

Moses PERGAMENT

VOLUME TWO: SONGS

Tuuli Lindeberg, soprano
Martin Malmgren, piano

FIRST RECORDINGS

MOSES PERGAMENT Songs

1	<i>A klap hot gegeben der Wint</i> (1909–16/1966)	3:15
2	<i>Zwei Kammern hat das Herz</i> (1911, revised)	1:14
3	<i>Kung Liv och Drottning Död</i> (1915)*	4:47
Två sånger (1916)		3:30
4	No. 1 Kväll i skogen*	2:35
5	No. 2 Barnet og faaret	0:55
6	<i>Erster Verlust</i> (1916)	2:07
7	<i>Der jungen Hexe Lied</i> (1919, rev. 1966)	2:37
8	<i>Die Quelle der Schmerzen</i> (1921)	2:31
9	<i>Torra trädets klagan</i> (1931)	2:22
Nyckelpigan och andra visor för barn (1932)		
10	No. 3 Långt bort i skogen	2:20
4 lustiga och 4 sorgmodiga folkvisor (1936)		13:55
11	No. 1 Rocken snurrar, lampan brinner	1:08
12	No. 2 Men liljorna de växa upp om våren	2:07
13	No. 3 Jag gick mej ut åt vägen	1:17
14	No. 4 De sporde om skön Särling	2:10
15	No. 5 Skomakarevisan	1:54
16	No. 6 Ge mej hit lite bläck och en penna	2:54
17	No. 7 Säckpipan	0:33
18	No. 8 Nödårsvisan	1:52
19	<i>Vårnatt i Ajalon</i> (1941)	5:04

<i>Fyra kinesiska sånger</i> (1946)	9:33
20 No. 1 Lyssnande till en nattlig flöjt från Shou-Hsingmuren	2:35
21 No. 2 En suck från en trappa av jade	1:05
22 No. 3 Bitter kärlek	2:17
23 No. 4 Gränslös längtan	3:36
24 <i>Ett är nödvändigt</i> (1950, revised)	4:59
25 <i>L'infidèle</i> (1951)	3:32
26 <i>Sono stanca</i> (1971)	3:38
27 <i>Natten sænker sit mørke Slør</i> (1970)	2:14
28 <i>Vaggvisa</i> (1971)	2:41
	TT 70:22

Tuuli Lindeberg, soprano
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FIRST RECORDINGS
* FIRST MODERN RECORDINGS

MOSES PERGAMENT, VOLUME TWO: SONGS

by Martin Malmgren

Even the most cursory glance at the musical output of Moses Pergament (1893–1977) makes it abundantly clear that the marriage between words and music was central to his creative life. His *œuvre* includes a substantial amount of choral music, three operas and many works for orchestra and voices – including *Den judiska sången* (‘The Jewish Song’), his *magnum opus*, and the oratorio *De sju dödssynderna* (‘The Seven Deadly Sins’), both for vocal soloists, choir and orchestra.¹ In stark contrast to the large-scale vocal scores stand his one hundred or so songs for voice and piano, most of which were written as independent works. They therefore offer a glimpse of Pergament in smaller format, focused on distilling the essence of one particular poem at a time.

Relatively little has been preserved from the earliest years of Pergament’s life. There is, however, an important early memory connected to singing:

When I was a little boy, I always went with my father, who was an Orthodox Jew, and so he faithfully attended the synagogue in Helsinki, where the entire congregation and liturgy were Orthodox. [...] And then there was this antiphonal singing between the cantor and the congregation – the cantor would sing a phrase, and then the congregation would respond. But since this was not a systematic choir responding, everyone sang individually – although the melody of the response was given – but since it was never rehearsed, one sang the response a little faster, another sang a little slower, one made a little trill around a certain motif in the response, so the overall effect became incredibly fascinating, like a roaring ocean wave, with many motifs at

¹ *The Seven Deadly Sins* also includes a separate speaking choir. It was commissioned by Sveriges Radio and premiered as a radio broadcast, with the actress Anita Björk reading between the movements the poems by Karin Boye that inspired the work. Although it is one of Pergament’s most important late works, to date it has never been performed in concert.

once, yet still coming across as a unified whole. And this I wanted to imitate in one place in *The Jewish Song*.²

It is in poetry rather than music that one finds Pergament's earliest preserved displays of creativity. A notebook bearing the title 'Sohn der Juden' ('Son of the Jews') contains his first known poems, with the thirteen-year-old Pergament writing in Yiddish, Swedish and sometimes German.³ The first known version of what he referred to as his first song, 'A klapp hot gegeben der Wint', in Yiddish and on the subject of a Jewish pogrom, is dated November 1909 and was written during his violin studies in St Petersburg, with a dedication to his 'good friend Mr Yrjö Kilpinen'.⁴ As might be expected, from the same period one finds original poetry on related subjects in Pergament's notebook.

Moses Pergament's family had its origins in the Lithuanian village of Ukmergė, where his grandfather was recruited as cantonist⁵ in the Imperial Russian army. He served as a drummer, and at the end of his mandatory 25 years of service, he was resettled to Turku, Finland, where limited exemptions to allow Jews to stay had been introduced in 1858. His son Judel – Moses Pergament's father – showed musicality by singing 'endless verses from Tehillim (the psalms) when he on Saturdays and public holidays had the afternoons free'.⁶ It has been said that 'what has meant the most to M.P. in his development is the heritage from two cultures, "the dual sources", as he himself calls it';⁷ a reference to his Jewish and Nordic roots. Given that Moses Pergament's grandfather

² Interviewed by Berit Berling, 28 September 1970, at Radiohuset, Sveriges Radio, Stockholm. It should be noted that the Helsinki synagogue was built in 1905–6, meaning that Pergament, who was born in 1893, couldn't have attended any liturgy there at the age of three. Before the synagogue was built, the small Jewish community of Helsinki gathered in various locations: in the Langén villa in Siltasaari, on Uudenmankatu 36 and on Malminkatu 22 (Samuli Skurnik, *Narinkkatorilta Kiestingin mottiin*, Kustannusosakeyhtiö Paasilinna, Helsinki, 2013, p. 47).

³ This notebook was rediscovered only recently among family belongings. In 1910, Pergament composed music to one of the last poems in the book, giving the song the title '*Vöglein singen, Glöcklein klingen...*'.

⁴ Found in the Yrjö Kilpinen archives of the Finnish National Library.

⁵ Cantonists were the underage sons of conscripts in the Russian Empire, educated from 1721 in special cantonist schools for future military service; Jews were conscripted from 1827. The cantonist system was abolished in 1857.

⁶ 'Berättelse om mitt liv', a handwritten unpublished eighteen-page memoir, written by Pergament in 1974–75 (in private ownership).

⁷ 'Den judiska sången – Några särdrag', unpublished essay by K. Hybinette, written after discussion with the composer. Found in the Pergament archives of the Music and Theatre Library in Stockholm (hereafter referred to as MTL): A640, Vol. 7.

was subjected to torture to make him abandon his faith,⁸ the subject-matter of his first known song seems only natural for a composer whose *magnum opus* was to be *The Jewish Song*, written many decades later and centred on similar issues. It is evident that these early experiences in the synagogue were central to his artistic development⁹ – and already in his earliest compositions one finds melodic elements inspired by the tropes.¹⁰ For most of his life Pergament's use of this material was entirely intuitive.¹¹

A natural vantage point from which to gain an understanding of Pergament's vocal works lies in his literary interests. Looking back at the reading experiences of his adolescence, he writes:

When, as a fifteen-year-old – after having read Dostoevsky's *Crime and Punishment* and Tolstoy's *Resurrection* and *The Kreutzer Sonata* – I became aware of the social and psychological themes of certain novels, every new book took on a new face – a face whose specific features had to be perceived and interpreted in accordance with the author's vision and intention.¹²

⁸ Ann-Charlotte Pergament, the daughter-in-law of Moses Pergament, compiled a document called 'Some notes on the Pergament family', in private ownership, which is 'based on oral accounts, letters, notes and individual documents'. It is dated January 1985 and is quoted here:

Moses Parmet was taken from his family's hideout in Vilkomir, Lithuania, at the age of eight and transported by the Tsar's soldiers by cart to Novgorod, where he was placed in a military school. Various inquisitorial measures were taken to get him and the other captured Jewish boys to be baptised. Among other things, they were made to stand for hours with bare knees on hard peas and then ordered to walk across the floor. They were fed salty herring and similar foods and then herded into a sweat sauna, consumed by thirst but given no water to drink until they agreed to be baptised. The weak succumbed, while the persistent were finally left in peace – for a time. Then the procedure was repeated.

⁹ In a letter (in English) to the Israeli conductor Elyakum Shapirra, he writes:

The mostpart of my compositions has been influenced by my jewish origin and mentality. Already from my third year I came in connection with the cantillation of the Bible in our synagogue. And this mighty impression remained the most dominating trough all my life until this day.

