

O|A YOUNG
ARTIST
PROGRAM

presents

Voyage à Paris



Sunday 15 June, 2pm
The Church, Alexandria

O|PERA AUSTRALI|A

Voyage à Paris

French Song Recital
Sunday 15th June 2025
The Church, Alexandria

PROGRAM

Gabriel Fauré
Reynaldo Hahn
Pauline Viardot

Paradis (from *Chanson d'Eve*)
Le printemps
Rêverie

Henri Duparc
Henri Duparc
Gabriel Fauré
Ernest Chausson
Gabriel Fauré
Henri Duparc

Extase
Phidylé
Pleurs d'ors
Le temps des lilas (from *Poème de l'amour et de la mer*)
Puisqu'ici-bas tout âme
La vie antérieure

Claude Debussy

Trois ballades de François Villon
i. Ballade de Villon à s'amy
ii. Ballade de Villon fait à la requeste de sa mère
iii. Ballade des femmes de Paris

Francis Poulenc

Ç (from *Deux poèmes de Louis Aragon*)
Voyage à Paris (from *Banalités*)
Montparnasse
Fêtes galantes (from *Deux poèmes de Louis Aragon*)
Les chemins de l'amour

PERFORMERS

(in order of appearance)

Marie-France Lefebvre, piano
Shikara Ringdahl, mezzo-soprano
Chelsea Burns, soprano
Elias Wilson, tenor
Leon Vitogiannis, baritone

Opera Australia Young Artist Program sincerely thanks Judith Nielson for the use of The Church today

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About the Artists



Chelsea Burns comes from country Western Australia and never imagined opera would be a part of her life. She grew up playing sport with her father and singing in choirs and musicals with her mother and sister. A transformative event for her was the day she saw a touring production of Opera Australia's *Carmen*. She was blown away by the music, the voices and the spectacle. Pursuing a degree in Classical Music had her falling in love with opera, the music's storytelling and the complex characters, a passion that was singled out and fostered by her acting teacher. This is one of the reasons that she so admires the artistry of Maria Callas, a true singing actress. Chelsea has been lucky enough to sing and cover some amazing roles, her favourites; Puccini's *Tosca* and Dvorak's *Rusalka*. In 2024, Chelsea was able to draw on her extensive dance training as she also performed as the Second Wood Nymph in a heavily choreographed production of *Rusalka*.



Shikara Ringdahl a Chinese-Australian mezzo-soprano, is a graduate of the Queensland Conservatorium Griffith University (QCGU) and holds a Bachelor of Music. She made her professional debut with the Sydney Symphony Orchestra singing Elgar's *Sea Pictures* Op. 37 under the baton of Benjamin Northey and was the first vocalist invited by the SSO to tour with the orchestra in their 80 years of regional touring. Shikara was a Young Artist with Opera Queensland in 2023/2024 and has previously been a resident Young Artist with the Israeli Opera's Meitar Opera Studio. For Opera Queensland Shikara has appeared in the statewide tour of "Do We Need Another Hero?", Festival of Outback Opera, as Second Witch in *Dido and Aeneas* and as Second Apparition in *Macbeth*. She has also performed with the OQ chorus in *Macbeth*, *Così fan tutte*, *Aida*, *Dido and Aeneas* and *Eucalyptus*. Shikara's other opera credits include Der Komponist in Strauss' *Ariadne auf Naxos* conducted by Simone Young AM, Larina in Tchaikovsky's *Eugene Onegin* conducted by Richard Hetherington, and Mrs Herring in Britten's *Albert Herring*, directed by Bruce Beresford for QCGU and Brisbane Festival.



First Nations tenor **Elias Wilson** grew up in Western Sydney with parents who were children's entertainers. Between learning his mother's choreography at community musical theatre rehearsals and school holidays spent helping his father stage manage the live shows of Play School and Bananas in Pajamas, theatre was part of his every day. Despite this influence, Elias wasn't bitten by the showbiz bug until he was 22 when, having never seen an opera, George Torbay cast him in the chorus of *La Traviata* at Opera New England. The music had him hooked, and he knew right away he had to quit his call-centre job to enroll at the Sydney Conservatorium of Music. Elias studied with Dr Rowena Cowley, and sang everything from Monteverdi to Musical Theatre. He finds the joy of music and opera in its diversity, and has since played classic romantic roles like Lysander and Nemorino, channeled gravitas and turmoil as an Elder in *The Visitors* or in excerpts of Peter Grimes, and relished the fun of rule-breaking character roles, adapting *Cendrillon's* stepmother for Tenor as a monstrous bearded drag queen. In every role Elias finds something personal – a part of himself to take with him, on-stage and off.



