

## Songs by Samuel Barber

### THE MONK AND HIS CAT

8<sup>th</sup> or 9<sup>th</sup> century Translated by W. H. Auden

Pangur, white Pangur,  
How happy we are  
Alone together,  
Scholar and cat.

Each has his own work to do daily,  
for you it is hunting, for me study.  
Your shining eye watches the wall,  
my feeble eye is fixed on a book.  
You rejoice when your claws  
Entrap a mouse.  
I rejoice when my mind  
Fathoms a problem.  
Pleased with his own art,  
Neither hinders the other;  
Thus we live ever  
Without tedium and envy.

Pangur, white Pangur,  
How happy we are  
Alone together,  
Scholar and cat.

### THE DAISIES                  James Stephens

In the scented bud of the morning O,  
When the windy grass went rippling far!  
I saw my dear one walking slow  
In the field where the daisies are.

We did not laugh, and we did not speak,  
As we wandered happ'ly, to and fro,  
I kissed my dear on either cheek,  
In the bud of the morning O!

A lark sang up, from the breezy land;  
A lark sang down, from a cloud afar;  
As he and I went, hand in hand,  
In the field where the daisies are.

### A GREEN LOWLAND OF PIANOS

Czeslaw Milosz from the Polish of  
Jerzy Harasymowicz

In the evening as far as the eye can see  
herds of black pianos  
up to their knees in the mire  
they listen to the frogs  
they gurgle in water with chords of rapture  
they are entranced by froggish, moonish  
spontaneity

after the vacation  
they cause scandals in a concert hall  
during the artistic milking  
suddenly they lie down like cows  
looking with indifference  
at the white flowers of the audience  
at the gesticulating of the ushers  
black pianos, black pianos.

### I HEAR AN ARMY    James Joyce

I hear an army charging upon the land,  
And the thunder of horses plunging,  
Foam about their knees:  
Arrogant, in black armour, behind them stand,  
Disdaining the reins, with flutt'ring whips,  
The charioteers.  
They cry unto the night their battle names:  
I moan in sleep when I hear afar their whirling  
laughter.  
They cleave the gloom of dreams, a blinding  
flame,  
Clanging, clanging upon the heart  
As upon an anvil.  
They come shaking in triumph their long, green  
hair:  
They come out of the sea and run shouting by  
the shore.

My heart, have you no wisdom thus to despair?  
My love, my love, my love,  
why have you left me alone?

## Barcarolle from *The Tales of Hoffmann* by Jacques Offenbach

English translation

Beautiful night, oh, night of love  
Smile on our intoxication  
Night sweeter than the day  
Oh beautiful night of love!

Time flees and doesn't return  
Carrying our tenderness  
Far from this happy place  
Time flees without return

Glowing zephyrs  
Fill us with your caresses

Glowing zephyrs  
Give us your kisses!  
Your kisses! Your kisses! Ah!

Beautiful night, oh, night of love  
Smile on our intoxication  
Night sweeter than the day  
Oh, beautiful night of love!  
Ah! Smile on our intoxication!  
Night of love, oh, night of love!  
Ah!

**Samuel Osborne Barber II** (March 9, 1910 – January 23, 1981) was an American composer of orchestral, opera, choral and piano music. He is one of the most celebrated composers of the 20<sup>th</sup> century: music critic Donal Henanhan stated that “Probably no other American composer has ever enjoyed such early, such persistent and such long-lasting acclaim.” His *Adagio for Strings* (1936) has earned a permanent place in the concert repertory of orchestras. He was awarded the Pulitzer Prize for Music twice: for his opera *Vanessa* (1956-57) and for the *Concerto for Piano and Orchestra* (1962).

Some of Barber's most exquisite achievements were in the realm of vocal music, particularly the songs of Op. 10 and 13 and his 1947 setting of James Agee's *Knoxville: Summer of 1915* for soprano and orchestra, commissioned by soprano Eleanor Steber. He also wrote a song cycle called *Hermit Songs* (1953), in which he set old anonymous Irish texts taken from the walls of monasteries.

At the time of his death, nearly all of his compositions had been recorded.

## **Ode to Rock Lodge**

And when I told them how wonderful you are  
They didn't believe me, they didn't believe me

The lake, the sky, the gorgeous air  
Are in a class beyond compare  
And the people you meet they really care

And when I tell them  
And I'm certainly going to tell them  
Rock Lodge is all you dream that life could be

They'll never believe me, they'll never believe me  
That such a place on earth could ever be.