

A blurred photograph of a woman in a red coat walking away on a path through a wooded area. The image is soft and out of focus, with the woman's red coat being the most prominent color against the muted greens and browns of the background. The path she is on leads into the distance, and the overall atmosphere is quiet and contemplative.

THE RED *of a*  
WOMAN'S HEART

LISA HARPER-BROWN  
DAVID WICKHAM



THE RED *of a*  
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AUSTRALIAN ART SONGS

ALLEN GLANVILLE-HICKS HANSON PHILLIPS SUTHERLAND

LISA HARPER-BROWN  
DAVID WICKHAM

# THE RED *of a* WOMAN'S HEART

MARGARET SUTHERLAND (1897-1984)

## FOUR BLAKE SONGS (William Blake)

1	i	Memory, hither come	2'31
2	ii	Piping down the valleys wild	1'30
3	iii	How sweet I roamed	2'38
4	iv	I love the jocund dance	1'14

GEOFFREY ALLEN (b.1927)

## REMEMBERED LOVE Op.62 (Geoffrey Grigson)

5	i	Young and old	1'07
6	ii	The yew tree	0'58
7	iii	Sappho's loneliness	2'05
8	iv	The rock	1'46

PEGGY GLANVILLE-HICKS (1912-1990)

## PROFILES FROM CHINA (Eunice Tietjens)

9	i	Poetics	0'56
10	ii	A lament of scarlet cloud	1'17
11	iii	The dream	1'18
12	iv	Crepuscle	0'43
13	v	The son of heaven	1'58

RAYMOND HANSON (1913-1976)

## TWO SONGS Op.7 (Dame Mary Gilmore)

14	i	Night	2'31
15	ii	The pilgrim	2'22
16		This is my delight Op.14	2'43

LINDA PHILLIPS (1899-2002)

## TWO HEBREW SONGS

17	i	Oranim yerukim (Elisheva Bichovsky)	2'24
18	ii	Tavas z'havi (Hayyim Bialik)	1'46

PEGGY GLANVILLE-HICKS

**THIRTEEN WAYS OF LOOKING AT A BLACKBIRD** (*Wallace Stevens*)

19	i	Among twenty snowy mountains	0'24
20	ii	I was of three minds	0'50
21	iii	The blackbird whirled in the autumn winds	0'26
22	iv	A man, a woman	1'11
23	v	I do not know which to prefer	0'46
24	vi	Icicles filled the long window	1'16
25	vii	O thin men of Haddam	0'30
26	viii	I know noble accents	1'02
27	ix	When the blackbird flew out of sight	0'20
28	x	At the sight of blackbirds	0'54
29	xi	He rode over Connecticut	0'35
30	xii	The river is moving	1'54
31	xiii	It was evening all afternoon	1'36

MARGARET SUTHERLAND

**SIX SONGS**

32	i	Silence, beautiful voice ( <i>Alfred Lord Tennyson</i> )	1'55
33	ii	The night wind ( <i>Emily Brontë</i> )	2'15
34	iii	I who am dead a thousand years ( <i>James Flecker</i> )	3'30
35	iv	Jenny kissed me ( <i>Leigh Hunt</i> )	0'48
36	v	O mistress mine ( <i>William Shakespeare</i> )	1'16
37	vi	Tom o' Bedlam's song ( <i>Anonymous</i> )	2'05

**SIX SONGS TO THE POEMS OF JUDITH WRIGHT**

38	i	Midnight	2'39
39	ii	Winter kestrel	1'21
40	iii	The old prison	3'36
41	iv	Woman's song	2'39
42	v	The twins	2'55
43	vi	Bullocky	3'43

LISA HARPER-BROWN soprano  
DAVID WICKHAM piano

73'56

## THE RED *of a* WOMAN'S HEART

In a recent essay by the composer Amy Beth Kirsten entitled *The 'Woman Composer' Is Dead*, she acknowledged that “women have had an agonizingly difficult time gaining a creative foothold in classical music, whose repertory is male-dominated to a stifling degree.” But, in light of the international renown of several figures she argued that the ‘woman composer’ no longer required special pleading or affirmative action. “Neither art nor artist is served by segregation – even if it’s well intended,” Kirsten wrote. “Rather than going out of their way to boost female composers,” she suggested, “programmers should embrace only works that speak to them strongly, trusting that women will continue to advance.”

I had played Peggy Glanville-Hicks’s *Thirteen ways of looking at a blackbird* some fourteen years ago in London, and had long wanted to revisit it. Playing through quantities of songs by many composers to choose repertoire for this recording, it became clear just how significant was the contribution of women composers. The only problem in selecting songs that spoke to me strongly was in deciding which to exclude.