Leon Vitogiannis is establishing himself as one of the most exciting baritones of his generation. After completing degrees at the Sydney Conservatorium of Music with Mr. Andrew Dalton and Dr. David Greco, Leon continues to build an impressive list of stage and concert credits. Leon's stage credits include; Figaro (*The Barber of Seville*), Aeneas (*Dido and Aeneas*), Eisenstein (*Die Fledermaus*), Count Almaviva (*The Marriage of Figaro*), Leporello (*Don Giovanni*), and Mr. McC. in (*Introductions and Goodbyes*) by Foss. His concert appearances include *Requiem* (Mozart and Fauré), *Messiah* (Handel), *Ein Deutsches Requiem* (Brahms), *Paulus* (Mendelssohn), *Crucifixion* (Stainer), and the Australian premiere of *Requiem for an Angel* (Carr). As Leon continues to expand his opera and oratorio repertoire, he also holds Lieder and Art Song to equal importance, focusing on the song cycles of Schubert, Schumann, and Mahler. Leon held a position as a Young Artist with Pacific Opera Studio in 2023 and 2024, working closely under Co-Artistic Directors, Cheryl Barker AO and Peter Coleman-Wright AO. Most recently, Leon was selected as an Opera Australia Young Artist in their 2025-2026 program.



Marie-France Lefebvre is a renowned collaborative pianist, conductor, and vocal coach. She has worked regularly with major opera companies, including The Metropolitan Opera (since 2007), Washington National Opera (1994-2004), Santa Fe Opera, Houston Grand Opera, Cincinnati Opera, and others. She served as Program and Music Director at the Banff Centre and has taught at the Collaborative Piano Institute and other institutions. As a prompter, she has collaborated with top opera houses and world-renowned singers such as Plácido Domingo, Renée Fleming, Diana Damrau, and Benjamin Bernheim, and has assisted conductors like Yannick Nézet-Séguin, Sir Simon Rattle, and James Levine. Marie-France was the official pianist for the Metropolitan Opera National Council Auditions (DC) until 2019 and has performed widely as a chamber musician, notably with Matthew Polenzani, Samuel Ramey, and Denyce Graves. She maintains a strong passion for song repertoire and has an ongoing relationship with the Cincinnati Song Initiative. She holds a DMA from the University of Michigan and an MM from the Manhattan School of Music. Since 2008, she has been a Professor of Opera at CCM, following faculty roles at Michigan State University and guest teaching at The Curtis Institute and University of Maryland. This is Marie-France's Australian debut.

Texts & Translations

Paradis - Charles van Lerberghe

C'est le premier matin du monde,
Comme une fleur confuse exhalée de la nuit,
Au souffle nouveau qui se lève des ondes,
Un jardin bleu s'épanouit.

Tout s'y confond encore et tout s'y mêle,
Frissons de feuilles, chants d'oiseaux,
Glissements d'ailes,
Sources qui sourdent, voix des airs, voix des eaux,
Murmure immense;
Et qui pourtant est du silence.

Ouvrant à la clarté ses doux et vagues yeux
La jeune et divine Ève S'est éveillée de Dieu.

Et le monde à ses pieds s'étend comme un beau rêve.

Or Dieu lui dit: Va, fille humaine,
Et donne à tous les êtres
Que j'ai créés, une parole de tes lèvres,
Un son pour les connaître.

Et Ève s'en alla, docile à son seigneur,
En son bosquet de roses,
Donnant à toutes choses
Une parole, un son de ses lèvres de fleur:

Chose qui fuit, chose qui souffle, chose qui vole ...

Cependant le jour passe, et vague, comme à l'aube,
Au crépuscule, peu à peu,
L'Éden s'endort et se dérobe
Dans le silence d'un songe bleu.

