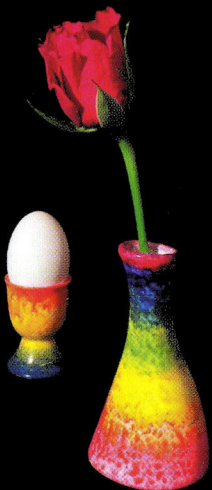


# NEW FRENCH SONG

Alison Smart Katharine Durran



## NEW FRENCH SONG

*New French Song* has created a whole new repertoire of songs by British composers.

The project was conceived in 1999, when soprano Alison Smart and pianist Katharine Durran were giving recitals marking the centenary of Poulenc's birth and celebrating the songs of Fauré.

They commissioned twenty exceptional British composers, some of whom were well established, others of whom were yet to receive the recognition they deserve.

The composers were asked to set French literature of their choice from the past two hundred years. The texts, ranging from Victor Hugo to the new millennium, were chosen by the composers in consultation with Alison Smart and Katharine Durran, and form a wonderful springboard for the composers' individual expression.

The result is a fascinating rainbow work covering all the major literary movements of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, overlapping into the twenty-first century – Romanticism, Symbolism, Surrealism, Cubism, Modernism and post-Modernism.

The twenty songs were written in 2003 and 2004. Alison Smart and Katharine Durran premièred them on 13th July 2004 at the Purcell Room, South Bank Centre, London.

*New French Song* forms a substantial contribution to the art song repertoire, and demonstrates a rare and far-reaching artistic vision.

## **Tarik O'Regan *Sainte* (Saint)**

*Stéphane Mallarmé*

A la fenêtre recelant  
Le santal vieux qui se dédore  
De sa viole étincelant  
Jadis avec flûte ou mandore,  
Est la Sainte pâle, étalant  
Le livre vieux qui se déplie  
Du Magnificat ruisselant  
Jadis selon vêpre et compline:

A ce vitrage d'ostensoir  
Que frôle une harpe par l'Ange  
Formée avec son vol du soir  
Pour la délicate phalange

Du doigt que, sans le vieux santal  
Ni le vieux livre, elle balance  
Sur le plumage instrumental,  
Musicienne du silence.

In the window concealing  
The old sandalwood that is losing  
Its guilt of her viol once  
Sparkling with flute or mandola,  
Is the pale saint; she displays  
The old book opened at  
The Magnificat flowing in ages past  
According to vespers and compline:

Within this monstrance glass  
Brushed by a harp formed by the Angel  
With his evening flight  
For the delicate tip

Of the finger which, without the old sandalwood  
Or the old book, she holds poised  
On the instrumental plumage,  
Musician of silence.

**Tarik O'Regan** (b.1978) recently moved from Oxford to New York City. His works have been performed by the BBC Symphony Orchestra, the London Sinfonietta, Birmingham Contemporary Music Group, the BBC Singers, New College Choir, Clare College Choir and James Bowman. His compositions have been broadcast on BBC Radio 3 and for television on BBC2. He was recently awarded a MacDowell Fellowship in the USA as well as the Butterworth Award presented by the SPNM.

He writes, 'The splinter of time which Mallarmé captures delicately in *Sainte* is so finely poised that I have tried to afford his wonderful words the clarity of space they demand.'

**Stéphane Mallarmé** (1842–98) was the key-stone writer of the Symbolist movement, a central figure linking the 19th-century Romantics with the Futurists and Surrealists of the 20th century.

**Sadie Harrison ..issu stellaire.. (..born of the stars..)**

*Stéphane Mallarmé*

**UN COUP DE DÉS  
JAMAIS**

SOIT  
LE MAÎTRE

**S'ABOLIRA**

COMME SI  
au silence  
autour du gouffre  
COMME SI  
SI

C'ÉTAIT LE NOMBRE  
issu stellaire  
EXISTÂT-IL  
COMMENÇÂT-IL ET CESSÂT-IL  
SE CHIFFRÂT-IL  
ILLUMINÂT-IL

CE SERAIT

**LE HASARD**

RIEN  
N'AURA EU LIEU  
QUE LE LIEU  
en quoi toute réalité se dissout

EXCEPTÉ  
PEUT-ÊTRE

UNE CONSTELLATION

**A THROW OF THE DICE  
WILL NEVER**

THOUGH IT BE  
THE MASTER

**ABOLISH**

AS IF  
in the silence  
about the abyss  
AS IF  
IF

IT WAS THE NUMBER  
born of the stars  
WERE IT TO EXIST  
WERE IT TO BEGIN AND WERE IT TO CEASE  
WERE IT TO BE NUMBERED  
WERE IT TO ILLUMINE