“The female voice has always been opera’s chief vessel of high emotion; something powerful happens when those voices become not just the conduit but also the creative source” as Alex Ross writes. Women have indeed excelled as song composers; Luise Reichardt, Fanny Mendelssohn, Clara Schumann, Lily and Nadia Boulanger span the golden age of the song in Germany and France, and in the present Judith Weir and Libby Larsen enjoy critical acclaim. Australia has one of the largest proportions of female to male composers in the world, of which we can be justly proud.

Some of the very best Australian songs were written by Peggy Glanville-Hicks and Margaret Sutherland. This disc brings together five of their sets, the most original and progressive, along with two songs by Linda Phillips representing a personal reflection of her Jewishness. Raymond Hanson is also featured, with three important songs showing his stylistic evolution from the earlier examples on *The poet sings*, our previous CD. Geoffrey Allen, tireless champion of Australian songs and chamber music publishing, completes the programme.

Of the travails that afflicted Margaret Sutherland in her career, Rosalind Appleby writes that “Through her travels, compositions and her active role in society, Sutherland brought an indifferent Australian public to terms with the musical currents of the early twentieth century. This despite the fact her last completed work was her first ever commission; she was refused

publication by Boosey & Hawkes after they discovered ‘M. Sutherland’ was a woman; and she was married for two decades to a man who thought composing music was a sign of mental illness in a woman.”

Having studied with Fritz Hart and Arnold Bax she had assimilated what she needed from European neo-classical music, a lack of sentiment and a leanness of form and texture, and had developed a subtle ear for changing density of harmony.

The **Four Blake songs** date from 1957, commemorating the bicentenary of William Blake. David Symons observes that “Sutherland was clearly attracted to Blake as a poet who depicts the natural world and draws an essentially mystical vision from it. The same is true of two of Sutherland’s most frequently-set poets, namely the Australian poets John Shaw Neilson and Judith Wright.” It is reported that Sutherland said that she “tried to get the feeling for Blake as an Englishman”, and so the choice of the dance rhythms of minuet, hornpipe, siciliana and jig is apposite, evoking era as well as place.

The first Blake song deals with ephemeral melody and memory, coloured with melancholy. Geoffrey Allen’s **Remembered love** follows this very English theme, setting texts by fellow Englishman Geoffrey Grigson. In the 1930s the irascible Grigson was part of a group that included W.H. Auden and Louis MacNeice. Allen had been seeking a poet who had been, like him, a student at St Edmund Hall, Oxford, but the correspondences seem to me to run much deeper. *Remembered love* uses a similar colloquial voice to Allen’s own texts in *Songs that mother never taught me* (recorded for *The poet sings*, our previous CD), and the velvety simplicity of Allen’s counterpoint animates the patient sorrow of the harmony to poignant effect. There are flashes of brightly energetic chromaticism to recall lost youth and love.

Peggy Glanville-Hicks also studied with Fritz Hart, a figure who will feature prominently later in this series of recordings. Glanville-Hicks, like Sutherland, also needed to leave Australia to develop, and worked under Vaughan Williams in London and Nadia Boulanger in Paris.

The neo-classical precision and rhythmic impulse encouraged by Boulanger are clearly displayed in both sets by Glanville-Hicks on this CD. A review of a performance of the 1945 **Profiles from China** proclaimed that “It is a rare pleasure indeed to come across a new composer writing in a contemporary idiom, yet free from the usual clichés”. The freshness is perhaps because this was the first time that Glanville-Hicks had moved away from poets and

topics favoured by the English pastoral composers, instead choosing an American writer whose text engaged with Asian themes. Eunice Tietjens's *Profiles from China: Sketches in Verse of People and Things Seen in the Interior* dates from 1917. The composer chose the aphoristic poems from among many longer ones, creating a series of detailed miniatures decked out with appropriately Chinese modal harmony but with the craft and heart of a Copland. Of the original book, Carl Sandburg wrote that "Some of the red of a woman's heart is between its covers, and it is a strong and honest book. I listen between the covers, and I hear the beggars, fakirs, scholars, ricksha runners, rice farmers and street dogs of swarming, immitigable, irrepressible, stinking, going-somewhere China."

A few details of the poems need mention; the Chinese *Book of Rites* says: "In ancient times, the emperor had one empress (hou), three consorts (fu-jen), nine concubines (p'in), twenty-seven mistresses (shih-fu), and eighty-one paramours (yü-ch'i)."

Li Po (701-762) was a prolific, creative and innovative poet, of whose output some thousand poems survive. Two of them were heard on *The poet sings*, set by Geoffrey Allen.