Undated copy, in private ownership, probably written around 1971
(Pergament's spelling has remained uncorrected).

¹⁰ Hebrew cantillation – also known as trope, trop or *te'amim* – refers to the traditional method of chanting passages from the Hebrew Bible during synagogue services. These chants follow specific musical signs or marks that appear in the Masoretic Text, accompanying the written letters and vowel symbols.

¹¹ Calendar entry, 9 June 1971, MTL, A640, Vol. 4.

¹² *Julfacklan*, 1957 edition. *Julfacklan* was the Christmas magazine of the Swedish Social Democratic Workers' Party.

If one takes the view that his art-songs present Pergament's interpretation of the 'face' of each individual poem, one can perhaps understand why the composer showed so little interest in writing cycles when composing for piano and voice: in the intimate form of Lieder, Pergament appears to have viewed each poem as a universe of its own, with little requirement that it should belong to a larger whole. His large-form statements were thus typically reserved for his operas, works for voices and orchestra and some choral works. By contrast, many of his songs seem to have been written swiftly, during short bursts of inspiration. Whenever writing for voices, Pergament explained that he always endeavoured to 'declaim as I imagine the poet would want to do. In any case, as the content of the poem dictates'.¹³

Pergament composed songs for voice and piano with some frequency from the start of his creative life until the early 1950s. The following ten-year gap is explained by the fact that he was occupied with his operatic collaborations with Nelly Sachs, the oratorio *The Seven Deadly Sins*, the Cello Concerto and other works. When he turned 70 in 1963, STIM (The Swedish Performing Rights Society) celebrated his birthday by bringing out some previously unpublished works, including many songs. In the newspaper *Dagens Nyheter*, Lennart Hedwall reported:

the path has gone from song-like simplicity to ever-greater breadth and expressiveness. Common to all the songs is the darkly brooding minor key, which sometimes brightens to a quiet melancholy, and the richly differentiated harmonies. They also testify to their composer's broad literary register: Pergament finds equally adequate musical expression for texts by Maeterlinck and Bertil Malmberg as for A. Gunnar Bergman.¹⁴ [...] The selection testifies to what an exquisite art-song composer Pergament is – it should not take an anniversary to underline that fact.¹⁵

¹³ Interview with Thomas Olofsson, broadcast on Sveriges Television on 5 October 1970.

¹⁴ Arnor Gunnar Nial Bergman was born in 1903 and was a writer, poet and editor, often referred to as a working-class writer. Pergament probably made the acquaintance of Bergman when the two worked for the daily, social-democratic *Aftonbladet*.

¹⁵ Lennart Hedwall, 'SÄNGER av Moses Pergament', *Dagens Nyheter*, 21 October 1963.

He continued to return to his earlier unpublished songs, and in 1968, STIM published a catalogue of Swedish vocal music with piano,¹⁶ where most of Pergament's output in the genre was finally listed in one place. Was it the reworking of earlier songs that made him return to *Lieder*? Whatever the cause, his last decade turned out to be productive, resulting in a series of ten Italian songs, as well as *Violoncellen* for voice, cello and piano, and some songs in Swedish and Danish. One can be thankful that a young musicology student, Eleanor Flodmark, took interest in Pergament's songs around this time – her unpublished thesis¹⁷ was written following interviews with the composer and goes through all songs that he had written to that date. Similarly, the starting point for this recording was to sing through Pergament's songs, to get a better sense of his musical voice, stylistic breadth and literary preferences.

The pianist Thomas Schuback collaborated with the singers Erik Saedén and Karin Mang-Habashi in the first performances of those ten Italian songs. Schuback wholeheartedly agreed with the words of Gunnar Staern, according to whom Pergament allowed much liberty to experiment with tempo and other matters.¹⁸ 'We met Moses, and I had this image of him as a rather stern intellectual. But he turned out to be an incredibly warm person.'¹⁹ Schuback also noted how focused Pergament was on the text, and recorded that Saedén was a natural choice of singer because of his excellent diction. Karin Mang-Habashi speaks of Pergament in similarly warm terms, describing him as a fount of knowledge who proved to be a good friend to her and her husband, the Egyptian-born cellist Nagy el Habashi.²⁰ To the cantor Leo Rosenblüth, Pergament was a dear friend and musical companion – together, they created a Jewish orchestra and choir in Stockholm during the Second World War, consisting primarily of refugees from the Third Reich; some of the arrangements Pergament wrote for it have been preserved on recordings. Often, Rosenblüth was among the first to sing through Pergament's most

¹⁶ Per Olof Lundahl, *Katalog över svensk vokalmusik: sånger för en röst med piano*, STIM, Stockholm, 1968.

¹⁷ Eleanor Flodmark, 'Moses Pergaments sånger', Stockholm University, 1972.

¹⁸ Discussed in my booklet text for *Moses Pergament, Volume One: A Musical Miscellany*, Toccata Classics TOCC 0728.

¹⁹ Telephone conversation on 6 June 2025.

²⁰ Nagy el Habashi became a cellist in the Royal Stockholm Philharmonic Orchestra, and performed and recorded many works by Pergament. He died on 25 February 2025.

recent songs *prima vista*, and in the words of Babette Gottschalk, the half-sister of Moses Pergament's wife Ilse: 'Moses used to say, if Leo hadn't been a cantor, he would have been an opera star'.²¹ In fact, this thought was later realised, when Leo was given the role of a rabbi in Pergament's opera *Eli*, to a libretto by Nelly Sachs. As one of the foremost interpreters of Pergament's vocal music, Rosenblüth comments:

Moses Pergament's melodies are characterised largely by their 'speaking' quality, not only in terms of the recitative and the more arioso form of his songs and choral pieces, but strangely enough also in terms of most of his instrumental works. It is thus a melodic style rooted in vocal music, where it places the principle of verbal expression above musical impulsiveness *ab initio*, which, once transferred to instrumental forms, proves to be highly potent, despite all the differences that naturally exist between voice and instrument in terms of range and mobility, but above all in terms of psychological effect.

The fact that Pergament works in this way and that his musical inventiveness and creative imagination result in precisely this melody with its highly personal touch can undoubtedly be explained by the musical impressions he received in his Jewish youth. These have never faded, no matter how familiar he became with other musical styles in later stages of his development.²²

Stylistically, Pergament developed from late Romanticism to an increasingly complex, modern style in the late 1910s to the 1920s. The following decade saw another shift in focus: he started writing children's songs, arrangements of Swedish folksongs and so-called 'sports songs',²³ all of which are much simpler than his earlier output. Pergament was not readily accepted in Swedish music-life, in part because of his Jewish background and the fact that he was foreign-born. It is therefore tempting to assume

²¹ Interview with Babette Gottschalk (b. 1929) on 11 September 2025. Apart from occasional visits to the family in the 1930s, she lived with them from 1947 to 1951, arriving together with her Italian mother, Alice de Finetti, as a refugee from Germany. Babette and Ilse's father, Leopold Kutzleb, died of a heart attack in May 1941.

²² Leo Rosenblüth, 'Arvet från två kulturer' ('The Legacy of Two Cultures'), *Nutida Musik*, 1963–64, No. 3, p. 8.

²³ These songs were written for a competition arranged by *Dagens Nyheter* and Nordiska Musikförlaget in 1936, where the successful works were meant to be sung by Swedish spectators at the Olympic Games in Berlin in the same year. Since Pergament was among the winners, it is likely that his songs were sung in an environment where German Jews had been excluded. Pergament dedicated the songs to his three children.

that he saw it as necessary to 'prove' his Swedishness. A letter to the composer Oskar Lindberg from 1938 gives an indication of how he viewed his situation: 'As you may recall from previous events, I am not particularly fearful. And as for the displeasure of "musicians in leading positions", I would only like to point out that I have thus far gone my way not with their help, but despite their opposition.'²⁴ But there are other, more straightforward explanations for the children's songs and folksong arrangements. Pergament composed mostly out of an inner necessity: it would be very much out of character if he had written anything to 'prove' himself. One can nevertheless understand his feelings when discussing the poet Oscar Levertin (1862–1906), where one is left wondering if he isn't also writing about himself:

As a poet and prose writer, Levertin was Swedish to the core. But as a human being and private individual, he felt strongly about his Jewish roots and connection to the Jewish experience: that nowhere was he unreservedly recognised as a fully equal and entitled member of society. Even in his work as a poet, he was sometimes accused of being a child of another spirit, an exotic bird whose wing beats carried a strong breeze from the Orient. As much as he loved and devoted himself to Sweden, to the country, his mother tongue, literature, national and folk motifs, he was equally strongly and consistently committed to the Jewish cause with his mind and heart.²⁵

Throughout his creative life and stylistic shifts, Pergament's musical voice remained distinct and easily recognisable. One can assume that his familiarity with the creative process of writing made it easy for him to distil the essence of any text he felt inspired to put to music.²⁶ What he wrote about the experience of reading books can readily be applied to his setting of texts:

²⁴ Letter to Oskar Lindberg, 24 January 1938, in private ownership. The 'previous events' in question might be a reference to when Wilhelm Peterson-Berger called Pergament a 'foreign parasite' in a review, after which Pergament travelled to Peterson-Berger's home and slapped him in the face. These events happened in January 1929 and resulted in countless newspaper articles and caricatures in the press.