La voix s'est tue, mais tout l'écoute encore,
Tout demeure en attente;
Lorsque avec le lever de l'étoile du soir,
Ève chante.

Le Printemps - Théodore de Banville

Te voilà, rire du printemps:
Les thyrses des lilas fleurissent.
Les amantes qui te chérissent
Délivrent leurs cheveux flottants.

Sous les rayons d'or éclatants
Les anciens lierres se flétrissent.
Te voilà, rire du printemps:
Les thyrses des lilas fleurissent.

Couchons-nous au bord des étangs,
Que nos maux amers se guérissent!
Mille espoirs fabuleux nourrissent
Nos cœurs émus et palpitants.
Te voilà, rire du printemps!

Rêverie - Armand Silvestre

Autour du ciel brumeux aux horizons navrants,
Aux rapides couchants, aux aurores pâlies,
Je regarde couler avec l'eau des torrents
Mes jours faits de mélancolie.

Sur l'aile du regret mes esprits emportés,
Comme s'il se pouvait que notre âme renaisse
Par courant en rêvant les coteaux enchantés
Où jadis, fleurit ma jeunesse.

Je sens au clair soleil du souvenir vainqueur
Reflourir en bouquets des roses déliées
Et monter à mes yeux des larmes, qu'en mon cœur
Mes vingt ans avaient oubliées!

Extase - Jean Lehor

Sur un lys pâle mon cœur dort
D'un sommeil doux comme la mort ...
Mort exquise, mort parfumée
Du souffle de la bien-aimée ...

Sur ton sein pâle mon cœur dort
D'un sommeil doux comme la mort ...

Paradise - translation by Shikara Ringdahl

It is the first morning of creation.
Like an abashed flower breathed on the night air,
With the new breath that rise from the waves,
A blue garden blooms.

Everything is still blurred and indistinct,
Trembling leaves, singing birds,
Gliding wings,
Springs that rise, voices of air and voices of water,
An immense murmuring;
And which yet is silence.

Opening to the light her soft and vacant eyes,
The young and divine Eve Is awakened by God.

And the world extends at her feet like a lovely dream.

Now God says to her: "Go, daughter of man,
And bestow on all beings
That I have created a word from your lips,
A sound that we might know them by."

And Eve went, obedient to her Lord,
Into her grove of roses,
Bestowing on all things
A word, a sound from her flower-like lips:

Thing that runs, thing that breathes, thing that flies ...

Meanwhile the day passes, and hazy, like the dawn,
Into twilight, bit by bit,
Eden falls asleep and steals
Into the silence of a blue dream.

The voice has died away, but everything still listens,
Waiting in expectation;
When with the rising of the evening star,
Eve sings.

Springtime - translation by Chelsea Burns

The bunches of lilacs bloom.
The lovers who cherish you
release their flowing hair.

Under the bright rays of gold,
the ancient ivies wither.
You are here, laughter of Spring:
the bunches of lilacs bloom.

We lie down on the edge of the pond
so that our bitter ills may heal themselves.
A thousand fabulous hopes feed
our moved and palpitating hearts.
There you are, laughter of Spring.

Rêverie - translation by Francis Greep

Around the misty sky with its heartbreaking horizons,
At rapid sunsets, at pale dawns,
I watch my days made of melancholy
flow with the torrents.

On the wing of regret, my spirits are carried away,
As if it were possible for our soul to be reborn
Dreaming along the enchanted hillsides
Where once my youth bloomed.

I feel the clear sunlight of victorious memory
Blossoming again in bouquets of unbound roses
And tears rise in my eyes, which in my heart,
My twenties had forgotten!

Extasy - translation by Elias Wilson

On a pale lily my heart is sleeping
A sleep as sweet as death ...
Exquisite death, death perfumed
By the breath of the beloved:

On your pale breast my heart is sleeping
A sleep as sweet as death ...

Phidylé - Charles Marie Leconte de Lisle
L'herbe est molle au sommeil sous les frais peupliers,
Aux pentes des sources moussues,
Qui, dans les prés en fleur germant par mille issues,
Se perdent sous les noirs halliers.

Repose, ô Phidylé! Midi sur les feuillages
Rayonne, et t'invite au sommeil.
Par le trèfle et le thym, seules, en plein soleil,
Chantent les abeilles volages.