IT WOULD BE

**CHANCE**

NOTHING  
WILL HAVE TAKEN PLACE  
BUT THE PLACE  
in which all reality dissolves

EXCEPT  
PERHAPS

A CONSTELLATION

Selected text from *Un Coup de Dés* by Stéphane Mallarmé ©1994 *Collected Poems*, University of California Press

**Sadie Harrison** (b.1965) was born in Adelaide, Australia. Until recently she was a lecturer in Composition at Goldsmith's College, University of London, but she now lives and works full-time as a composer in Dorset. Recent projects include *An Unexpected Light*, a violin concerto premièred and recorded for TV in Lithuania by Rusne Mataityte and the St Christopherus Orchestra (Vilnius, February 2004), *...under the circle of the moon...* premièred by



Peter Sheppard Skaerved and Phillipa Mo (London, May 2004), *Atoms-Lotus-Thorns-Fire* for the Meininger Trio (Cologne, July 2004) and *The Fourteenth Terrace*, selected to represent Australia in the 2005 World Music Days. She is Artistic Director of the Semley Music Festival.

She writes: 'My setting of extracts from *Un coup de Dés* attempts to capture something of Mallarmé's "empire of passion and dreams" where silence is as important as sound, where "images are strewn like stars on the page".'

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## **Will Todd *Le Pont Mirabeau* (The Mirabeau Bridge)**

*Guillaume Apollinaire*

Sous le pont Mirabeau coule la Seine  
Et nos amours

Faut-il qu'il m'en souvienne

La joie venait toujours après la peine

Vienne la nuit sonne l'heure

Les jours s'en vont je demeure

Les mains dans les mains restons face à face

Tandis que sous

Le pont de nos bras passe

Des éternels regards l'onde si lasse

Vienne la nuit sonne l'heure

Les jours s'en vont je demeure

L'amour s'en va comme cette eau courante

L'amour s'en va

Comme la vie est lente

Et comme l'Espérance est violente

Passent les jours et passent les semaines

Ni temps passé

Ni les amours reviennent

Sous le pont Mirabeau coule la Seine

Vienne la nuit sonne l'heure

Les jours s'en vont je demeure

Under the Mirabeau Bridge the Seine flows on  
And our loves

Must I remember it

Joy always followed pain

Let night come let the hour chime

The days pass away I remain

Hands in hands let us stand here face to face

While under

The bridge of our arms flow

The weary waters of eternal gazing

Let night come let the hour chime

The days pass away I remain

Love passes away like this running water

Love passes away

How slow life is

And how violent is Hope

Let the days pass and weeks pass

Neither time past

Nor loves come back again

Under the Mirabeau Bridge the Seine flows on

Let night come let the hour chime

The days pass away I remain

**Will Todd** (b.1970) is from County Durham and studied composition from an early age. His opera *The Blackened Man* (libretto Ben Dunwell) has been performed at the Linbury Theatre at the Royal Opera House and at the Buxton Festival. In Boston and New York there have been a number of productions of *The Screams of Kitty Genovese* (libretto David Simpatico) as well as a workshop production at ENO. His *Mass in Blue*, a setting of the Latin Mass for Jazz orchestra and choir, has received many performances since its première two years ago and, along with a number of Will Todd's other works, is available on CD from tyalgumpress.com. As well as opera, his extensive output includes musicals, oratorio, orchestral works and works for children and amateur performers. His music has been widely performed in the UK and United States and featured on Radio 3's In Tune, on Classic FM, and the Radio 2 Arts Programme. He is married to the soprano Bethany Halliday.

**Guillaume Apollinaire** (1880–1918) was France's most eloquent poet of the First World War. Artistically he embraced all that was new, in particular Cubism, and thus he links the Symbolist world with that of the 20th century.

## **Edward Cowie *Les Hiboux* (The Owls)**

*Charles Baudelaire*

Sous les ifs noirs qui les abritent,  
Les hiboux se tiennent rangés,  
Ainsi que les dieux étrangers,  
Dardant leur œuil rouge, ils méditent.

Sans remuer ils se tiendront  
Jusqu'à l'heure mélancolique  
Où, poussant le soleil oblique  
Les ténèbres s'établiront.

Leur attitude au sage enseigne  
Qu'il faut en ce monde qu'il craigne  
Tumulte et le mouvement;

L'homme ivre d'une ombre qui passe  
Pour toujours le châtimet  
D'avoir voulu changer de place.