²⁵ Moses Pergament, 'Drömmen om mulden och vinderne' ('The Dream of the Soil and the Winds'), *Nutida Musik*, 1970–71, No. 1, p. 24.

²⁶ Apart from his experience of more than forty years as a critic and essayist, Pergament wrote numerous film and theatre scripts, novellas and a good deal of poetry. Other than a few poems, none of this material has been published.

To acquire a new book for oneself or to give one to another is to grant oneself or others access to a new world. Before crossing its threshold, one does not know what it contains or what it may mean to oneself. [...] Through contact with others, one also learns to know oneself better; in one's sympathies and antipathies, one reveals one's own nature rather than that of the object. And interaction with oneself, one's innermost self, whether it occurs fully consciously or as an instinctive reaction to unfamiliar impressions, is the most valuable and most fruitful thing for the development of the soul.²⁷

About the Music

At the time Pergament was growing up, the poet and writer Avrom Reyzn²⁸ was becoming increasingly popular. His short stories were typically written in highly condensed form, so as to suit newspaper publication, and often contain a good dose of humour. Out of his poem *A klap hot gegeben der Wint* ('The Wind Dealt a Blow') [1] came one of Pergament's few original songs in Yiddish. The text suggests a metaphor for a Jewish pogrom, where the protagonist accuses the sun of shining indifferently while the forces of nature wreak havoc. The tonal language seems unusually mature, suggesting that the song, as published, may not have been entirely the work of the sixteen-year-old Pergament. Indeed, the song did evolve over the years: it was prepared for publication only in the last years of Pergament's life, when he most probably had at his disposal a score stating that the song was written in 1909–16,²⁹ with a dedication to the Finnish conductor and composer Armas Järnefelt, who thoughtfully helped Pergament obtain a patron after the move to Stockholm.³⁰ When he prepared the song for publication more

²⁷ Written by Pergament in 1925, published anonymously in *Wennergrens nyheter*, Christmas 1930, p. 3. Found in MTL, A640, Vol. 10.

²⁸ There are many different spellings of his name. Avrom Reyzn (1876–1953) was born in Belarus and served as a musician in the Russian Imperial army, as Pergament's grandfather had. He eventually moved to New York and wrote for *Forverts* and *Tsukunft*.

²⁹ MTL, A747, *Vokalmusik i autograf*.

³⁰ The patron in question was Arthur Thiel, a Swedish-Jewish businessman and cultural figure, who among other things had been general commissioner for the Swedish exhibition at the 1900 Paris Exposition.

than five decades later, the dedication was omitted, and he mentions only 1909 as the composition date.³¹

Among the earliest extant songs preserved nearly in their original form is *Zwei Kammern hat das Herz* ('The Heart has Two Chambers') from 1911 [2]. Originally dedicated to the mezzo-soprano Margit Lindberg, it was later published with a dedication to the composer's wife, Ilse. It was first heard at Pergament's debut concert, in an orchestral arrangement sung by Alexis af Enehjelm,³² with the Helsinki Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by the composer. No author of the text is mentioned in the score; the poem is found in multiple publications, and Pergament understood it to be based on Chinese poetry, without a known author.

A striking example of Pergament's ability to create musical contrasts in accordance with the text is found in his setting of Levertin's *Kung Liv och Drottning Död* ('King Life and Queen Death') [3]: the two protagonists are introduced in a *molto tranquillo* setting that is difficult to define tonally, immediately contrasted by a spirited *Allegro* that represents the lively king, whose gaze is a ray of sunshine. Yet after reaching a high point, the music comes to an abrupt halt on a dissonant chord, leaving way for the queen, who wears her robe of darkness. The increasingly threatening atmosphere is then subdued by an outgrowth of the music of the opening, concluding in the minor after it is revealed that the reason for this evening rendezvous between the king and the queen is so that they can play dice with the fate of their subjects. The drastic contrasts, with frequent changes of key, tempo and dynamics, bring to mind Schumann's *Kreisleriana* and its literary inspiration, E. T. A. Hoffman's *The Life and Opinions of the Tomcat Murr*. Again one can sense an autobiographical component in the choice of poetry: at this time, Pergament had just made his escape to Sweden from the Grand Duchy of Finland, where he faced the risk of being conscripted into the military.

³¹ Pergament could hardly have expected that the earliest known version of this song would eventually be found in the National Library of Finland, in the Kilpinen archives. Though the early version is not without interest, it is far simpler and an entirely different composition altogether – not a single note is alike.

³² Alexis af Enehjelm (1886–1939) was a singer and radio personality who became a beloved cultural figure. His sudden death led to something akin to national mourning, with a programme dedicated to his memory broadcasted by YLE, the Finnish state broadcaster. Only Sibelius and the presidents of Finland have since been honoured with programmes of a similar kind.

‘Kväll i skogen’ (‘Evening in the Wood’) [4], also with words by Levertin, is realised with mostly soft dynamics, instructing the singer to sing in an almost whispering manner in this quiet evening scene in nature, where each blade of grass is falling asleep. Only when the poet asks why his heart alone trembles in this hushed idyll does the music momentarily grow louder. Pergament appears to have wanted to use the second verse of the poem in a repeat of the music, but seems to have abandoned the idea.³³ He must have had some liking for this song, since he also made a separate arrangement for voice, strings, vibraphone and piano.³⁴ In both versions, the song was dedicated to Armas Järnefelt. It is not immediately apparent why this song and the amusing ‘Barnet og faaret’ (‘The Child and the Sheep’) [5] were published together as a set: they are sung in different languages and are highly contrasted in mood, and the latter is over almost as soon as it has begun. A common theme is nevertheless discernible: the meeting between man and nature.

Erster Verlust (‘First Loss’) [6] finds Pergament in Sturm-und-Drang mood, as the poet (Goethe) asks how to be brought back to the beautiful days of his first love. The composition is divided between restless and recitative-like sections, as if first presenting the poet’s emotional outbursts to the surrounding world, contrasted with the introspective recitatives, which may be perceived as the poet’s sad and lonely monologue.

Pergament had a liking for the poetry of Otto Julius Bierbaum (1865–1910) and set it on many occasions. Superficially, the subject-matter of *Der jungen Hexe Lied* (‘The Young Witch’s Song’) [7] has some similarities with perhaps the best-known of all art-songs, Schubert’s *Erlkönig*. A young witch hears a strange sound as she rides over the mountains at night, sounding as wonderful as children’s voices. As the sound disappears, she sees a light in her house and discovers that it is her son, looking out for his mother. With its incessant, galloping rhythm, Pergament embarks on an unusual harmonic adventure, keeping the tension by leaving the listener uncertain about which turn the music will take next.

³³ A second verse has been filled in by hand, presumably by Pergament, in a printed score found in MTL, A747, Vokalmusik i tryck.

³⁴ Found in MTL, A747, Vokalmusik i autograf, A747. It is not known when this arrangement was made.

The poem *Die Quelle der Schmerzen* ('The Source of Pain') [8] has its origins in the Shi King (or Shijing), the oldest preserved collection of Chinese poetry, dating from the eleventh to the seventh centuries BC, and likens the heart's sorrow to a spring bursting from the earth – a relentless welling-up that cannot be contained. Pergament's reading features an imaginative use of fourths, both harmonically and as a recurring melodic interval. The image of a spring as the well of emotion evokes the idea of the natural world as a mirror of the depths of the heart.

Torra trädets klagan ('Lament of the Barren Tree') [9], to a text by Bertil Malmberg (1889–1958) presents the sorrow of a desolate tree, yearning for a renewal that never comes, as it waits in vain for the rain that graces every living thing but its own branches. This bleak image is conveyed with lifeless crotchet chords in the piano, landing on a new harmony only every few bars, while the singer's phrases gradually reach higher, eventually letting the intensity fade back to nothingness.