Un chaud parfum circule au détour des sentiers,
La rouge fleur des blés s'incline,
Et les oiseaux, rasant de l'aile la colline,
Cherchent l'ombre des églantiers.

Mais, quand l'Astre, incliné sur sa courbe éclatante,
Verra ses ardeurs s'apaiser,
Que ton plus beau sourire et ton meilleur baiser
Me récompensent de l'attente!

Pleurs d'ors - Albert Samain
Larmes aux fleurs suspendues,
Larmes de sources perdues
Aux mousses des rochers creux ;

Larmes d'automne épandues,
Larmes de cor entendues
Dans les grands bois douloureux ;

Larmes des cloches latines,
Carmélites, Feuillantines...
Voix des beffrois en ferveur ;

Larmes des nuits étoilées,
Larmes des flûtes voilées
Au bleu du parc endormi;

Larmes aux grand cils perlées,
Larmes d'amante coulées
Jusqu'à l'âme de l'ami ;

Larmes d'extase, éplorément délicieux,
Tombez des nuits! Tombez des fleurs! Tombez des yeux!

Le temps des lilas - Maurice Bouchor
Le temps des lilas et le temps des roses
Ne reviendra plus à ce printemps-ci;
Le temps des lilas et le temps des roses
Est passé, le temps des œillets aussi.

Le vent a changé, les cieus sont moroses,
Et nous n'irons plus courir, et cueillir
Les lilas en fleur et les belles roses;
Le printemps est triste et ne peut fleurir.

Oh! joyeux et doux printemps de l'année,
Qui vins, l'an passé, nous ensoleiller,
Notre fleur d'amour est si bien fanée,
Las! Que ton baiser ne peut l'éveiller!

Et toi, que fais-tu? pas de fleurs écloses,
Point de gai soleil ni d'ombrages frais;
Le temps des lilas et le temps des roses
Avec notre amour est mort à jamais.

Puisqu'ici-bas tout âme - Victor Hugo
Puisqu'ici-bas toute âme donne à quelqu'un
Sa musique, sa flamme, ou son parfum ;

Puisqu'ici toute chose donne toujours
Son épine ou sa rose à ses amours ;

Puis qu'avril donne aux chênes un bruit charmant;
Que la nuit donne aux peines l'oubli dormant.

Puisque lorsqu'elle arrive, s'y reposer,
L'onde amère à la rive donne un baiser ;

Je te donne, à cette heure, penché sur toi,
La chose la meilleure que j'ai en moi !

Reçois donc ma pensée, triste d'ailleurs,
Qui, comme une rosée, t'arrive en pleurs !

Reçois mes vœux sans nombre, o mes amours !
Reçois la flamme ou l'ombre de tous mes jours !

Mes transports pleins d'ivresses pur de soupçons,
Et toutes les caresses de mes chansons !

Mon esprit qui sans voile vogue au hazard,
Et qui n'a pour étoile que ton regard !

Reçois, mon bien céleste, o ma beauté,
Mon cœur, dont rien ne reste, l'amour ôté !

Phidylé - translation by Elias Wilson
The grass is soft for sleep beneath the cool poplars
On the banks of the mossy springs
That flow in flowering meadows from a thousand sources,
And vanish beneath dark thickets.

Rest, O Phidylé! Noon on the leaves
Is gleaming, inviting you to sleep.
By the clover and thyme, alone, in the bright sunlight,
The fickle bees are humming.

A warm fragrance floats about the winding paths,
The red flowers of the cornfield droop;
And the birds, skimming the hillside with their wings,
Seek the shade of the eglantine.

But when the sun, low on its dazzling curve,
Sees its brilliance wane,
Let your loveliest smile and finest kiss
Reward me to for my waiting!

Tears of Gold - translation David K. Smythe
Tears hanging from the flowers,
Tears of springs lost
In the mossy hollows of the rocks;

Autumnal tears spread,
Painful tears of horns heard
In the great woods.

Tears, silvery songs
In the Florentine bowls
At the bottom of the dreamy garden;

Tears of starry nights,
Tears of veiled flutes
In the blue of the sleepy park;

Beaded tears of long eyelashes,
Tears of a mistress flowing
As far as the soul of the lover;

Drops of ecstasy, deliciously grief-stricken,
Let nights fall! Let flowers fall! Let eyes fall!