The Ten Courts of Purgatory are different regions of Diyu, the hell of Chinese mythology. "Each court deals with a different aspect of atonement and different punishments; most legends claim that sinners are subjected to gruesome tortures until their "deaths", after which they are restored to their original state for the torture to be repeated again."

Kuang-hsu was Emperor from 1875 to 1908, the eleventh of the Qing Dynasty. Yehonala is the birth name of the Dowager Empress Cixi who was regent to the young emperor. Kuang-Hsu initiated the Hundred Days' Reform, a bold attempt to modernise China after the model of powerful Japan, but was abruptly stopped when Cixi launched a coup in 1898, after which he was put under house arrest until his death. It is suggested that he was poisoned by the dying Cixi to prevent him overturning her policies.

The Nine Springs, Jiuquan, is another name for Hell, and the Dragon Throne is that of the Emperor of China.

For a change, male composers have to fight for a place in this collection, and Raymond Hanson deserves this place. The Depression of the 1930s curtailed early ambitions to be a missionary, and he turned instead to developing his musical gifts. It was only after military

service in the Second World War that Hanson trained in composition, with Alex Burnard. In turn, he taught at the NSW Conservatorium, and his students included Nigel Butterley, Richard Meale and Barry Conyngham. Larry Sitsky recalls the “image of a man who was kind, honest, full of integrity and humility and a man who cared for his pupils and for the future of music in Australia.”

His Opp.7 and 14 appear here, showing a darker and subtler development in his chromatic harmony, and a sonorous but understated French style to the accompaniments. Appropriately for this celebration of outstanding Australian women, he turned to Mary Gilmore for the texts of Op.7.

Gilmore was born in 1865, and after becoming a teacher near the mining town of Broken Hill developed profound socialist views and began writing poetry. Gilmore’s first volume of poetry was published in 1910, and for the ensuing half-century she was regarded as one of Australia’s most popular and widely read poets. **Night** is remarkable for European-style romanticisation of a distinctly Australian landscape, and **The pilgrim** offers an insight into her indomitable spirit.

Rabindranath Tagore’s poem **This is my delight** evokes a more overtly Romantic musical response from Hanson, with a dark-toned piano accompaniment and vocal line reminiscent of Rachmaninov. Tagore, or Thakur, was Bengali, and despite the European setting the voice of the mystic can be heard.

Like others in this collection, Linda Phillips searched widely for unusual texts to set, among them these two Hebrew poems. Although Phillips apparently translated them herself and set them in English, we prefer the originals which were given their own vocal line on the manuscript, and as such were sanctioned for performance by the composer.

Born in Melbourne in 1899, Phillips was another of Fritz Hart’s remarkable students at the Albert Street Conservatorium. As Joel Crotty observes, “Hart’s all-embracing composition studio must have been one of the few places in the Western world in the first quarter of the twentieth century that applied gender equality.” In common with his other students she developed confident handling of prosody and skill in concentrated form. Crotty writes that “Her melodic lines are never forced upon the voice”, and the aptness and freedom of these songs

demonstrate this. As an experienced accompanist her piano parts cradle the voice beautifully. Phillips's Jewish faith is often reflected in her music melodically and in idiomatic harmonies, but rarely as overtly as in the setting of these Hebrew texts, **Oranim yerukim** and **Tavas z'havi**.

Peggy Glanville-Hicks's second set on this disc is dated 1947, written in the United States where she enjoyed several years composing alongside Virgil Thomson and Paul Bowles. She chose the fascinating, suggestive miniatures **Thirteen ways of looking at a blackbird** by Wallace Stevens, and the same concern with compression of thought and clarity of musical imagery are employed as in *Profiles from China*.

Pulitzer Prize winner Stevens's writing has a minute concern with style and precision. He has the gift of finding an arresting image clothed in a few luminous and surprising words, suggesting deep knowledge expressed with lightness, almost a sense of play. Stevens was strongly influenced by the painter Paul Klee. His striking and apparently simple images are meticulously constructed and yet spontaneous in appearance, profound and playful. This concern with enigma, whimsy and humour in homeopathic doses is a perfect analogy for Stevens's haiku-like writing in *Blackbirds*. Stevens wrote that "This group of poems is not meant to be a collection of epigrams or of ideas, but of sensations."

Completing a circle, we return to Margaret Sutherland, covering both ends of her remarkable career. The **Six songs** are simply a collection of individual works, and show great stylistic diversity. David Symons has suggested the given dates of composition as being the most likely.