The appearance of children's songs in Pergament's *œuvre* in the 1930s is of little surprise, given that he was now the father of three young children: Leo, Eldi and Kay. The youngsters would become familiar with a certain Uncle 'Yorrick', as he was called, who became a regular collaborator with Pergament in song-composition. His real name was Olov Lundgren (1870–1945), and one can assume that Pergament got to know him through the day jobs they both held at *Svenska Dagbladet*. 'Långt bort i skogen' ('Far away in the Wood') [10] is the third of *Nyckelpigan och andra visor för barn* ('The Ladybird and Other Songs for Children'), a cycle of five songs, each of which is beautifully illustrated in the 1932 score by Stella Falkner. Many of these Lundgren-Pergament numbers – sung enthusiastically by the Pergament children³⁵ – are idyllic to the point where one senses a degree of irony from the mature creators towards the naïve children: a poor street-musician falls in love with a princess and is immediately given approval by the king and offered half of the kingdom; a child gets to wish for as many things as a ladybird has

³⁵ Revealed in Ilse Pergament's unpublished family memories, written for her son Kay and starting from the time when she realised she was pregnant for the third time, in early 1930. It was the sight of her newborn half-sister, Babette, that made her realise that she wanted to have one more child.

spots on her back; and our hero Kalle apparently manages to escape a terrifying bear by running faster than the growling creature and climbing up a tree.

Pergament hardly ever used his own grand piano while composing, but the instrument nevertheless came into its own in the family for playing Christmas songs and other such forms of music-making.³⁶ As the children grew older, their repertoire expanded to include folk-music of many kinds – Swedish, German, English. One can therefore assume that it was these spontaneous moments of music-making that gave rise to the cycle *4 lustiga och 4 sorgmodiga folkvisor* ('4 Cheerful and 4 Sorrowful Folksongs'), arrangements of Swedish folk originals alternating between slow and fast. The first, 'Rocken snurrar, lampan brinner'³⁷ ('The spinning wheel spins, the lamp burns') [1], opens the set in the bright key of C major, employing almost exclusively the white keys of the keyboard. 'Men liljorna de växa upp om våren' ('But lilies they grow in spring') [2] originates from Swedish-speaking Finland – the text is by the poet Alexander Slotte (1861–1927) – and may be familiar to some in an *a cappella* arrangement (as 'Och glädjen den dansar') by Einojuhani Rautavaara from 1993. Pergament took note of a book published by the Brage Association³⁸ with arrangements of Finnish-Swedish folksongs,³⁹ which appear to have included this song. 'Jag gick mej ut åt vägen' ('I went out on the road')⁴⁰ [3] starts off as a carefree encounter between a boy and a girl that turns into an unexpected entanglement. 'De sporde om skön Säriling' ('It was said of the beautiful eccentric')⁴¹ [4] tells the tragic story of a woman whose sad fate of hardship

³⁶ Interview with Babette Gottschalk, 11 September 2025.

³⁷ The music is from the Southern Swedish province of Scania, and the text is probably by Pehr Thomasson (1818–83). Early publications of the text call it 'Bondpigans aftonvisa' ('The farm-girl's evening song'), with a total of nine verses, without mentioning any author.

³⁸ Föreningen Brage ('The Brage Association') was founded in 1906 by Otto Andersson, and has as its purpose 'to preserve and create, and through its activities promote, Finnish-Swedish folk culture in the broadest sense, both at home and abroad': https://www.brage.fi/sve/brage/om/vad_ar_brage/.

³⁹ 'Svensk-finländska folkvisorna', *Svenska Dagbladet*, 17 June 1925.

⁴⁰ Annotated in 1876 by Anders Norbäck, organist in the parish of Ekshärad in Värmland (*August Bondessons visbok*, second book, Albert Bonniers Förlag, Stockholm, 1903, p. 159).

⁴¹ 'Säriling' has a range of meanings, which makes it a difficult word to translate into English. It signifies someone who keeps him- or herself apart from the other members of a group, but is not necessarily an outcast or outsider – someone somehow distinct.

⁴² The source of the song was Augusta Gustafsson who, 'born in Gothenburg, spent her early youth in the parish of Stora Lundby in Västergötland'. Annotated with her help in 1895–96 (*August Bondessons visbok*, book 1, 1903, p. 383).

and death after childbirth was foretold from youth. ‘Skomakarevisan’ (‘The Shoemaker’s Song’)⁴³ [15] records a chance encounter between a shoemaker’s apprentice and an object of his desire. ‘Ge mej hit lite bläck och en penna’ (‘Bring me some ink and a pen’)⁴⁴ [16] is a tender vow of immortal love, cast in the humble form of a letter. Its imagery – mountains melting, the sun losing its light – elevates a simple declaration into something eternal, where devotion outlasts even the undoing of nature itself. The song is more widely known in a version by the Swedish folk-rock band Garmarna. ‘Säckpipan’ (‘The Bagpipe’)⁴⁵ [17] is said to originate from Filikromen, the name of a famous Stockholm street-musician of the early 1800s, whose works were published around 1850 (by the printer, writer and artist Theodor Öberg) under the pseudonym Axel I. Ståhl. The researcher Mats Rehnberg suggests that the bagpipe, which the wife in this case desperately tries to prevent her husband from selling, is in fact often used as a code word for something else.⁴⁶ ‘Nödårsvisan’ (‘Song of the Year of Hardship’)⁴⁷ [18] ends the set by voicing the despair of rural Sweden in the early 1800s, when failed harvests brought hunger and uncertainty. Through the protagonist’s plea to a neighbour for food and advice, the poem recalls the conditions that drove many Swedes to seek a new life across the Atlantic.

During his first years in Sweden, Pergament made the acquaintance of the poet Ragnar Josephson (1891–1966),⁴⁸ whose Jewish-themed poetry he deeply admired. The Swedish composer Hilding Rosenberg, a friend of Pergament, married Josephson’s sister Vera, and these three families lived for long stretches of time near one another, in the area of Bromma in Stockholm. Their closeness is neatly illustrated by the fact that when

⁴³ Annotated in 1896 through Per Gunnarsson, born in Renneslöv parish, Halland (*ibid.*, p. 374).

⁴⁴ Notated in 1896, apparently by Per Gussander, originating from Röstebö summer pasture in Bollnäs parish, Hälsingland (*ibid.*, p. 381).

⁴⁵ Pergament references the publication *Dikt o. Ton*, p. 24, but the original source has not yet been found.

⁴⁶ Mats Rehnberg, *Säckpipan i Sverige*, 1943, referenced here: https://www.balladeskolen.dk/029_1598.htm.

⁴⁷ From Nils Andersson, *Svenska låtar* (‘Swedish songs’), Västmanland section, P. A. Norstedt & Söner, Stockholm, 1933. According to this source, the song originates from Svärdsjö, Dalarna, after Gustaf Inge, notated by master smith and municipal chairman Axel Inge, Storå, Guldsmedshyttan: <https://www.stefanlinden.se/S/L/SVL/SVLVS/visa%20Nodarsvisan%20e%20Axel%20Inge%20SVLVS100.pdf>.

⁴⁸ A letter from Simon Parmet to his brother Moses, dated 26 November 1918, in private ownership, suggests that Moses is acquainted with Josephson.

Josephson turned 50, both Pergament and Rosenberg presented him with their own composition to his poem *Vårnatt i Ajalon* ('Spring Night in Ayalon')⁴⁹ [19]; amusingly, neither composer had been aware of the other's work. Rosenberg ended up writing a set of four Jewish songs to Josephson's poetry, whereas Pergament orchestrated his song and included it as the fourth movement of *The Jewish Song*, where all the texts were written by Josephson.

It is interesting to compare the simplicity of the original version of the song with the more elaborate orchestral realisation. As described by the composer, the song presents 'the story of the young woman who leaves her father and mother to follow her beloved, who belongs to a foreign tribe, and is therefore cursed by her own people.'⁵⁰ Once again, the subject is one of which Pergament had personal experience, as his father and step-mother were initially against his marrying a 'girl of another nation.'⁵¹ Discussing the poem behind the song, the 80-year-old composer commented: 'This is a complex area within Judaism. On the one hand, there is the commandment to treat strangers as friends, and on the other, the fanatical Orthodox requirement to keep the tribe pure! I am not Orthodox – and in general I am glad that things have loosened up enormously.'⁵²

The only deliberate alteration to any of the scores on this album is found in the end of this song – a left-hand tremolo has been added, to come closer to the dramatic effect of the orchestral version.

Pergament's *Fyra kinesiska sånger* ('Four Chinese Songs') bring another connection with Hilding Rosenberg who also, around the same time, based some song-settings on recently published translations of Chinese poetry by the Swedish poet Erik Blomberg. But where Rosenberg's fourteen songs sound modernist, Pergament's set – which also

⁴⁹ The Ayalon Valley connects Jerusalem to the coastal plain.

⁵⁰ Interview with Berit Berling, 16 January 1974. As quoted in 'Konsertnytt 8', a brochure produced for the Royal Stockholm Philharmonic's February 1974 performance of *Den judiska sången*, preserved in MTL, A640, Vol. 7.

⁵¹ Undated letter from Judel Pergament to his son Moses, probably written c. 1919, in private ownership. Moses was engaged to the singer Esther Branson at the time, and eventually his parents accepted his choice. But by then the couple had already grown apart, and Moses had met the woman who became his wife – Ilse Maria Kutzleb, who was not Jewish either. Judel Pergament attended their wedding in Berlin in December 1923.