[Huhu Keewik!]

Beneath the shelter of the yew trees,  
The owls stand in rows,  
Like strange gods,  
Shooting their red eyes, they meditate.

They remain motionless  
Until the melancholy hour  
When darkness comes,  
Pushing away the oblique sun.

Their attitude teaches the wise man  
That in this world he should fear  
Tumult and movement;

He who thirsts for shade  
Is punished eternally  
For having wanted to change places.

[Huhu Keewik!]

**Edward Cowie** (b.1943) took his first degree in Physics. In the early 1960s, he began to study privately with Alexander Goehr and in 1971 received a Chopin Scholarship to study with Wi-

told Lutoslawski in Poland. By the mid 1970s he was establishing a world-wide reputation as both a composer and a painter. In 1984 he was awarded the first Granada composer/conductorship with the RLPO, a position he held for three years. He returned to England in 1995 after living in Australia for twelve years. He is Professor and Director of Research at Dartington College of Arts. He recently held two residencies, as Composer-in-Association with the BBC Singers, and as first Artist-in-Residence with the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds. His music has been featured in major festivals all over the world and he has had more than forty one-man shows as a painter in galleries in fourteen countries. Much of his music and visual art has been directly inspired by the natural sciences – bird song in particular. He describes his musical language as influenced by the nature of forms and the forms of nature.

**Charles Baudelaire** (1821–67) occupies a pivotal position as the high Romantic poet whose writings pointed the way towards Modernism. His influence on the Symbolism of Verlaine, Mallarmé, Valéry and Rimbaud was immense.

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### **Bob Chilcott** *L'enfant dort* (*The Child is Sleeping*)

*Victor Hugo*

Elle dort; ses beaux yeux rouvriront demain;  
Et mon doigt qu'elle tient dans l'ombre emplit sa main;

Moi, je lis, ayant soin que rien ne la réveille.  
L'enfant dort, et, comme si son rêve me disait:

Sois tranquille, ô père, et sois clément!  
Je sens sa main presser la mienne doucement.

She is sleeping; her lovely eyes will open again  
tomorrow;

And my finger which she is holding in the darkness  
fills her hand;

I myself am reading, taking care that nothing should  
wake her.

The child is sleeping, and, as if her dream said to me:

'Be calm, father, and be forbearing!'  
I feel her hand gently pressing against mine.

**Bob Chilcott** (b.1955) has a fast-growing reputation as one of Britain's most popular and accessible composers of choral music. He has been involved in choral music for most of his life, having been a boy chorister and choral scholar in the choir of King's College, Cambridge, and also a member of the vocal group The King's Singers for twelve years. Chilcott has contributed a growing body of work to the repertoire of adult and children's choirs. Of his larger works for mixed voices, *Jubilate* has been performed widely, including at Carnegie Hall, New York, Symphony Hall in Birmingham, the New Handel Hall in Halle, Germany, and in Brisbane, Australia. His *Canticles of Light* successfully brings adult and children's voices together with

orchestra in a distinctive setting of three Latin hymns from the *Liturgia Horarum*. His song with sign language, *Can you hear me?*, has become one of the most widely performed pieces in the children's choir world. He is conductor of the 200-voice chorus at the Royal College of Music in London and Principal Guest Conductor of the BBC Singers.

**Victor Hugo** (1802–85) was the dominant force of 19th-century French literature. His humanitarian republican ideals have brought him honour as a national patriarch whose diverse spheres of influence have been of universal importance.

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## **John Casken** *Colloque Sentimental* (Sentimental Dialogue)

*Paul Verlaine*

Dans le vieux parc solitaire et glacé,  
Deux formes ont tout à l'heure passé.

Les yeux sont morts et leurs lèvres sont molles,  
Et l'on entend à peine leurs paroles.

Dans le vieux parc solitaire et glacé,  
Deux spectres ont évoqué le passé.

–Te souvient-il de notre extase ancienne?

–Pourquoi voulez-vous donc qu'il m'en souvienn?

–Ton cœur bat-il toujours à mon seul nom?  
Toujours vois-tu mon âme en rêve? – Non.

–Ah! les beaux jours de bonheur indicible  
Où nous joignons nos bouches! – C'est possible.

–Qu'il était bleu, le ciel, et grand, l'espoir!  
–L'espoir a fui, vaincu, vers le ciel noir.

Tels ils marchaient dans les avoines folles,  
Et la nuit seule entendit leurs paroles.