**Silence, beautiful voice** is from Tennyson's *Maud*, "the most beautiful of Tennyson's conceptions... She is veritably the "queen rose of the rosebud garden of girls" and there is "none like her, none." Yet *Maud* is but a shadow cast across the path of a man." If the song was indeed written in 1913 it is a striking announcement of things to come from a Melbourne schoolgirl. In that case, we owe a debt of gratitude to her early teacher Mona McBurney, the first acclaimed woman composer from Australia.

Emily Brontë's **The night wind** followed in 1914, after the first lessons with Fritz Hart. It is a beautifully poised piece, reminiscent of Schumann's *Mondnacht* in its hushed pulsing of a single note as a cloud of harmony aggregates around it through the sustain pedal.

From the 1930s came **I who am dead a thousand years**. James Elroy Flecker's majestic, mournful poem is striking enough as verse, but Sutherland finds a supple, keening darkness with just an echo of Arnold Bax. Its poignancy is doubled when one reflects that Flecker's early death in 1915, at 30, was described as the greatest premature loss in English poetry since Keats. **Jenny kissed me** is pure informal whimsy, all of eleven bars long, but full of harmonic detail. Its poet, Leigh Hunt, was born in London in 1784 to American parents, and his Hampstead circle included Keats himself, Shelley, Hazlitt and Lamb.

**O mistress mine** reminds one that every generation of song-writers needs to approach and interpret Shakespeare afresh. It was probably written in 1940, alongside incidental music and songs for a Melbourne production of *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. Being strophic, and perhaps for the theatre, it is in the simplest of idioms. Behind that façade is meticulously flexible and natural prosody involving changing metre and a disarmingly winning vocal line.

**Tom o' Bedlam's song** is a ballad, contemporary with Shakespeare but anonymous. In the manner of a Baroque mad song, such as Purcell excelled in, it portrays the ravings of a beggar, licensed upon his release from Bedlam. The supernatural references, the elevated subject matter of the fantasies aping high theatre and opera seria and the sexual overtones are all typical, the "hallmarks of licensed idiocy". This is confidently through-composed with just enough hints of rondo recurrences of a twisted chromatic descent to hold the structure together. From the seemingly comic intentions of the original text Sutherland creates something rather darker "which may have had autobiographical associations for Sutherland, this song being written around the time of her divorce" in 1946, Symons suggests.

The superb finale to this recital is the set of **Six songs to the poems of Judith Wright**. Published in 1967, the year of her belated first commission, they are full of perfectly-judged subtlety of dissonance, flexible metre and bold, long-flighted melody born straight out of the heart of the words. The piano staves are richly intense, somewhere sublimely between Lieder-like figuration and word-painting, and French-style encapsulation of mood. Their sure-footed rightness is the equal of Britten or Barber.

That the poetry is by Judith Wright only helps propel these songs into the very front rank of Australian music. She was only the second Australian to be awarded the Queen's Gold Medal

for Poetry, and balanced affectionate portraits of the Australian landscape with the ability to “deal with the relationship between settlers, Indigenous Australians and the bush”.

**Midnight** matches the seething metaphysics of the verse with austere nobility. The tense clarity of the poetic metre is carefully modulated with subtle tempo changes. **Winter kestrel** is all concentrated compact power, unblinking like the magnificent hunter of the poem. **The old prison**, by contrast, broods darkly in the piano chords as the wind moans through the voice and lamenting harmony. **Woman's song** is an astonishing meditation upon motherhood and mortality, a hushed soliloquy with an unborn child. The gentle intelligence of the vocal line rolls over beautifully judged harmonies in whispering quavers. **The twins** is marked “rather unconcernedly”, alluding to the serene delicate beauty of the sisters, but Sutherland finds a profound simplicity for the twins’ mysterious inner connection and their blithe unattainability. **Bullocky** is a classic Australian poem; the title is the name given to bullock train drivers. The direction on the score is “lumbering and sing-song”, and it is hard to imagine a better musical response to the mad Biblical references from the rough latter-day Moses. Is it fanciful to hear an echo of Porgy and Bess?

Wright offers a wonderful insight into Australian poetry, and also song. In 1968 she wrote that “For many years, a conception of Australia as a country to be loved or valued for its own sake was rare and difficult to uphold ... What did arise ... was, not a love of the country as such, but rather of the freedom its great distances provide ... than any deep feeling for the land itself. Even today, exploitation is the keynote of its economy, and respect for the soil and its natural growth of plants and animals is generally subordinate to the chance of money-making, at whatever cost to the landscape and its future. This forms no favourable climate for poetry, which needs a background in which emotional, as well as material, values are given their due weight; and the effect of this shallowness of roots is easily traceable in Australian writing ... We are only now developing a true local idiom and feeling.”