⁵² Berling interview 1974, *loc. cit.*

exists in an orchestrated version – comes across as stylistically less complex. ‘Lyssnande till en nattlig flöjt från Shou-Hsingmuren’ (‘Listening to a flute at night from the Shou-Xing Wall’) [20] paints a picture of a quiet night on the frontier, where moonlit stillness and the sound of a distant flute awaken a homesickness in the soldiers who keep watch. This first song keeps the right pedal down from start to finish, unlike ‘En suck från en trappa av jade’ (‘A sigh from a staircase of jade’) [21], where pentatonic piano figurations are given imaginative harmonic colourings. The text presents the aftermath of a meeting under the autumn moon, after which a woman lingers in the quiet of her thoughts, her heart still turned toward the night that has just passed. There may be a continuation of this story in ‘Bitter kärlek’ (‘Bitter love’) [22], where a woman leans into the night, her beauty shining through sorrow, her tears visible in the moonlight – but the one she loves remains unseen. The feeling of stasis is here taken to an extreme, with an unchanging fifth in the bass paired with an ostinato figure that is heard throughout. The emotional high point is nevertheless reserved for the last song of the four, ‘Gränslös längtan’ (‘Boundless longing’) [23]: in the stillness of night, gazing beyond the mountains, the heart aches for Ch’ang-an,⁵³ so close in memory, so distant to the eye.

The poet Johannes Edfelt (1904–97) was a member of Pergament’s circle of friends, Nelly Sachs being a mutual connection. *Ett är nödvändigt* (‘One thing is necessary’) [24]⁵⁴ was premiered at a lyrical evening at Borgarskolan in Stockholm on 29 March 1950, where Edfelt was to recite his own poetry. It was sung by the tenor Einar Andersson, with the composer at the piano. The song has fittingly been described as evolutionary, in that one part is followed by another and nothing is ever repeated.⁵⁵ A letter of thanks from the following evening shows that the poet was impressed by the dynamic flow and vivid shading of the music.⁵⁶

Little is known about Pergament’s only song to a French text (by a Belgian author), Maeterlinck’s *L’infidèle* [25], except that it was written for the Belgian-Swedish soprano

⁵³ Ch’ang-an was the capital of several Chinese dynasties, and at times the largest city in the world.

⁵⁴ This recording is based on handwritten changes to the printed score, made by Pergament and found in MTL.

⁵⁵ Flodmark, *loc. cit.*, p. 50.

⁵⁶ Letter from Johannes Edfelt to Moses Pergament, 30 March 1950 (MTL, A640, Vol. 21).

Henriette Guermant and that, according to Pergament's sketchbooks, he intended to orchestrate it. These plans appear to have been abandoned, and there is no documented performance by Guermant. The alternation of question and answer in the text is mirrored musically: the piano interludes create space and suspension between each exchange, and the vocal line often moves from tension in the questioning phrases to a composed, measured release in the replies, reflecting the delicate balance between emotion and detachment in the poem.

The subject of death appears with some frequency in Pergament's later output, as exemplified in *Sono stanca*, an Italian translation of the poem 'Är jag intill döden trött' ('I am weary unto death') [26] by the poet and painter Harriet Löwenhjem, written towards the end of her short life (1887–1918). Her final years were spent mostly in sanatoria because of lung disease. The bleak mood is illustrated with simple means – no more than one harmony per bar at the outset, illustrated with upwards arpeggios that come to a halt before the middle of each bar, where a weariness with life makes itself felt.

The story behind the lullaby *Natten sænker sit mørke Slør* ('The night lowers its dark veil') [27] provides some valuable insights into the extended Pergament family. Benjamin ('Beni') Rubinstein (1905–89) was the son of Riko, Moses' eldest sister, and Jakob Rubinstein, a couple who moved to Denmark around 1916 and remained there for some years. Letters to Pergament suggest that the young 'Beni' was a sensitive, artistic soul, upset over the fact that his grandfather Judel had, in consultation with uncle Moses, decided that he ought to study law.⁵⁷ He changed area of study several times, eventually switching to psychoanalysis and being supervised by Eva Rosenfeld, a pupil of Freud. In this field he earned himself the nickname 'the unknown great Finn of psychoanalysis'.⁵⁸ Late one evening in 1917, the twelve-year-old 'Beni' felt agitated but in a strangely calm way, as if he were under some kind of spell. Out of this feeling a poem suddenly appeared, as if it already had taken shape in his mind and all he had to do was adjust a

⁵⁷ Letters from Benjamin Rubinstein to Pergament from 1921 and 1923, in private ownership.

⁵⁸ Juhani Ihanus and Vesa Talvitie, 'Benjamin Rubinstein – psykoanalyysin tuntematon suuri suomalainen,' *Psykoterapia*, No. 4, 2007, pp. 226–42.

word or two.⁵⁹ More than half a century later, Pergament put the words to music, where a freely formed melody is sung over overlapping chords between right and left hands, which create a hypnotic effect.

Similarly personal is the story behind *Vaggvisa* ('Lullaby') [28], which bears a dedication to Karin Mang-Habashi, by now herself a mother. The text is by the Chilean poet Gabriela Mistral (1889–1957), in a Swedish translation by Hjalmar Gullberg (1898–1961). To a rocking sicilienne rhythm, a mother sings her child to sleep amid the quiet breathing of nature and feels that, while she cradles her son, God at the same time gently rocks boundless worlds. Pergament's setting of this lullaby – written late in his life and dedicated to a young mother – may also carry a deeper resonance: a man nearing his own final rest, sensing in the rhythm of the cradle a universal motion of beginnings and endings, composing an oblique reckoning with mortality.

The soprano **Tuuli Lindeberg** is one of the leading performers of Baroque and contemporary vocal music in Finland and enjoys rediscovering forgotten vocal repertoire. She frequently works with the best orchestras and professional ensembles in her native country, appearing frequently as a soloist in oratorios, orchestral concerts and chamber recitals in diverse venues for classical music. Her voice and musicianship have inspired numerous composers over the years, and she has premiered dozens of works written specifically for her. She has performed stage roles at the Finnish National Opera and Finnish National Theatre and in several collaborative and multidisciplinary stage productions within the Finnish freelance community.

She teaches vocal music and style from her areas of specialisation at the Sibelius Academy of Uniarts Helsinki. She is also the artistic director of Musica Nova Helsinki, the largest festival for contemporary art-music in Finland, and one of the artistic planners of the BRQ Vantaa early-music festival.



Photograph: Heikki Tuuli

⁵⁹ Letter from Benjamin Rubinstein to Pergament, 13 March 1971 (MTL, A640, Vol. 26).

The pianist **Martin Malmgren** is a versatile performer who loves exploring both the knowns and the unknowns of the repertoire. He has performed widely across four continents and enjoys making music as soloist, Lied pianist, chamber musician and orchestral pianist, in contemporary-music ensembles as well as in folk-music bands.

His unusually wide repertoire allows him to take delight in surprising his audiences by programming unjustly neglected works and composers, in addition to the standard concert fare. His concert programmes typically show a thoughtful approach which builds bridges between different musical styles and periods. He is a founding member of the Agora Music Collective.

As a sought-after soloist, he has appeared with Sinfonia Lahti, Tapiola Sinfonietta, the Helsingborg Symphony Orchestra, Toruń Philharmonic Orchestra, Oulu Sinfonia and Jyväskylä Sinfonia and, further afield, the Belgrade Symphony Orchestra and other major ensembles. He gave the Finnish premieres of Moses Pergament's Piano Concerto, Elliott Carter's *Dialogues 2*, Doreen Carwithen's Piano Concerto and Guillaume Connesson's Concertino.

He is currently pursuing a doctoral degree at the Sibelius Academy, where he previously received a Master of Music degree, with Ilmo Ranta as his main piano teacher. Other important teachers have included Henri Barda, Konstantin Bogino, Tuija Hakkila, Antti Hotti, Juhani Lagerspetz, Jerome Lowenthal and Liisa Pohjola.



Photograph: Heikki Tuuli

Sung Texts and Translations*

[1] *A klap hot gegeben der wint*

Avrom Reyzn (Abraham Reisen)

A klap hot gegeben der wint in mein Stibel'
un hot ir in ganzen zertrogen,
un bald hot der hert sich a knal fun a duner
un' hot fil nefosches derscholgen.

Zu soll ich denn zornen af wint un af duner,
zu weissen sei den wos sei tuen?
Es brent nor mein zoren, wi hot es geschehn,
wenn lichtig gescheint hot di sun?

Dem wint mit dem duner,
oi, sei bin ich moichel,
sei seinen wi krafft doch blind!
Wi ašoi hot gescheint di šun, ober fräg ich,
un ruhig gešehn aša šint?

[2] *Zwei Kammern hat das Herz*

Anon.