In the lonely, frozen old park,  
two figures passed by just now.

Their eyes are dead and their lips are limp,  
and their words are hardly audible.

In the lonely, frozen old park,  
two spectres evoked the past.

–Do you remember our old rapture?

–Why ever should I remember that?

–Does your heart still pound at my very name?  
Do you still see my soul in dreams? – No

–Ah! Those fine days of unspeakable bliss  
when we kissed! – It's possible.

–How blue the sky was, how great was hope!

–Hope has fled, defeated, towards the black sky.

Thus they walked among the wild oats, and the darkness alone heard their words.

**John Casken** (b.1949) studied in Poland and had regular consultations with Witold Lutoslawski. He was appointed Professor of Music at the University of Manchester in 1992. His works have been featured at major international festivals, and his first opera, *Golem*, won the first Britten Award in 1990 and the 1991 Gramophone Award for Best Contemporary Recording (Virgin Classics). Sir Thomas Allen and the BBC Symphony Orchestra premièred the or-

chestral song-cycle *Still Mine* at the 1992 Proms and this work subsequently won the Prince Pierre de Monaco Prize for Musical Composition in 1993. He was Composer-in-Association with the Northern Sinfonia for twelve years. His Violin Concerto was premièred at the 1995 Proms and his second opera, *God's Liar*, was premièred in 2000 by Almeida Opera.

The eerie landscape of Paul Verlaine's poem *Colloque Sentimental* evokes a sad, ironic world in which the spectres of two former lovers pass in a lonely, frozen park. One of the figures finds it hard to, or refuses to, recall memories of their former bliss, seeing only the black sky, darkness alone hearing their words.

**Paul Verlaine** (1844–96) was a close contemporary of Stéphane Mallarmé; together they embody the Symbolist ideals in poetry whereby poetical creation becomes akin to musical form. Due to his poetic contrasts, moods and intrinsic lyricism he has always been beloved of composers as a source of texts for song.

## **Laurence Crane *Tour de France Statistics 1903–2003***

*Laurence Crane*

Cinq. L'Amérique, huit.

Quatre. L'Espagne, huit.

Trois. L'Italie, neuf.

Deux. La Belgique, dix-huit.

Le pays qui a remporté le plus de victoires est la France, qui a gagné trente-six fois.

Cinq. Grenoble, trente-huit.

Quatre. Metz, quarante.

Trois. Luchon, quarante-neuf.

Deux. Pau, cinquante-huit.

Sans compter Paris, la ville la plus visitée par le Tour est Bordeaux, avec soixante dix-huit visites.

Indurain, douze, Miguel Indurain.

Armstrong, seize, Lance Armstrong.

Anquetil, seize, Jacques Anquetil.

Hinault, vingt-huit, Bernard Hinault.

Des coureurs cyclistes cinq fois victorieux, celui qui a remporté le plus de victoires d'étape est Eddy Merckx. Il en a gagné trente-quatre.

5. America, eight.

4. Spain, eight.

3. Italy, nine.

2. Belgium, eighteen.

The nation with the largest number of victories is France, which won thirty-six times.

5. Grenoble, thirty-eight.

4. Metz, forty.

3. Luchon, forty-nine.

2. Pau, fifty-eight.

Not counting Paris, the town most visited by the Tour is Bordeaux, with seventy-eight visits.

Indurain, twelve, Miguel Indurain.

Armstrong, sixteen, Lance Armstrong.

Anquetil, sixteen, Jacques Anquetil.

Hinault, twenty-eight, Bernard Hinault.

Of the competing cyclists who have won five times, the one who won the most single stages is Eddy Merckx. He won thirty-four stages.

*translated by Laurence Crane*

**Laurence Crane** (b.1961) was born in Oxford and studied composition with Peter Nelson and Nigel Osborne at Nottingham University. He is closely associated with the British ensemble Apartment House, who have given around forty performances of his works and have also presented two portrait concerts; in October 1998 at the Three Two Festival in New York City and in October 2001 at The Warehouse in London as part of the BMIC's third Cutting Edge series. Performers of his chamber works have included IXION, Plus-Minus, Ruth Wall, Rhodri Davies, Duo Contour, Noszferatu, 175 East (Auckland), Continuum Ensemble (Toronto) and the London Sinfonietta. The Dutch group Orkest de Ereprijs commissioned his largest work to date, *Movement for Ensemble*, in 2002 and gave the première in Amsterdam. Then the Ives Ensemble commissioned *Movement for 10 Musicians*, a new arrangement of the earlier work, for a collaboration with Rotterdam Dance Works which toured the Netherlands in the spring of 2004. His music has been presented at festivals in Britain and abroad and broadcast on BBC Radio 3. Michael Finnissy has recorded his complete music for solo piano, for a CD which will be released by METIER.