This is crucial to any attempt to determine whether an Australian voice has emerged in song-writing. It may be that with the work of writers such as Wright, John Shaw Neilsen, David Campbell, Douglas Stewart, Rosemary Dobson and Randolph Stow such a thing is developing.

MARGARET SUTHERLAND

**FOUR BLAKE SONGS**

*William Blake (1757-1827)*

1 i **Memory, hither come**

Memory, hither come,  
And tune your merry notes;  
And, while upon the wind  
Your music floats.

I'll pore upon the stream  
Where sighing lovers dream  
And fish for fancies as they pass  
Within the watery glass.

I'll drink of the clear stream,  
And hear the linner's song:  
And there I'll lie and dream  
The day along:

And, when night comes, I'll go  
To places fit for woe,  
Walking along the darkened valley  
With silent melancholy.

2 ii **Piping down the valleys wild**

Piping down the valleys wild,  
Piping songs of pleasant glee,  
On a cloud I saw a child,  
And he laughing said to me:

"Pipe a song about a lamb!"  
So I piped with merry cheer.  
"Piper, sing that again;"  
So I piped: he wept to hear.

"Drop thy pipe, thy happy pipe;  
Sing thy songs of happy cheer:"  
So I sung the same again,  
While he wept with joy to hear.

"Piper, sit thee down and write  
In a book that all may read."  
So he vanish'd from my sight  
And I pluck'd a hollow reed.

So I made a rural pen  
And I stain'd the water clear,  
And I wrote my happy songs  
Every child may joy to hear.

3 iii **How sweet I roamed**

How sweet I roamed from field to field,  
And tasted all the summer's pride,  
Till I the Prince of Love beheld,  
Who in the sunny beams did glide!

He shew'd me lilies for my hair  
And blushing roses for my brow;  
He led me through the gardens fair,  
Where all his golden pleasures grow.

With sweet May dews my wings were wet  
And Phoebus fired my vocal rage;  
He caught me in his silken net,  
And shut me in his golden cage.

He loves to sit and hear me sing,  
Then, laughing, sports and plays with me;  
He stretches out my golden wing,  
And mocks my loss of liberty.

4 iv **I love the jocund dance**

I love the jocund dance,  
The softly breathing song,  
Where innocent eyes do glance,  
And where lisps the maiden's tongue.

I love the laughing vale,  
I love the echoing hills,  
Where mirth can never fail,  
And the jolly swain laughs his fill.

I love the pleasant cot,  
I love the innocent bow'r,  
Where white and brown is our lot,  
Or fruit in the midday hour:

I love the oaken seat,  
Beneath the oaken tree,  
Where all the old villagers meet,  
But Kitty I better love thee.

I love our neighbours all,  
But Kitty I better love thee,  
I ever shall, I love thee,  
But thou art all to me!

### GEOFFREY ALLEN

#### REMEMBERED LOVE Op.62

*Geoffrey Grigson (1905-1985)*

5 i **Young and old**

You are young, you two, in loving  
Why should you wonder what endearments  
Old whisper still to old in bed,  
Or what the one left will say and say,  
Aloud, when nobody overhears, to the one  
Who irremediably is dead?

6 ii **The yew tree**

What happiness you gave to me  
Underneath this graveyard tree  
When in my embraces wound,  
Dear heart, you lay above the ground.

7 iii **Sappho's loneliness**

The moon has set  
The Seven Stars have set as well  
It is the middle of the night  
The time goes by  
And by myself I lie.

8 iv **The rock**

By a flat rock on the shore of the sea  
My dear one spoke to me.

O thyme now grows by the rock  
And a sprig of the rosemary.

### PEGGY GLANVILLE-HICKS

#### PROFILES FROM CHINA

*Eunice Tietjens (1884-1944)*

9 i **Poetics**

While two ladies of the Imperial harem held  
before a screen of pink silk, and a P'in Concubine  
knelt with his ink-slab, Li Po, who was very  
drunk, wrote an impassioned poem to the moon.

10 ii **A lament of scarlet cloud**

O golden night, lit by the flame of seven stars, the  
years have drunk you too.

11 iii **The dream**

When he had tasted in a dream of the Ten Courts  
of Purgatory, Doctor Tseng was humbled in spirit,  
and passed his life in piety among the foot-hills.

12 iv **Crepuscule**

Like the patter of the rain on the crisp leaves of  
autumn are the tiny footfalls of the fox-maidens.