Zwei Kammern hat das Herz,
Drin wohnen
Die Freude und der Schmerz;
Wacht Freude in der einen,
So schlummert der Schmerz,

The Wind Dealt a Blow

*The wind dealt a blow to my little home,
scattering it completely,
soon a crack of thunder was heard,
and countless souls were struck down.*

*Should I direct my fury at wind and thunder,
do they know their deeds?
It is only my anger that burns – how could this
have happened
when the sun shone so brightly?*

*The wind and the thunder –
oh, I forgive them both,
they are but blind forces, after all.
Yet how could the sun keep shining, I ask,
and look so calmly upon such sin?*

The Heart has Two Chambers

*The heart has two chambers,
In which dwell
Joy and Sorrow;
When Joy awakens in one,
Sorrow slumbers*

* Complete Finnish and, where required, Swedish translations of these songs can be found on the Toccata Classics website, at <http://toccataclassics.com/tocc0785more>.

¹ Shtiebel – Yiddish *shtibl*: literally 'little room'; commonly a small, informal prayer-room or house-synagogue in Jewish communal life.

still in der seinen.
O Freude! habe Acht!
Sprich leise,
Daß nicht der Schmerz erwacht.

3 Kung Liv och Drottning Död
Oscar Levartin

I aftonrodnans gyllne slott,
vid solnedgångens glöd,
där mötas för en timme blott
kung Liv och drottning Död.

De komma från skilda håll
med skilda färgers glans,
av guld är kungens mantelfäll
och purprad kappans frans.

Med rosor prydd är hans barett
och skärpet av viol,
hans skratt är sång, hans gång är lätt,
hans blick en stråle sol.

Men drottning Död bär mörkrets skrud
med tunga veck av natt.

Kring pannans marmorvita hud
hon sorgens slöja satt,
men munnen lyser röd som blod
i dystert, vilt begär,
och högt i dunkla lockars flod
hon aftonstjärnan bär.

*In the other.
O Joy, be careful!
Speak softly,
Lest sorrow awaken.*

King Life and Queen Death

*In the golden castle of the evening glow,
by the light of the setting sun,
for a mere hour
King Life and Queen Death meet.*

*They come from different directions
with different colours of splendour,
golden is the king's cloak
and the fringe of his cape is purple red.*

*His beret is adorned with roses
and his sash with violets,
his laughter is song, his gait is light,
his gaze a ray of sunshine.*

*But Queen Death wears the robe of darkness
with heavy folds of night.*

*Around the forehead's marble-white skin
she wears the veil of sorrow,
but her mouth glows red as blood
in sombre, wild desire,
and high in the torrent of dark curls
she bears the evening star.*

Så mötas de vid solnedgång
i aftonrodnans slott
och spela tärning timman lång
om människornas lott.

Två sånger

[4] No. 1, Kväll i skogen
Oscar Levantin

Nu sjunker soln vid skogens rand
och skymningssuset saktar,
du hjärta, som till fjärran land
och fjärran lycka traktar,
se, hur i ro nu hvarje gren
och hvarje grässtrå domna.
Hvi, hjärta, skälfter du allen,
när alla bladen somna?

[5] No. 2, Barnet og faaret
Dansk barnever

Faar. Faar!
Sikke Blomster jeg kan vise!
Bare se, men ikke spise!
Faaret aad dem til sidste Straa,
andet forstod det sig ikke paa.

[6] Erster Verlust
Goethe

Ach, wer bringt die schönen Tage,
jene Tage der ersten Liebe,
Ach, wer bringt nur eine Stunde
jener holden Zeit zurück!

*Thus they meet at sunset
in the castle of the evening glow
and play dice for an hour
with the fate of humankind.*

Two Songs
Evening in the Wood

*Now the sun sinks at the edge of the wood
and the twilight rustles grow calm,
you, my heart, which yearns towards distant lands
and distant happiness,
see, how peacefully every branch
and every blade of grass grows numb.
Why, heart, do you alone tremble,
when all the leaves fall asleep?*

The Child and the Sheep
Danish children's verse

Sheep. Sheep!
What flowers I can show you!
Just look, but don't eat!
The sheep ate them down to the last blade,
it didn't understand anything else.

First Loss

*Ah, who will bring back those beautiful days –
those days of first love?*
*Ah, who will bring back even just one hour
of that lovely time?*

Einsam nähr' ich meine Wunde,
Und mit stets erneuter Klage
traur' ich um's verlorne Glück.

Ach, wer bringt die schönen Tage,
jener holden Zeit zurück!

[7] Der jungen Hexe Lied

Otto Julius Bierbaum

Als nachts ich über'm Gebirge ritt,
Rack, schack, schacke mein Pferdchen,
Da ritt ein seltsames Klingeln mit,
kling, kling, klingelalei.

Es war ein schmeichlerisch bittend Getön,
Es war wie Kinderstimmen schön.

Mir war's, ich streichelt ein lindes Haar,
Mir war's so weh und wunderbar.

Da schwand das Klingeln mit einem mal,
Ich sah hinunter in's tiefe Tal,

Da sah ich ein Licht in meinem Haus,
Rack, schack, schacke mein Pferdchen!
Mein Bübchen sah nach der Mutter aus,
kling, kling, klingelalei!

*Lonely, I nourish my wound
and with constantly renewed laments,
I mourn my lost happiness.*

*Ah, who will bring back those beautiful days –
that lovely time?*

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from the LiederNet Archive

The Young Witch's Song

*When by night I rode over the mountains,
Rack, schack, schacke my little horse,
A strange ringing seemed to be riding along
with me,
Kling, ling, klingelalei.*

*It was a beguilingly pleading sound,
It was as beautiful as the voices of children.*

*It was as if I were caressing a soft head of hair,
I felt so melancholy and wonderful.*

*Then the ringing disappeared all at once,
I gazed down into the deep valley.*

*I saw a light there, inside my house,
Rack, schack, schacke my little horse,
My little lad was looking out for his mother,
Kling, ling, klingelalei!*

—Translation © Sharon Krebs, reprinted with
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[8] Die Quelle der Schmerzen

Aus dem "Shi-king"

Mit mächt'gem Andrang bricht hervor,
so breit er kann, aus seinem Tor,
der sprudelvolle Wasserquell
und strömt dann in die Tiefe schnell.

So wird mein Herz von Gram erfüllt,
indem sich Leid auf Leiden türmt,
und sich das Herz in Schmerz ergiesst
und wogend in sich selbst zerfließt.

Nicht neu ist unser aller Leid,
begann nicht heut', noch schliesst es heut',
es kam mit meinem Anbeginn
und endet, wenn ich nicht mehr bin.

[9] Torra trädets klagan

Bertil Malmberg

Andra träd, dem solen brände,
får av regnets droppar svalkas.
Men till mig och mitt elände
inga milda skurar nalkas.
Jag får aldrig mera hoppas
Jag får aldrig mera blomma.
Mina grenar rassla tomma.
Jag har ingenting att hoppas.

The Source of Pain

From the Shi King

*With mighty force, it bursts forth,
as wide as it is able, from its gate,
the bubbling water source
and then flows quickly into the depths.*

*Thus my heart is assailed by grief,
as sorrow piles upon sorrow,
and the heart pours out in pain
and, swelling in itself, it melts away.*

*Our suffering is nothing new,
it did not begin today, nor will it end today,
it came with my beginning
and will end when I am no more.*

Lament of the Barren Tree

*Other trees, scorched by the sun,
may be cooled down by the drops of rain.
But towards me and my misery
no gentle showers approach.
I may never hope again,
I may never bloom again.
My branches rustle emptily.
I have nothing to hope for.*

Nyckelpigan och andra visor för barn

10 No. 3, Långt bort i skogen
Olov Lundgren

Långt bort i skogen går gossen,
Då möter han björnen på mossen.
Tusentals myror åt björnen igår,
Nu plockar han blåbär och mumsar och mår.
Nifs nafs! Rifs rafs!
"Jo jag"; säger gossen, "heter Kalle".
"Och jag", brummar björnen, "heter Nalle".

Björnen han säger till gossen:
"Du själv är ett blåbär på mossen.
Blåbärsblå är du om händer och trut,
och dig ska jag plocka och mumsa till slut.
Nifs nafs! Rifs rafs!
En morskt liten gosse är nog Kalle,
Men starkare ramar har ju Nalle."

Aj aj, så rädd blev då gossen.
Han sprang till en gran bredvid mossen.
Högt klev han upp och skrek:
"Hej och hallå! Jo, där kan du vänta,
tills pälsen blir grå.
Klifs klafs! Nifs nafs!
Där såg du till slut att lilla Kalle
har kvickare ben än stora Nalle."