The time of lilacs - translation by Shikara Ringdahl
The time for lilacs and the time for roses
Will return no more this spring;
The time for lilacs and the time for roses
Is past, the time for carnations too.

The wind has changed, the skies are sullen,
And no longer shall we roam to gather
The flowering lilac and beautiful rose;
The spring is sad and cannot bloom.

Oh sweet and joyous springtime
That came in the year gone by to shine upon us,
Our flower of love is so far faded,
Alas, that your kiss cannot reawaken it!

And what do you do? No blossoming flowers,
No bright sun, and no cool shade;
The time for lilacs and the time for roses
With our love has perished for evermore.

Since here on earth each soul - translation by Peter Low
Since here on earth each soul gives to another one
its music, its flame, or its perfume;

since here on earth each thing always gives
its thorn or its rose to its beloved;

since April gives to the oaks a charming rustling noise,
and night gives to troubled minds the oblivion of sleep;

and since the ocean wave when it comes to rest
gives a kiss to the shore;

I give you now, as I lean over you,
the very best thing that I have inside me!

So accept my thought (a sad one, as it happens)
which like the dew reaches you as teardrops.

Accept my countless wishful words, oh my beloved!
Accept the flame or shadow of all my days!

Accept my passionate raptures, free of all suspicion,
and all the caresses of my songs;

And my mind which travels the seas, at random with no sail,
and follows no star except your eyes;

Accept, oh my beauty, my heavenly treasure,
this my heart which would be nothing if love were removed!

La vie antérieure - Charles Baudelaire

J'ai longtemps habité sous de vastes portiques
Que les soleils marins teignaient de mille feux,
Et que leurs grands piliers, droits et majestueux,
Rendaient pareils, le soir, aux grottes basaltiques.

Les houles, en roulant les images des cieux,
Mêlaient d'une façon solennelle et mystique
Les tout-puissants accords de leur riche musique
Aux couleurs du couchant reflété par mes yeux.

C'est là que j'ai vécu dans les voluptés calmes
Au milieu de l'azur, des vagues, des splendeurs,
Et des esclaves nus, tout imprégnés d'odeurs,

Qui me rafraîchissaient le front avec des palmes,
Et dont l'unique soin était d'approfondir
Le secret douloureux qui me faisait languir.

Ballade de Villon à s'amye - François Villon

Faulse beauté, qui tant me couste cher,
Rude en effect, hypocrite douleur,
Amour dure, plus que fer, à mascher;
Nommer que puis de ma deffaçon seur.
Charme felon, la mort d'ung povre cueur,
Orgueil mussé, qui gens met au mourir,
Yeulx sans pitié! ne vult Droict de Rigueur
Sans empirer, ung povre secourir?

Mieulx m'eust valu avoir esté crier
Ailleurs secours, c'eust esté mon bonheur:
Rien ne m'eust sceu de ce fait arracher;
Trotter m'en fault en fuyte à deshonneur.
Haro, haro, le grand et le mineur!
Et qu'est cecy? mourray sans coup ferir,
Ou pitié peult, selon ceste teneur,
Sans empirer, ung povre secourir.

Ung temps viendra, qui fera desseicher,
Jaulnir, flestrir, vostre espanie fleur:
J'en risse lors, se tant peusse marcher,
Mais las! nenny: ce seroit donc foleur,
Vieil je seray; vous, laide et sans couleur.
Or, beuvez, fort, tant que ru peult courir.
Ne donnez pas à tous ceste douleur
Sans empirer, ung povre secourir.

Prince amoureux, des amans le greigneur,
Vostre mal gré ne voudroye encourir;
Mais tout franc cueur doit, par Nostre Seigneur,
Sans empirer, ung povre secourir.

Ballade de Villon fait à la requête de sa mère

Dame du ciel, regente terrienne,
Emperière des infernaux palux,
Recevez-moy, vostre humble chrestienne,
Que comprinse soye entre vos esleuz,
Ce non obstant qu'onques riens ne valuz.
Les biens de vous, ma dame et ma maistresse,
Sont trop plus grans que ne suys pecheresse,
Sans lesquelz bien ame ne peult
Merir n'avoir les cieulx,
Je n'en suis mentèresse.
En ceste foy je vueil vivre et mourir.