13 v **The son of heaven**

Like this frail and melancholy rain is the memory  
of the Emperor Kuang-Hsue, and of his sufferings  
at the hand of Yehonala.

Yet in heaven was there found no one to avenge him.  
Now he has mounted the Dragon and has visited  
the Nine Springs. His betrayer sits upon the  
Dragon Throne.

RAYMOND HANSON

**TWO SONGS** Op.7

*Dame Mary Gilmore (1865-1962)*

14 i **Night**

The sun sinks slowly down,  
Darkens the forest;  
The shadows lengthen and run on the grass,  
And like great birds they fall.

In the trees naught moves but a leaf,  
Twisting and turning;  
Naught sounds but the click of a beetle,  
Upward slow creeping

Swift through the twilight  
Like a grey phantom,  
Silent the wallaroo  
Glides in his going.

Now like a bird on the nest  
Night covers the earth;  
In the far heavens  
Sharpen the stars.

15 ii **The pilgrim**

Rain dark as pain, and wind as wild as grief,  
And in my heart the salt of unshed tears –  
Scattered in sodden showers the once  
green leaf  
Ended the chapter of the golden years.  
The grain I sowed is sprouting in the sheaf  
The stook is slack to every wind that veers;  
Time that was once my friend is now  
my thief,  
And flings me to a course where no  
man steers.

And still against the adverse winds of fate  
I hold my way towards the utmost goal  
Taking what punishment may still await  
As part of that which shapes the steadfast soul;  
Longing in what sad hours and desolate,  
That you may one day read this blotted scroll.

16 **This is my delight** Op.14  
*Rabindranath Tagore (1861-1941)*

This is my delight, thus to wait and watch at the  
wayside where shadow chases light and the rain  
comes in the wake of the summer.

Messengers, with tidings from unknown skies,  
greet me and speed along the road.  
My heart is glad within, and the breath of the  
passing breeze is sweet.

From dawn till dusk I sit here before my door, and  
I know that of a sudden the happy moment will  
arrive when I shall see.

In the meanwhile I smile and I sing here all alone.  
In the meanwhile the air is filling with the  
perfume of promise.

LINDA PHILLIPS

## TWO HEBREW SONGS

- 17 i **Oranim yerukim**  
*Elisheva Bichovsky (1888-1949)*

Oranim yerukim beyarot molad'tee  
Shimru menuchatee v'simchat nishmatee  
Yeish harbei elanot B'artzee hashalvaa  
Rak lachemy' duar chochmat hashalvaa.

Im haneitz hachemmah el rekia orot  
Tis'oo kappachem k'nay-  
menorot.  
Kach, mikkedem am'du b'hei'chal elohim.  
Achelchem, arzei' levanon gevohim!

- 18 ii **Tavas z'havi**  
*Hayyim Nahman Bialik (1873-1934)*

Tavas z'havi parach lo!  
Anah ta'oof, Tavas z'havi?  
Af ani el evrai yam.  
Tireh sham et dod le'vavi?

Ereh ve' avi micktav lachu  
Va'micktav be'tsorah metukah.  
Yom hachuppah, im yirtseh hashem,  
Achar shabbat shel chanukah!

## Ash trees

*Green ash trees in the forests of my home.  
Watch over my rest and my soul's happiness.  
Though in my country fair are many trees,  
Only you know wisdom of quietness.*

*With the sun arising to the heavens of light  
Your palms you outspread like a candle's branch  
they lie.  
Thus in times long ago in the temple of God  
Your brothers, cedars of Lebanon stood high!*

## The golden bird

*Whither fliest golden bird?  
Whither fliest wings that are golden?  
I shall fly across the sea.  
Wilt thou return with news of my lover?*

*I shall bring a message to thee,  
A message with tidings of joy!  
After the Sabbath of the Feast of Lights,  
Thy wedding day will come!*

PEGGY GLANVILLE-HICKS

**THIRTEEN WAYS OF LOOKING  
AT A BLACKBIRD**

*Wallace Stevens (1879-1955)*

19 i **Among twenty snowy mountains**

Among twenty snowy mountains,  
The only moving thing  
Was the eye of the blackbird.

20 ii **I was of three minds**

I was of three minds,  
Like a tree  
In which there are three blackbirds.

21 iii **The blackbird whirled in the  
autumn winds**

The blackbird whirled in the autumn winds.  
It was a small part of the pantomime.

22 iv **A man, a woman**

A man, a woman  
Are one.  
A man, a woman, a blackbird  
Are one.

23 v **I do not know which to prefer**

I do not know which to prefer,  
The beauty of inflections  
Or the beauty of innuendoes,  
The blackbird whistling  
Or just after.