He says, 'I always compose songs to my own texts, which deal with people, places and incidents in an anecdotal style.'

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### **Adam Gorb *La Cloche Fêlée* (The Cracked Bell)**

*Charles Baudelaire*

Il est amer et doux, pendant les nuits d'hiver,  
D'écouter, près du feu qui palpite et qui fume,  
Les souvenirs lointains lentement s'élever  
Au bruit des carillons qui chantent dans la brume.

Bienheureuse la cloche au gosier vigoureux  
Qui, malgré sa vieillesse, alerte et bien portante,  
Jette fidèlement son cri religieux,  
Ainsi qu'un vieux soldat qui veille sous la tente!

Moi, mon âme est fêlée, et lorsqu'en ses ennuis  
Elle veut de ses chants peupler l'air froid des nuits,  
Il arrive souvent que sa voix affaiblie

Semble le râle épais d'un blessé qu'on oublie  
Au bord d'un lac de sang, sous un grand tas de morts,  
Et qui meurt, sans bouger, dans d'immenses efforts.

It is bitter-sweet on a winter's night  
by a fire which quivers and smokes,  
to hear distant memories  
in the sound of bells in the mist.

Happy the bell with the lively tune  
which although old remains bright and tuneful  
as it emits its saintly cry  
like an old soldier keeping watch in his tent.

For myself, my soul is cracked, and when at difficult  
times it wishes to fill the cold night air with its tunes,  
it often happens that its feeble voice

Is like the heavy death rattle of a wounded man left for  
dead by a lake of blood under a huge pile of corpses;  
he dies motionless in a great struggle.

**Adam Gorb** (b.1958) is Head of School of Composition and Contemporary Music at the Royal Northern College of Music. He studied at Cambridge University and the Royal Academy of Music. Notable works include *Metropolis* for wind band, which won the Walter Beeler Memorial Prize in the USA in 1994, *Prelude, Interlude and Postlude* for piano, which won the Purcell Composition Prize in 1995, *Kol Simcha*, a ballet given over fifty performances by the Rambert Dance Company, a Violin Sonata premièred at the Spitalfields Festival in 1996 and *Elements*, a Percussion Concerto for Evelyn Glennie and the Royal Northern College of Music Wind Ensemble which was released on CD in 2001. Recent premières have included a Clarinet Concerto for Nicholas Cox and the Royal Liverpool Philharmonic Orchestra, a String Quartet for the Maggini Quartet, *Towards Nirvana* for the Tokyo Kosei Wind Ensemble, and *Diaspora* for eleven strings which was given its première by the Goldberg Ensemble in 2003.

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**Gabriel Jackson** *A la Mémoire de Claude Debussy* (In Memory of Claude Debussy)  
*Jean Cocteau*

Les vagues, les feuilles, le vent  
Et autres bêtes sans visage  
T'aiment, charmeur de paysages,  
Et te savent toujours vivant.

Une Reine-Claude se tue  
Sa blessure saigne de l'or  
Marbre n'écrase pas ce mort  
Dont un nuage est la statue.

The waves, the leaves, the wind  
And other faceless creatures  
Love you, conjuror of landscapes,  
And know you're still alive.

A greengage immolates itself,  
Its gash bleeds gold;  
Marble won't weigh on this man  
Whose statue is a cloud.

*Used by permission of Editions Gallimard, Paris*

**Gabriel Jackson** (b.1962) was a chorister at Canterbury Cathedral before studying composition at the RCM. He received the 2004 British Composers Award for Composition in the Liturgical category. A CD of his choral music is to be released shortly on the Delphian label. His music has been performed and broadcast extensively on BBC Radio 3, throughout Europe and the USA and as far afield as Kuwait and Ho Chi Minh City. He has a particular interest in the visual arts, with major pieces based on works by Richard Long and Ian Hamilton Finlay, and has curated concerts at Tate Britain and Tate St Ives.

He writes: '*A la Mémoire de Claude Debussy* sets a short, rather enigmatic poem by Jean Cocteau; quiet and delicate, it is my small homage to a very great composer.'

**Jean Cocteau** (1889–1963) regarded himself foremost as a poet, although he is best known

today as a leading figure of avant-garde theatre. A Futurist who paid homage to his Symbolist precursors, his major collaborations were with certain icons of the early 20th century, among them Picasso and Stravinsky.