À vostre Filz dictes que je suys sienne;
De luy soyent mes pechez aboluz:
Pardonnez-moy comme à l'Egyptienne,
Ou comme il feut au clerc Theophilus,
Lequel par vous fut quitte et absoluz,
Combien qu'il eust au diable faict promesse.
Preservez-moy que je n'accomplisse ce!
Vierge portant sans rompure encourir
Le sacrement qu'on celebre à la messe.
En ceste foy je vueil vivre et mourir.

Femme je suis povrette et ancienne,
Qui riens ne sçay, onques letre ne leuz;
Au moustier voy dont suis paroissienne,
Paradis painct où sont harpes et luz,
Et ung enfer où damnez sont boulluz:
L'ung me faict paour, l'autre joye et liesse.
La joye avoir fais moy, haulte Deesse,
À qui pecheurs doibvent tous recourir,
Comblez de foy, sans faincte ne paresse.
En ceste foy je vueil vivre et mourir.

A former life - translation by Elias Wilson

For long I lived beneath vast colonnades
Tinged with a thousand fires by ocean suns,
Whose giant pillars, straight and majestic,
Made them look, at evening, like basalt caves.

The sea-swells, mingling the mirrored skies,
Solemnly and mystically interwove
The mighty chords of their mellow music
With the colours of sunset reflected in my eyes.

It is there that I have lived in sensuous repose,
With blue sky about me and brightness and waves
And naked slaves all drenched in perfume.

Who fanned my brow with fronds of palm,
And whose only care was to fathom
The secret grief which made me languish.

Ballad of Villon to his lady - translation from various sources

False beauty, who costs me so dearly,
Harsh indeed, hypocritical sweetness,
Your love lasts longer than it takes to chew iron;
I name you, the cause of my ruin.
Treacherous enchantment, death to a poor heart,
Hidden pride that puts people to death,
Eyes without pity, can't the rights I am entitled to
Without worsening my lot, help a poor soul?

It would've been better for me to cry
Elsewhere for help: it would've been my good fortune;
Nothing would've been able to tear me away from that.
I pick up a trot in my flight from dishonor.
Help, help, I call both urgently and beseechingly!
And what's this? Should I die without a shot being fired?
Or can pity, given this situation,
Without worsening my lot, help a poor soul?

Your time will come: your blossoming flower
Will dessicate, turn yellow, and wilt;
I'll laugh then, if I can still chew,
But alas! nay; It would be folly,
I'll be old; you, ugly, and without color;
So drink deep, while the river still runs;
Don't inflict on anyone else this pain,
Without worsening my lot, help a poor soul?

Prince of love, the greatest of lovers,
Your disfavor I don't wish to incur,
But every honest heart must, by Our Lord,
Without worsening my lot, help a poor soul?

Ballade that Villon wrote at the request his mother - translation from various sources

Lady of heaven, earthly regent,
Empress of the infernal marshes,
Receive me, your humble Christian believer,
So I may be numbered among your elect,
Notwithstanding that I am worth nothing.
Your good qualities, my Lady and my Mistress,
Are far too great; I'm only a sinner,
Without those good qualities, a soul can't merit
Nor attain heaven.
I not a liar.
In this faith I want to live and die.

Tell your Son that I am his;
Through him may my sins be absolved;
Pardon me, like the Egyptian woman,
Or as you did for the cleric Theophilus,
Who through you were acquitted and absolved,
In spite of how many promises were made to the Devil.
Keep me from doing such a thing!
O Virgin, carrying, without risk of rupture,
The sacrament which is celebrated at Mass:
In this faith I want to live and die.

I am a woman, poor and old,
Who knows nothing; who never read a single letter.
At the monastic church where I am a parishioner, I see
Paradise painted, where there are harps and lutes,
And a Hell where the damned are boiled:
One frightens me, the other causes joy and jubilation.
Give me joy, lofty goddess,
From whom sinners must all resort,
Filled with faith, without feigning or laziness:
In this faith I want to live and die.