24 vi **Icicles filled the long window**

Icicles filled the long window  
With barbaric glass.  
The shadow of the blackbird  
Crossed it, to and fro.  
The mood  
Traced in the shadow  
An indecipherable cause.

25 vii **O thin men of Haddam**

O thin men of Haddam,  
Why do you imagine golden birds?  
Do you not see how the blackbird  
Walks around the feet  
Of the women about you?

26 viii **I know noble accents**

I know noble accents  
And lucid, inescapable rhythms;  
But I know, too,  
That the blackbird is involved  
In what I know.

27 ix **When the blackbird flew out of sight**

When the blackbird flew out of sight,  
It marked the edge  
Of one of many circles.

28 x **At the sight of blackbirds**

At the sight of blackbirds  
Flying in a green light,  
Even the bawds of euphony  
Would cry out sharply.

29 xi **He rode over Connecticut**

He rode over Connecticut  
In a glass coach.  
Once, a fear pierced him,  
In that he mistook  
The shadow of his equipage  
For blackbirds.

30 xii **The river is moving**

The river is moving,  
The blackbird must be flying.

31 xiii **It was evening all afternoon**

It was evening all afternoon.  
It was snowing  
And it was going to snow.  
The blackbird sat  
In the cedar-limbs.

MARGARET SUTHERLAND

SIX SONGS

32 i **Silence, beautiful voice**

*Alfred Lord Tennyson (1809-1892)*

Silence, beautiful voice!  
Be still for you only trouble the mind  
With a joy in which I cannot rejoice  
A glory I shall not find.  
Still! I will hear you no more,  
For your sweetness hardly leaves me a choice  
But to move to the meadow and fall before  
Her feet on the meadow grass, and adore,  
Not her, who is neither courtly nor kind  
Not her, not her, but a voice.

33 ii **The night wind**

*Emily Brontë (1818-1848)*

In summer's mellow midnight  
A cloudless moon shone through  
Our open parlour window,  
And roses wet with dew.

I sat in silent musing  
The soft wind waved my hair.  
It told me heaven was glorious,  
And sleeping earth was fair.

I needed not its breathing  
To bring such thoughts to me;  
But still it murmured lowly,  
How dark the woods will be!

34 iii **I who am dead a thousand years**

*James Elroy Flecker (1884-1915)*

I who am dead a thousand years,  
And wrote this sweet archaic song,  
Send you my words for messengers,  
The way I shall not pass along.

I care not if you bridge the seas,  
Or ride secure the cruel sky,  
Or build consummate palaces,  
Of metal or of masonry.

But have you wine and music still,  
And statues and a bright-eyed love,  
And foolish thoughts of good or ill,  
And prayers to those who sit above?

How shall we conquer? Like a wind  
That falls at eve our fancies blow  
And old Maeonides the blind,  
Said it three thousand years ago.

O friend unseen, unborn, unknown,  
Student of our sweet English tongue,  
Read out my words at night, alone:  
I was a poet, I was young.

Since I can never see your face,  
And never shake you by the hand,  
I send my soul through time and space  
To greet you. You will understand.

35 iv **Jenny kissed me**

*Leigh Hunt (1810-1873)*

Jenny kissed me when we met,  
Jumping from the chair she sat in;  
Time, you thief, who love to get  
Sweets into your list, put that in!  
Say I'm weary, say I'm sad,  
Say that health and wealth have missed me,  
Say I'm growing old, but add,  
Jenny kissed me.

36 v **O mistress mine**  
*William Shakespeare (1564-1616)*

O mistress mine, where are you roaming?  
O stay and hear, your true love's coming,  
That can sing both high and low.  
Trip no further, pretty sweeting,  
Journeys end in lovers meeting,  
Every wise man's son doth know.

What is love? 'Tis not hereafter,  
Present mirth hath present laughter.  
What's to come is still unsure.  
In delay there lies no plenty,  
Then come kiss me, sweet and twenty,  
Youth's a stuff will not endure.

37 vi **Tom o' Bedlam's song**  
*Anonymous*

From the hag and hungry goblin  
That into rags would rend ye,  
All the spirits that stand by the naked man  
In the book of moons defend ye!

I slept not since the Conquest,  
Till then I never waked,  
Till the roguish boy of love where I lay  
Me found and stripped me naked.

The moon's my constant mistress  
And the lonely owl my marrow;  
The flaming drake and the night crow  
Make me music to my sorrow.

I know more than Apollo,  
For oft when he lies sleeping  
I behold the stars at bloody wars  
And the wounded welkin weeping.