## **Michael Finnissy *Salomé* (Salome)**

*Jules Laforgue*

Salomé, ayant donné cours à un petit rire toussotant, peut-être pour faire assavoir que surtout fallait pas croire qu'elle se prenait au sérieux, pince sa lyre noire jusqu'au sang, et, de la voix sans timbre et sans sexe d'un malade qui réclame sa potion dont, au fond, il n'a jamais eu plus besoin que vous ou moi, improvisa à même...

'Et maintenant, mon père,  
je désirerais que vous me fassiez monter chez  
moi, en un plat quelconque, la tête de laokannan.  
C'est dit. Je monte l'attendre.'

Salome, having expressed a stifled laugh, perhaps to make people aware that it was most important that they shouldn't think she was taking herself seriously, plucked her black lyre until her fingers hurt, and, in a flat and sexless voice – like that of an invalid who is calling for his medicine which, in truth, he has never needed any more than you or I – made up this speech...

'And now, father,  
I would like you to bring to me  
on some sort of plate, the head of John the Baptist.  
That is my demand. I am going up to wait for it.'

**Michael Finnissy** (b.1946) has always ploughed his own musical furrow and commanded the respect and admiration of several generations of performers. He created the music department of the London School of Contemporary Dance and has been associated with other dance companies, including London Contemporary Dance Theatre, Ballet Rambert, Strider, and Second Stride. He has taught at Dartington Summer School and has been musician in residence to the Victorian College of the Arts and to the City of Caulfield in Australia. He is now Professor of Composition at the University of Southampton. He has been featured composer at the Bath, Huddersfield and Almeida festivals; his work is widely performed and broadcast worldwide. His orchestral work *Red Earth* was a BBC Prom commission. His vast output has included chamber music, opera and vocal works and has embraced a wide spectrum of world culture. As a pianist he is particularly associated with the commissioning and performing of new British work; composers who have written pieces especially for him include James Dillon and Oliver Knussen.

**Jules Laforgue** (1860–87) is remembered as one of the creators of Modernism who 'took the universe to be an irony practised against its inhabitants'. In his poetry he held up literary seriousness in a memorable and often provocative light.



## Andrew Keeling *Artémis* (*Artémis*)

*Gérard de Nerval*

La Treizième revient...C'est encore la première;  
Et c'est toujours la seule – ou c'est le seul moment:  
Aimez qui vous aima du berceau dans la bière;  
Celle que j'aimai seul m'aime encore tendrement:  
C'est la Mort – ou la Morte... O délice! ô tourment!  
La rose qu'elle tient, c'est la Rose trémière.  
Sainte napolitaine aux mains pleines de feux,  
Rose au cœur violet, fleur de sainte Gudule:  
As-tu trouvé ta croix dans le désert des cieux?

The thirteenth returns – she's the first again;  
And she is always alone – or it's the only time;  
Love those who loved you from cradle to grave;  
The one that I loved alone still loves me tenderly:  
She is Death – or the Dead Woman ...O delight! o agony!  
The rose she holds is the Hollyhock.  
Neapolitan saint with hands full of fire,  
Rose with the violet heart, flower of Saint Gudule:  
Did you find your cross in the desert of the heavens?

**Andrew Keeling** (b.1955) was a cathedral chorister in the 1960s, performed in rock bands in the 1970s, then turned to composition in the late 1980s. His music has been commissioned and performed by Evelyn Glennie, Fretwork, Virelai, Gemini, and many others, and two CDs of his music are currently available on the RiverRun label. His *Frühlingsregen* of 2002 was part of Katharine Durrant's triptych of commissions *New Rückert Lieder*. He has recently been working with Robert Fripp of King Crimson on orchestral versions of *Soundscapes*, which have been performed and released on CD. He lives and works in the North West of England; much of his work has been inspired by Jungian psychology and the landscapes of the Lake District.

He describes his setting of *Artémis* as 'unashamedly Romantic' following the other settings of Nerval's poetry he has written recently.

**Gérard de Nerval** (1808–1855) led a colourful, somewhat nomadic but ultimately tragic life which ended with his suicide. Although truly representative of Romanticism, he was not recognised as such until the Surrealists placed him in the literary canon.