Ballade des femmes de Paris

Quoy qu'on tient belles langagières
Florentines, Veniciennes,
Assez pour estre messaigières,
Et mesmement les anciennes;
Mais, soient Lombardes, Romaines,
Genevoises, à mes périls,
Piemontoises, Savoyssiennes,
Il n'est bon bec que de Paris.

De beau parler tiennent chayeres,
Ce dit-on Napolitaines,
Et que sont bonnes cacquetières
Allemandes et Pruciennes;
Soient Grecques, Egyptiennes,
De Hongrie ou d'autre pais,
Espaignolles ou Castellannes,
Il n'est bon bec que de Paris.

Brettes, Suysses, n'y sçavent guères,
Ne Gasconnes et Tholouzaines;
Du Petit Pont deux harangères les concluront,
Et les Lorraines,
Anglesches ou Callaisiennes,
(ay-je beaucoup de lieux compris?)
Picardes, de Valenciennes...
Il n'est bon bec que de Paris.

Prince, aux dames parisiennes,
De bien parler donnez le prix;
Quoy qu'on die d'Italiennes,
Il n'est bon bec que de Paris.

Ç - Louis Aragon

J'ai traversé les ponts de Cé
C'est là que tout a commencé

Une chanson des temps passés
Parle d'un chevalier blessé
D'une rose sur la chaussée
Et d'un corsage délacé

Du château d'un duc insensé
Et des cygnes dans les fossés
De la prairie où vient danser
Une éternelle fiancée

Et j'ai bu comme un lait glacé
Le long lai des gloires fausées

La Loire emporte mes pensées
Avec les voitures versées
Et les armes désamorçées
Et les larmes mal effacées

O ma France, ô ma délaissée
J'ai traversé les ponts de Cé.

Voyage à Paris - Guillaume Apollinaire

Ah! la charmante chose
Quitter un pays morose
Pour Paris Paris joli
Qu'un jour Du créer l'Amour
Ah! La charmante chose
Quitter un pays morose
Pour Paris Paris joli
Ah! Quitter un pays morose
Charmante chose.

Montparnasse - Guillaume Apollinaire

Ô porte de l'hôtel avec deux plantes vertes
Vertes qui jamais
Ne porteront de fleurs
Où sont mes fruits? Où me planté-je?
Ô porte de l'hôtel un ange est devant toi
Distribuant des prospectus
On n'a jamais si bien défendu la vertu
Donnez-moi pour toujours une chambre à la semaine
Ange barbu vous êtes en réalité
Un poète lyrique d'Allemagne
Qui voulez connaître Paris
Vous connaissez de son pavé
Ces raies sur lesquelles il ne faut pas que l'on marche
Et vous rêvez
D'aller passer votre Dimanche à Garches

Il fait un peu lourd et vos cheveux sont longs
Ô bon petit poète un peu bête et trop blond
Vos yeux ressemblent tant à ces deux grands ballons
Qui s'en vont dans l'air pur
À l'aventure

Ballad to the women of Paris - translation from various sources

Whoever we consider to be charming conversationalists
Florentines, Venetians,
Enough for them to be able to be messengers,
As were those of old;
But, be they Lombards, Romans,
Genevans, I assert at my peril,
Piedmontese, Savoyards,
There is no gift of the gab as in Paris

In fine speaking, they hold chairs.
That is said of Neapolitans.
And they are good babblers
those Germans and Prussians;
Such is said of Greeks, Egyptians,
And those from Hungary or other lands,
Spaniards and Catalans, yet
There is no gift of the gab as in Paris

Bretons, Swiss, they scarcely know anything,
Neither do Gascons and Toulousianes:
Even two fishwives at the Petit Pont
Can out-talk them, and those from Lorraine,
England or Calais,
(Have I included enough places?)
Those from Picardy, from Valencia;
There is no gift of the gab as in Paris

Prince, to the women of Paris
Who speak so well, give the prize;
Whatever we say of the Italians,
There is no gift of the gab as in Paris

C - translation by Chelsea Burns

I have crossed the bridges of Cé
it is there that everything began.

A song of times passed
tells of a wounded knight,
of a rose on the pavement,
and an unlaced bodice.

Of the castle of an insane duke
and the swans in the moats,
of the meadow where
an eternal fiancée comes to dance.

And I have drunk like iced milk
the long lay of false glories.

