had run the risk of being damn'd for ever;
And Haidee, being devout as well as fair,
Had, doubtless, heard about the Stygian river,
And hell and purgatory—but forgot
Just in the very crisis she should not.

They look upon each other, and their eyes
Gleam in the moonlight; and her white arm clasps
Round Juan's head, and his around her lies
Half buried in the tresses which it grasps;
She sits upon his knee, and drinks his sighs,
He hers, until they end in broken gasps;
And thus they form a group that's quite antique,
Half naked, loving, natural, and Greek.

And when those deep and burning moments pass'd,
And Juan sunk to sleep within her arms,
She slept not, but all tenderly, though fast,
Sustain'd his head upon her bosom's charms;
And now and then her eye to heaven is cast,
And then on the pale cheek her breast now warms,
Pillow'd on her o'erflowing heart, which pants
With all it granted, and with all it grants.

An infant when it gazes on a light,
A child the moment when it drains the breast,
A devotee when soars the Host in sight,
An Arab with a stranger for a guest,
A sailor when the prize has struck in fight,
A miser filling his most hoarded chest,
Feel rapture; but not such true joy are reaping
As they who watch o'er what they love while sleeping.

For there it lies so tranquil, so beloved,
All that it hath of life with us is living;
So gentle, stirless, helpless, and unmoved,
And all unconscious of the joy 'tis giving;
All it hath felt, inflicted, pass'd, and proved,
Hush'd into depths beyond the watcher's diving:
There lies the thing we love with all its errors
And all its charms, like death without its terrors.

Detail of a letter from Byron
showing his signature
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Hubert Parry
There be none of Beauty's daughters

Byron
Stanzas for Music

There be none of Beauty's daughters
 With a magic like thee;
 And like music on the waters
 Is thy sweet voice to me:
 When, as if its sound were causing
 The charmed ocean's pausing,
 The waves lie still and gleaming,
 And the lulled winds seem dreaming.

And the midnight moon is weaving
 Her bright chain o'er the deep;
 Whose breast is gently heaving,
 As an infant's asleep.
 So the spirit bows before thee,
 To listen and adore thee;
 With a full but soft emotion,
 Like the swell of Summer's ocean.

Charles Gounod
Vierge d'Athènes
 Words by Alexis Paulin Pâris

Vierge d'Athènes, avant mon départ,
 rends-moi, oh! rends-moi mon cœur;
 ou bien, puisque ce cœur a quitté mon sein,
 garde-le maintenant et prends le reste!
 Entends mon vœu avant que je parte,
 Ζωή μου, σᾶς ἀγαπῶ.

J'en jure par ces tresses flottantes
 que caressent les brises de la mer Égée;
 par ces paupières dont les franges de jais
 baisent les roses de ta joue;
 par ces yeux aussi vifs que les yeux du chevreuil sauvage,
 Ζωή μου, σᾶς ἀγαπῶ.

Par cette lèvre que je brûle de savourer;
 par la ceinture qui entoure ta jolie taille;
 par tous ces emblèmes de fleurs 160 qui expriment
 ce que les paroles ne diraient jamais si bien;
 par les joies et les misères que l'amour tour à tour amène,
 Ζωή μου, σᾶς ἀγαπῶ.

Vierge d'Athènes! je suis parti:
 pense à moi, douce amie! quand tu seras seule.
 Quoique je fuie à Istamboul,
 Athènes renferme mon cœur, et mon âme.
 Puis-je donc cesser de t'aimer? Non!
 Ζωή μου, σᾶς ἀγαπῶ.

Byron
Maid of Athens

Maid of Athens, ere we part,
 Give, oh, give me back my heart!
 Or, since that has left my breast,
 Keep it now, and take the rest!
 Hear my vow before I go,
 Ζωή μου, σᾶς ἀγαπῶ.

By those tresses unconfin'd,
 Woo'd by each Aegean wind;
 By those lids whose jetty fringe
 Kiss thy soft cheeks' blooming tinge;
 By those wild eyes like the roe,
 Ζωή μου, σᾶς ἀγαπῶ.

By that lip I long to taste;
 By that zone-encircl'd waist;
 By all the token-flowers that tell
 What words can never speak so well;
 By Love's alternate joy and woe,
 Ζωή μου, σᾶς ἀγαπῶ.

Maid of Athens! I am gone:
 Think of me, sweet! when alone.
 Though I fly to Istambol,
 Athens holds my heart and soul:
 Can I cease to love thee? No!
 Ζωή μου, σᾶς ἀγαπῶ.

Maude Valerie White
So we'll go no more a-roving

So, we'll go no more a-roving
 So late into the night,
 Though the heart be still as loving,
 And the moon be still as bright.

For the sword outwears its sheath,
 And the soul wears out the breast,
 And the heart must pause to breathe,
 And love itself have rest.