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## Hugh Wood *Alicante* (*Alicante*)

*Jacques Prévert*

Une orange sur la table  
Ta robe sur le tapis  
Et toi dans mon lit  
Doux présent du présent  
Fraîcheur de la nuit  
Chaleur de ma vie

An orange on the table  
Your dress on the carpet  
And you in my bed  
Gentle present of the present  
Coolness of the night  
Passion of my life

*Jacques Prévert: Alicante from Paroles*

**Hugh Wood** (b.1932) originally studied History at Oxford. His subsequent teachers of music included Matyas Seiber and Iain Hamilton. For many years a Fellow of Churchill College, Cambridge, he is a well-known broadcaster and writer on music, brilliantly effective especially as a polemicist against hack criticism, and a superb apologist for music that he happens to admire. As a composer, he has typically preferred chamber music genres, a leaning which suggests a greater interest in the structural and contrapuntal working-out of ideas than in colourful sound or musical portraiture or narrative. His output includes three full-scale concerti, for cello, violin and piano, and several BBC Prom commissions. Recent projects have included *Variations* for the BBC Symphony Orchestra, which was performed at the last night of the Proms in 1998, *Serenade and Elegy*, commissioned for the 1999 Cheltenham International Festival, and a fifth String Quartet for the Lindsays, commissioned by Music in the Round in Sheffield and premièred in October 2001.

**Jacques Prévert** (1900–77) was a fringe Surrealist and a poet whose work touches all levels of humanity. He could be anarchic but also sentimental and playful; his wordplay and observations of everyday life have endeared him to his readers.

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## **Diana Burrell** *Longtemps ce fut l'été* (That was a Long Summer)

*Yves Bonnefoy*

Longtemps ce fut l'été.  
Une étoile immobile  
Dominait les soleils tournants.  
L'été de nuit portait  
L'été de jour dans ses mains de lumière.  
Et nous nous parlions bas en feuillage de nuit.

L'étoile indifférente; et l'étrave;  
Et le clair chemin de l'une  
à l'autre en eaux et ciels tranquilles.  
Tout ce qui est bougeait comme un vaisseau  
qui tourne et glisse,  
et ne sait plus son âme dans la nuit.

That was a long summer.  
A star, motionless,  
Towered above the turning suns.  
The summer night carried  
The summer day in its hands of light.  
And we spoke quietly in the darkened foliage.

The star constant; and the prow;  
And the clear path from the one  
to the other in waters, and peaceful skies.  
Everything which exists was moving like a ship  
which turns and glides  
and no longer knows its own soul in the night.

*Yves Bonnefoy, L'été de nuit from Pierre écrite, ©1965 Mercure de France*

**Diana Burrell** (b.1948) studied Music at Cambridge University. Her catalogue of over 50 compositions includes commissions from the BBC Symphony Orchestra, Orchestra of St John's Smith Square, Bournemouth Sinfonietta and Northern Sinfonia. She has also com-

pleted a number of finely crafted chamber works for solo instruments, duos, trios and other combinations, including *Bronze* for 18 instruments, for the Brunel Ensemble. Her music is regularly heard on Radio 3. A CD of orchestral works recorded by the Northern Sinfonia was released by ASV to huge critical acclaim, and was the winner of Classic CD magazine's 1998 award in the Living Composer category. She was Composer-in-Association to the City of London Sinfonia from 1994 to 1996.

She describes *Longtemps ce fut l'été* as having 'long sweeping romantic lines for the soprano with tiny fragments from the piano thrown against the melodies...'.

**Yves Bonnefoy** (b.1923) is arguably France's leading post-Second World War poet. His work has combined a lyrical intensity with a powerful philosophical questioning which is intrinsic to all his writing.

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## **Helen Roe *Pourquoi?* (Why?)**

*Paul Verlaine*

Je ne sais pourquoi  
Mon esprit amer  
D'une aile inquiète et folle vole sur la mer.  
Tout ce qui m'est cher,  
D'une aile d'effroi  
Mon amour le couve au ras des flots.  
Pourquoi, pourquoi?

Mouette à l'essor mélancolique,  
Elle suit la vague, ma pensée,  
A tous les vents du ciel balancée,  
Et biaisant quand la marée oblique,  
Mouette à l'essor mélancolique.

Ivre de soleil  
Et de liberté,  
Un instinct la guide à travers cette immensité.  
La brise d'été  
Sur le flot vermeil  
Doucement la porte en un tiède demi-sommeil.

Parfois si tristement elle crie  
Qu'elle alarme au lointain le pilote,  
Puis au gré du vent se livre et flotte

I do not know why  
My bitter spirit  
Flies on a wild and restless wing over the sea.  
All that is dear to me,  
With a wing of terror  
My love broods over it as it skims the waves.  
Why, Why?