The Loire carries my thoughts away
with the overturned cars
and the disarmed weapons
and the poorly erased tears.

Oh my France, oh my abandoned one,
I have crossed the bridges of Cé.

Trip to Paris - translation by Shikara Ringdahl

Oh! how delightful
To leave a dismal place
For Paris Pretty Paris
That one day Love must have made
Ah! how delightful
To leave a dismal place
For Paris Pretty Paris
To leave a dismal place
Charming thing.

Montparnasse - translation by Chelsea Burns

Oh hotel door with two green plants,
greenery that shall never
bear flowers
Where are my fruits? Where have I planted myself?
Oh hotel door, an angel is in front of you
distributing leaflets,
virtue has never been so well defended.
Give me forever a bedroom by the week.
Bearded angel, you are in reality
a lyric poet from Germany
who wants to know Paris.
You know it's pavements,
these cracks on which one must not step,
and you dream
of going to spend your Sunday in Garches.

It is a little sultry and your hair is long
Oh good little poet, a little stupid and too blond,
your eyes resemble so much these two big balloons
that float away in the pure air
on an adventure.

Fêtes galantes - Louis Aragon
On voit des marquis sur des bicyclettes
On voit des marlous en cheval-jupon
On voit des morveux avec des voilettes
On voit les pompiers brûler les pompons

On voit des mots jetés à la voirie
On voit des mots élevés au pavois
On voit les pieds des enfants de Marie
On voit le dos des diseuses à voix

On voit des voitures à gazogène
On voit aussi des voutures à bras
On voit des lascars que les longs nez gênent
On voit des coïons de dix-huit carats

On voit ici ce que l'on voit ailleurs
On voit des demoiselles dévoyées
On voit des voyous, On voit des voyeurs
On voit sous les ponts passer les noyés

On voit chômer les marchands de chaussures
On voit mourir d'ennui les mireurs d'œufs
On voit périlcliter les valeurs sûres
Et fuir la vie à la six-quatre-deux

Les chemins de l'amour - Jean Anouilh
Les chemins qui vont à la mer
Ont gardé de notre passage,
Des fleurs effeuillées
Et l'écho sous leurs arbres
De nos deux rires clairs.
Hélas! des jours de bonheur,
Radieuses joies envolées,
Je vais sans retrouver traces
Dans mon cœur.

Chemins de mon amour,
Je vous cherche toujours,
Chemins perdus, vous n'êtes plus
Et vos échos sont sourds.
Chemins du désespoir,
Chemins du souvenir,
Chemins du premier jour,
Divins chemins d'amour.

Si je dois l'oublier un jour,
La vie effaçant toute chose,
Je veux, dans mon cœur, qu'un souvenir repose,
Plus fort que l'autre amour.
Le souvenir du chemin,
Où tremblante et toute éperdue,
Un jour j'ai senti sur moi
Brûler tes mains.

Galante Festivities - translation by Chelsea Burns
One sees marquises on bicycles,
one sees crooks in petticoats,
one sees brats with veils,
one sees firefighters burn their pompoms

One sees words thrown in the rubbish,
one sees words elevated to the sky,
one sees the feet of the children of Mary,
one sees the back of storytellers.

One sees gas powered cars,
one also sees handcarts,
one sees rascals whose long noses are annoying,
one sees eighteen-carat fools.

One sees here what you see everywhere,
one sees young women led astray,
one sees thugs, you see voyeurs,
one sees the drowned passing under bridges.

One sees unemployed shoemakers,
one sees the egg-candlers bored to death
one sees sure values deteriorate,
and life flying by at six, four, two.

The paths of love - translation by Chelsea Burns
The paths that lead to the sea
have retained from our passing
the flowers stripped of their petals
and the echo beneath their trees
of our clear laughter.
Alas, the days of happiness,
of radiant joys are gone.
I go on without finding traces
of them in my heart.

Paths of my love,
I still seek you,
lost paths, you are no more
and your echoes are dull.
Paths of despair,
paths of memory,
paths of the first day,
divine paths of love.

If one day I have to forget,
since life erases all things,
I want one memory of love to rest in my heart
more firmly than another.
The memory of the path
where, trembling and totally lost,
I one day felt
your burning hands on me.



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