The Ladybird and Other Songs for Children

Far away in the Wood

*The boy walks far away in the wood,
Then he meets the bear on the moss.
The bear ate thousands of ants yesterday,
Now he picks blueberries and munches and feels
good.
Nifs nafs! Rifs rafs!
'Well,' says the boy, 'my name is Kalle.'
'And I,' growls the bear, 'am called Nalle.'*

*The bear says to the boy:
'You yourself are a blueberry on the moss.
You are blueberry-blue on your hands and snout,
and I will pick you and munch you all up.
Nifs nafs! Rifs rafs!
Kalle surely is a lively little boy,
but Nalle clearly has stronger paws.'*

*Oh dear, how frightened the boy became.
He ran to a fir tree next to the moss.
He climbed high up and shouted:
'Hey and hello! Yes, there you can wait
until your fur turns grey.
Klifs klafs! Nifs nafs!
There you finally saw that little Kalle
has quicker legs than big Nalle.'*

4 lustiga och 4 sorgmodiga folkvisor

[11] No. 1, Rocken snurrar, lampan brinner

Rocken snurrar, lampan brinner,
Vinterkvällen är så lång.
Men lik rök den snart försvinner
Under munterhet och sång.
Tra-la-la...

Denna veckan går lik många,
Söndag blir det snart igen.
Då skall jag till kyrkan gånga,
Träffa där min lilla vän.
Tra-la-la...

[12] No. 2, Men liljorna de växa upp om våren
Alexander Slotte

Och glädjen den dansar bland blommor
och strå.
Men ären de komma och ären de gå.
Då blir det så stilla kring vännerna två.
Men liljorna de växa upp om våren.

Och världen är så vider och världen är så stor,
och sorgerna de komma från sunnan och från
nord.
Då är det gott i stugan där kärleken bor.
Och liljorna de växa upp om våren.

Och människorna födas och människorna dö
som gångande vågor på villande sjö.

4 Cheerful and 4 Sorrowful Folksongs

The spinning wheel spins, the lamp burns

*The spinning wheel spins, the lamp burns,
The winter evening is so long.
But like smoke, it soon disappears
During cheerfulness and song.
Tra-la-la...*

*This week goes by like many others,
Sunday will soon be here again.
Then I'll stroll to church,
To meet my little friend there.
Tra-la-la...*

But lilies they grow in spring

*And the joy dances among flowers and straw.
But the years they come and the years they go.
Then everything falls quiet around the two
friends.
But lilies they grow in spring.*

*And the world is so wide and the world is so vast,
and sorrows they come from the south and from
the north.
Then the cottage where love dwells is a good place
to be.
And lilies they grow in spring.*

*And people are born and people die
like rolling waves on a stormy sea.*

De fallande blomstren ska' täckas av snö.
Men liljorna de växa upp om våren.

[13] No. 3, Jag gick mej ut åt vägen

Jag gick mej ut åt vägen,
jag var så glad, så glad var jag.
Då möte det mej en jänta,
en jänta, som vacker var,
ja hon var rar.

"Och vacker hatt du har uppå dej",
sade jöntan till mej.

"Å, jag har fälle så, så, jag bärger mej",
svarade jej.

Och jöntan fick tag uti hatten och drog,
och hon drog, och jag drog.

"Och drager du hatten utå mej,
se, då tappar jej!"

Och långer sommar och kaller höst,
och jag fick dansa hattelös
till långt fram på vintern
för jöntans skull.

[14] No. 4, De sporde om skön Särling

De sporde om skön Särling, allt medan
hon var ung,
att alla hennes dagar skulle bliva så tung!
Den sorgen glöms aldrig.

De sporde om skön Särling, allt medan
hon var mö,

*The falling flowers will be covered by snow.
But lilies they grow in spring.*

I went out on the road

*I went out on the road
I was so happy, so happy I was.
Then I met a girl,
a girl who was beautiful;
yes, she was sweet.*

*'What a beautiful hat you have on your head',
the girl said to me.*

*'Oh, I've got it all sorted, so I'll be fine',
I answered.*

*But the girl grabbed my hat and pulled;
she pulled, and I pulled.*

*'And if you pull my hat from me,
look, then I'll lose my grip!'*

*And summer lasted a long time, as did the cold
autumn,
and I had to dance hatless
until late winter
for the girl's sake.*

It was said about the beautiful eccentric

*It was said about the beautiful eccentric
when she was young,
that all of her days would be so heavy!
That sorrow will never be forgotten.*

*It was said about the beautiful eccentric,
when she was a maiden,*

att den tolvtonde barnsäng skulle bliva hennes
död.

Den sorgen glöms aldrig.

Skön Särling, hon blev döder och lagder uppå
bår,
och åtta sjömanspojkar henne till graven följa
må.

Den sorgen glöms aldrig.

[15] No. 5, Skomakarevisan

Jag gick mig uti den gröna lund,
Där mötte mig en skomakardräng.
Och femton par sylar det hade han med sig,
Och lästerna de voro tjugufem.
Terum, terum, terum, terum,
terum, terum, terum, terum, terum.

Min vän, om du blott mister mig,
så får du en förskräckelig sorg,
Då får du aldrig mera din glädje igen,
som du ju tillförne har haft.
Terum...

Som stjärnorna uppå himmelen den blå,
de para sig i par om par,
Så gör ock du och jag, min lilla vän,
uti våra unga dar.
Terum...

*that the twelfth childbed would be her death.
That sorrow will never be forgotten.*

*The beautiful eccentric, dead she became
and was lifted onto a bier,
and eight sailor boys bore her to her grave.
That sorrow will never be forgotten.*

The Shoemaker's Song

*I walked out into the green grove,
Where I met a shoemaker's apprentice.
He had fifteen pairs of awls with him,
And twenty-five lasts.
Terum, terum, terum, terum,
terum, terum, terum, terum, terum.*

*My friend, if you lose me,
you will be so terribly sad,
You will never again find the joy
that you once had.
Terum...*

*Like the stars upon the blue sky,
they pair up in pairs,
So shall you and I, my little friend,
in our youthful days.
Terum...*

[16] No. 6, Ge mej hit lite bläck och en penna

Ge mej hit lite bläck och en penna,
jag vill nederskriva ett brev.
Du skall däri få se och bekänna,
att jag har dej så innerligen kär.

Förr ska hällebergen smälta liksom is,
förr ska solen bortmistas sitt sken,
förr ska skogen bli förvandlad till en tuva,
än jag dej, lilla vännen, överger.

[17] No. 7, Säckpipan

Och gubben sad' till gumman:
"Nu säljer jag min dudeludelej."
Men gumman sad:
"Ack nej, ack nej, sälj hus, sälj hem, sälj getter
och får, sälj rock, sälj väst, sälj allt vad du vill,
men behåll för mig din dudeludelej."

[18] No. 8, Nödårsvisan

Å kära min granne, säg mig ett gott rå.
Hur skall jag till vintren min bröföda få?
Ni minns fäll i höstres hur gali då gick,
hur liti med havre å sneser ja fick.

Bring me some ink and a pen

*Bring me some ink and a pen,
I want to write a letter.
In it you shall see and feel
that I love you so dearly.*

*Sooner shall the mountain rock melt like ice,
sooner shall the sun be robbed of its light,
sooner shall the forest be transformed into a tuft,
than I will abandon you, my little friend.*

The Bagpipe

*And the old man said to his wife:
'Well, I'm off to sell my dudeludelej'.
But the old woman said:
'Oh no, oh no, sell the house, sell the home,
sell the goats and sheep, sell the coat, sell the
waistcoat, sell anything that you want, but do
keep for me your dudeludelej'.*

Song of the Year of Hardship

*Oh my dear neighbour, give me some good
advice.
How can I get bread and food for the winter?
You surely remember how crazily it went last
autumn,
how little oats and grain I got.*

[19] Vårnatt i Ajalon

Ragnar Josephson (1891–1966)

Vinden står still i Ajalons dal
Liljorna brinna vita.
Fången vid muren söker en hund
kedjorna slita.
Men Zilla går fram mellan cederstammar,
och den röda kjortelen flappar.

Månen står gul över Ajalons dal,
gul som en cyperblomma.
Floden flyter ljudlös och sval
bort mot det tomma.
Men Zilla sig skygg mot en trädstam trycker,
och hon sliter sin mantel i stycker.

Gräsen stå bleka på Ajalons fält,
bleka vid Ajalons floder.
Zilla lämnat sin faders tält,
lämnat sin moder.
Vägen hon följt under gråt och vaka,
den leder icke tillbaka.

Vårar skall gå över Ajalons land,
heta, härjande vårar.
Aldrig den orena älskogens brand
släcks av tårar.
Fiendebruden med brännmärkt panna
skall Ajalon evigt förbanna.