The moon embraces her shepherd  
And the Queen of Love her haven,  
While the first doth horn the star of dawn  
And the next the heav'nly farrier.

With a host of furious fancies  
Whereof I am commander  
With a burning spear and a horse of air  
To the wilderness I wandered.

**SIX SONGS TO THE POEMS OF  
JUDITH WRIGHT**

*Judith Wright (1915-2000)*

38 i **Midnight**

Darkness where I find my sight,  
Shadowless and burning night,  
Here where life and death are met  
Is the fire of being set.

Watchman eye and workman hand  
Are spun of water, air and sand.  
These will crumble and be gone, –  
Still that darkness rages on.

As a plant in winter dies  
Down into the germ, and lies  
Leafless, tongueless, lost in the earth,  
Imagining its fierce rebirth;

And with the whirling rays of the sun,  
And shuttle-stroke of living rain  
Weaves that image from its heart  
And like a god is born again –

So let my blood reshape its dream,  
Drawn into that tideless stream;  
That shadowless and burning night  
Of darkness where I find my sight.

39 ii **Winter kestrel**

Fierce with hunger and cold  
All night in the windy tree  
The kestrel in the sun cries,  
“Oh bird in the egg of the sea,

“Break out, and tower, and hang  
High, oh most high,  
And watch for the running mouse  
With your unwavering eye;

“And I shall hover and hunt,  
And I shall see him move,  
And I, like a bolt of power  
Shall seize him from above.

“Break from your blue shell,  
You burning Bird of God,  
And light me to my kill –  
And you shall share his blood.”

40 iii **The old prison**

The rows of cells are unroofed,  
A flute for the wind's mouth,  
Who comes with a breath of ice  
From the blue caves of the south.

O dark and fierce day:  
The wind like an angry bee  
Hunts for the black honey  
In the pits of the hollow sea.

Waves of shadow wash  
The empty shell bone bare,  
And like a bone it sings  
A bitter song of the air.

Who built and laboured here?  
The wind and the sea say  
– The cold nest is broken  
And they are blown away –

They did not breed nor love.  
Each in his cell alone  
Cries as the wind now cries  
Through his flute of stone.

41 iv **Woman's song**

O move in me, my darling.  
For now the sun must rise;  
The sun that will draw open  
The lids upon your eyes.

O wake in me, my darling.  
The knife of day is bright,  
To cut the thread that binds you  
Within the flesh of night.

Today I lose and find you  
Whom yet my blood would keep –  
Would weave and sing around you  
The spells and songs of sleep.

None but I shall know you  
As none but I have known;  
Yet there's a death and a maiden  
Who wait for you alone;

So move in me, my darling,  
Whose debt I cannot pay.  
Pain and the dark must claim you,  
And passion and the day.

42 v **The twins**

Not because of their beauty – though  
 they are slender  
 As saplings of white cedar, and long as lilies –  
 Not because of their delicate dancing step,  
 Or their brown hair sideways blown like  
 the manes of fillies –  
 It is not for their beauty that the crowd in  
 the street  
 Wavers like dry leaves around them on  
 the wind.  
 It is the chord, the intricate unison  
 Of one and one, strikes home to the  
 watcher's mind.  
 How sweet is the double gesture, the  
 mirror-answer;  
 Same hand woven in same, like arm in arm.  
 Salt blood like tears freshens the crowd's  
 dry veins,  
 And moving in its web of time and harm  
 The unloved heart answers, "Where is  
 my reply,  
 My kin, my answer? I am driven and alone."  
 Their serene eyes seek nothing. They  
 walk by.  
 They move into the future and are gone.

43 vi **Bullocky**

Beside his heavy shouldered team,  
 Thirsty with drought and chilled by rain,  
 He weathered all the striding years  
 Till they ran widdershins in his brain:

Till the long solitary track  
 Etched deeper with each lurching load  
 Were populous before his eyes,  
 And fiends and angels used his road.

All the long straining journey grew  
 A mad apocalyptic dream,  
 And he, old Moses, and his slaves  
 His suffering and stubborn team.

Then in his evening camp beneath  
 The half-light pillars of the trees  
 He filled the steeped cone of night  
 With shouted prayers and prophecies.

While past the campfire's crimson ring  
 The star-struck darkness cupped him round,  
 And centuries of cattle-bells  
 Rang with their sweet uneasy sound.

Grass is across the wagon-tracks,  
 And plough strikes bones beneath the grass,  
 And vineyards cover all the slopes  
 Where the dead teams were used to pass.

O vine, grow close upon that bone  
 And hold it with your rooted hand.  
 The prophet Moses feeds the grape,  
 And fruitful is the Promised Land.

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