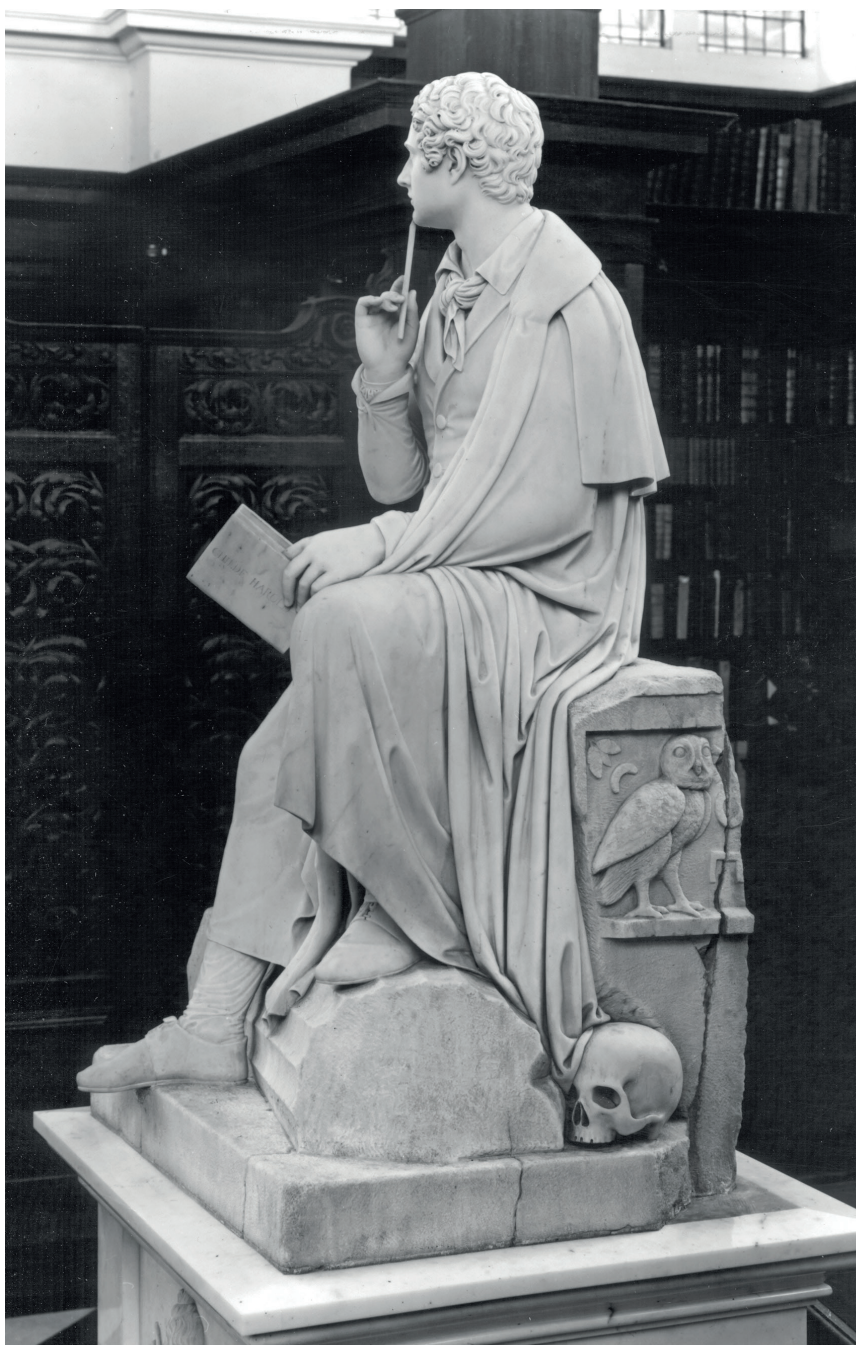
Though the night was made for loving,
 And the day returns too soon,
 Yet we'll go no more a-roving
 By the light of the moon.

Reading 5
She walks in beauty

She walks in beauty, like the night
 Of cloudless climes and starry skies;
 And all that's best of dark and bright
 Meet in her aspect and her eyes;
 Thus mellowed to that tender light
 Which heaven to gaudy day denies.

One shade the more, one ray the less,
 Had half impaired the nameless grace
 Which waves in every raven tress,
 Or softly lightens o'er her face;
 Where thoughts serenely sweet express,
 How pure, how dear their dwelling-place.

And on that cheek, and o'er that brow,
 So soft, so calm, yet eloquent,
 The smiles that win, the tints that glow,
 But tell of days in goodness spent,
 A mind at peace with all below,
 A heart whose love is innocent!



View of the Byron statue showing the owl
 of Minerva and the skull as memento mori.
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