Spring Night in Ayalon

*The wind stands still in the vale of Ayalon
The lilies burn white.
Imprisoned by the wall, a dog seeks
to tear its chains.
But Zilla walks forward between cedar trunks,
and her red robe flutters.*

*The moon stands yellow over the vale of Ayalon,
yellow as a cypress flower.
The river flows silently and coolly
towards the void.
But Zilla timidly presses herself against a tree
trunk,
and she tears her cloak to pieces.*

*The grasses stand pale on the fields of Ayalon,
pale by the rivers of Ayalon.
Zilla has left her father's tent,
left her mother.
The path she has followed through tears and
vigils,
it does not lead homeward.*

*Springtimes shall pass over the land of Ayalon,
hot, ravaging springtimes.
never shall the fire of unclean love
be quenched by tears.
The foe's bride with branded brow
shall Ayalon forever disavow.*

Four Chinese Songs

Swedish translations by Erik Blomberg

[20] No. 1, Lyssnande till en nattlig flöjt
från Shou-Hsingmuren
Li Yi

Sanden under gränsberget ligger vit som snö
och månen som frost över stadens mur,
och någonstades spelar en ensam flöjt
som gör soldaterna hemsjuka hela natten,

[21] No. 2, En suck från en trappa av jade
Li Po

Hennes jadevita trappa är kall av dagg,
hennes silverskor är våta,
hon stannade länge ute...
Varför väntar hon ännu bakom det stängda
fönstret
betraktande höstmånens glöd genom rutans
kristall

[22] No. 3, Bitter kärlek
Li Po

Så vacker hon är,
då hon öppnar sitt pärlklara fönster,
hur lugnt hon lutar sig ut ---
så mörk hennes panna är.
Du kan se hennes tårar som glittra mot kinden
men inte den man hon så bittert älskar.

*Listening to a flute at night
from the Shou-Xing Wall*

*The sand beneath the border mountain lies white
as snow
and the moon as frost over the city wall,
and somewhere a solitary flute plays,
making the soldiers homesick all night long,*

A sigh from a staircase of jade

*Her jade-white staircase is cold with dew,
her silver shoes are wet,
she lingered outside for a long time...
Why is she still waiting behind the closed window
gazing at the glow of the autumn moon through
the crystal of the pane*

Bitter Love

*How beautiful she is,
as she opens her pearl-bright window,
how calmly she leans out ---
how dark her brow.
You can see her tears glistening on her cheek
but not the man she so bitterly loves.*

[23] No. 4, Gränslös längtan
Li Po

Jag längtar gränslost till Ch'ang-an.
Insekter surra höstligt över brunnens kant,
och frosten glittrar som små speglar på min matta.
Lampflågan flämtar och min längtan växer...
Jag lyfter undan skärmen och betraktar månen,
ensam som en blomma ibland mörka skyar.
Däruppe himlens blåa djup.
Därnere rastlöst dunkla vatten.
Hög är himlen,
vid är jorden,
mellan dem flyger bitter min sorg. --
Kan mina drömmar aldrig tränga över bergen?
Gränslösa längtan
som trycker på mitt hjärta!

[24] *Ett är nödvändigt*
Johannes Edfelt

Ett är nödvändigt: att färdas mot brunnar.
Djupt i skogen av tätande år
längta våra förtorkade munnar
efter däliden, där vattnet går,
lyssna vi spånt till vad ådern förkunnar,
dold under livets törnesnår.

Först som förmäktande, överkörda
människosjälur, som bristen känt,
närmas vi, dignande under vår börda,

Boundless Longing

*I long boundlessly for Ch'ang-an.
Insects buzz autumnally over the edge of the well,
and the frost glitters like little mirrors on my mat.
The lamp flame flickers and my longing grows...
I lift the screen and gaze at the moon,
alone like a flower amid dark skies.
Above, the blue depths of the sky.
Below, restless murky waters.
High is the sky,
wide is the earth,
between them flies my bitter sorrow. --
Can my dreams never cross the mountains?
Boundless longing
that weighs on my heart!*

One thing is necessary

*One thing is necessary: to travel towards wells.
Deep in the forest of thickening years
our withered mouths long
for the small valley, where the water flows,
we listen intently to what the vein of water
proclaims,
hidden beneath the thorns of life.*

*First as languishing, trampled
human souls, who have known deprivation,
we approach, weighed down by our burden,*

det som är ande och inåtvänt,
få vi ta del av det oerhörda,
väntar oss brunnens sakrament.

Blickstill speglar dess vattenhinna
rymder av hisnande opal.
Hemliga källsprång sorla och rinna.
Inne i brunnens och ekots dal
pressas mot läppar, som hetta och brinna,
drycken, gåtfull och evighetssval.

[25] L'infidèle

Maurice Maeterlinck

Et s'il revenait un jour,
que faut-il lui dire?
- Dites-lui qu'on l'attendit
Jusqu'à s'en mourir...

Et s'il demande où vous êtes
Que faut-il lui répondre?
- Donnez-lui mon anneau d'or,
Sans rien lui répondre...

Et s'il veut savoir pourquoi
La salle est déserte?
- Montrez-lui la lampe éteinte
Et la porte ouverte...

Et s'il interroge alors
Sur la dernière heure?
- Dites-lui que j'ai souri
De peur qu'il ne pleure...

*that which is spirit and inwardly,
we are granted to partake of the immense,
the sacrament of the well awaits us.*

*Stock-still, its watery film reflects
expanses of breathtaking opal.
Secret fountainheads purl and flow.
Inside the valley of the well and the echo
pressed against lips that scorch and burn,
is the drink, mysterious and eternally cool.*

The Unfaithful

*And if he were ever to return,
what should be said to him?
- Tell him that he was awaited
Until death intervened...*

*And if he asks where you are,
What should he be told in response?
- Give him my gold ring,
Without answering him...*

*And if he wants to know why
The room is deserted?
- Show him the extinguished lamp
And the open door...*

*And if he then asks
About the last hour?
- Tell him that I smiled
for fear that he might weep...*

[26] Sono stanca

*Harriet Löwenhjelm (1887–1918), italiensk
översättning Giacomo Oreglia (1924–2007)*

Sono stanca da morire
abbastanza stanca,
molto stanca,
malata e stanca e triste.
Lungo era il cammino, che ho consunto,
Nessun gentile amico ho incontrato.
Sono stanca,
abbastanza stanca,
malata e stanca e triste.

Ditemi, dov'è il mio gentile amico,
caro amico,
unico amico
in questo vasto mondo?
Il cuore mi si stringe.
Vieni, vieni tu ancora,
gentile amico,
caro amico
in questo vasto mondo?

Vieni e aiutami per l'amor di Dio,
per amor mio,
per amor tuo,
tu solo lo puoi fare.
Il mondo è pieno di tristezza,
tutto quanto luccica non è oro.
Per l'amor di Dio,
per amor mio,
aiutami tu, che lo puoi!

I am weary unto death

*I am weary unto death,
o so weary,
quite quite weary,
sick and weary and sad.
Long was the road I've taken.
No sweet love did I encounter.
I am weary,
o so weary,
sick and weary and sad.*

*Tell me, where is my kind friend,
dear friend,
only friend
in this immense world?
My heart tightens.
Are you coming, coming again,
kind friend,
dear friend
in this immense world?*

*Come and help me for God's sake,
for my sake,
for your sake,
only you can do it.
The world is full of sadness,
Not everything that glitters is gold.
For God's sake,
for my sake,
help me, you who can do it!*

[27] Natten sænker sit mørke Slør
Benjamin ('Beni') Rubinstein

Natten sænker sit mørke Slør
hen over Mark og Skove.
Stille, stille,
intet man hør
allting i Verden vil sove.
Intet man hør af Livets Strøm,
intet af fattiges Klager.
Alla drømmer saa dejlig en Drøm
drømmer om barndomens Sager.

[28] Vaggvisa
Gabriela Mistral/Hjalmar Gullberg

Nu vaggar mitt hav sina vågor
vid dyningens eviga dån.
Jag lyssnar till vågornas kärlek
och vaggar min son.

I sädesfälten går vinden
och vaggar nattliga strån.
Jag lyssnar till vindarnas kärlek
och vaggar min son.

Gud vaggar de ändlösa världar,
som tystnaden kommer ifrån.
Jag känner hans hand i mörkret
och vaggar min son.

The night lowers its dark veil

*The night lowers its dark veil
over fields and forests.
Quiet, quiet,
nothing to be heard
everything in the world wants to sleep.
Nothing can be heard of the stream of life,
nothing of the complaints of the poor.
Everyone dreams such a lovely dream
dreaming about the things of childhood.*

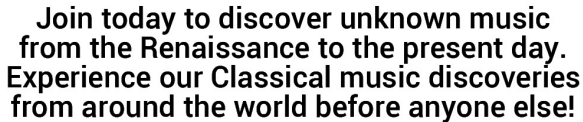
Lullaby

*Now my sea rocks its waves
to the eternal murmur of the swell.
I listen to the love of the waves
and rock my son.*

*The wind walks through the cornfields
and rocks the nocturnal straws.
I listen to the love of the winds
and rock my son.*

*God rocks the endless worlds,
from whence silence comes.
I feel his hand in the darkness
and rock my son.*

—English translations by Martin Malmgren
unless otherwise noted



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