Melancholy soaring seagull,  
It follows the wave, my thought,  
Buffeted by all the winds in the sky,  
And tilting with the slanting tide,  
Melancholy soaring seagull.

Drunk with sunlight  
And with freedom,  
An instinct guides it across this vastness.  
The summer breeze  
On the vermilion waters  
Bears it gently in a warm half-sleep.

Sometimes it cries so plaintively  
That it startles the distant pilot,  
Then to the whim of the wind it surrenders and hovers

Et plonge, et l'aile toute meurtrie  
Revole, et puis si tristement crie!

Je ne sais pourquoi  
Mon esprit amer  
D'une aile inquiète et folle vole sur la mer.  
Tout ce qui m'est cher,  
D'une aile d'effroi  
Mon amour le couve au ras des flots.  
Pourquoi, pourquoi?

*Paul Verlaine: Je ne sais pourquoi*

And dives, and the battered wing  
Flies up once more, then cries so plaintively!

I do not know why  
My bitter spirit  
Flies on a wild and restless wing over the sea.  
All that is dear to me,  
With a wing of terror  
My love broods over it as it skims the waves.  
Why, Why?

**Helen Roe** (b.1955) studied composition with David Lumsdaine and Peter Wiegold, and read music at Jesus College, Oxford. After a three-year appointment as Fellow in Creative Arts at Wolfson College, Oxford, she held a number of teaching posts, including one as a composition teacher at King's College, London, and another as a tutor on the postgraduate Performance and Communication Skills course at the Guildhall School of Music & Drama. Her first broadcast piece was *Ash Wednesday* (1975), a 20-minute work for piano; since then, several of her larger pieces have been heard on Radio 3. Her music has also been broadcast on Australian radio, Danish television and Channel 4. Awards include the SPNM prize for a test piece for the Carl Flesch International Violin Competition (1982), the Harriet Cohen Memorial Trust Award (1984), and the Gemini Fellowship for composers (1992).

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## **Nicola LeFanu *Billet à Whistler* (Letter to Whistler)**

*Stéphane Mallarmé*

Pas les rafales à propos  
De rien comme occuper la rue  
Sujette au noir vol de chapeaux;  
Mais une danseuse apparue

Tourbillon de mousseline ou  
Fureur éparses en écumes  
Que soulève par son genou  
Celle même dont nous vécûmes

Pour tout, hormis lui, rebattu  
Spirituelle, ivre, immobile

Not the squalls of wind  
that take over the street  
for no reason, liable to make black hats fly off,  
but a dancer

in a whirlwind of muslin,  
a passion of scattered foam  
as she raises her knee;  
she whom we lived for:

spirited, wild yet still;  
the tutu knocking out

Foudroyer avec le tutu,  
Sans se faire autrement de bile

Sinon rieur que puisse l'air  
De sa jupe éventer Whistler.

everything hackneyed,  
without worrying,

except to smile that the wind of her skirt  
might be an air to fan Whistler.

*Translated by Nicola LeFanu*

**Nicola LeFanu** (b.1947) studied at Oxford, in London and at Harvard. She is the daughter of Elizabeth Maconchy and the music of both composers is featured on the METIER CD *Reflections* (MSV CD92064) and *Peripheral Visions* (MSV CD92025). Her music has been played and broadcast all over the world. Recent works include *Duo Concertante* for violin, viola and orchestra, a Piano Trio and *Mira Clar Tenebras* for voice and small ensemble. She has a particular affinity for vocal music and has composed six operas: *Dawnpath* (New Opera Company 1977), *The Story of Mary O'Neill* (BBC, 1987), *The Green Children* (Kings Lynn Festival, 1990), *Blood Wedding* (WPT, 1992), *The Wildman* (Aldeburgh Festival, 1995) and *Light Passing* (BBC/NCEM, 2004). She is Professor of Music at the University of York and has travelled widely in Australia, Europe and the USA. Her music often draws its inspiration from natural landscape, especially her childhood haunts in Ireland.

She says, 'I can never resist an invitation to compose a song; over the years I have written nearly thirty vocal works – not to mention being addicted to opera.'

## **Edward McGuire *Rêves de la Bonne Heure* (Dreams of the Good Hour)**

*Edward McGuire*

Mon sourire est blanc et noir,  
Oubliez mes mots oranges...  
Ton visage est comme une poire,  
Calme, et très étrange...

Mais lève-toi  
Et chante au bon matin!  
La lumière! Son éclair!  
Peu à peu nous pensons  
A l'ouvrage que je dois faire  
Et maintenant nous nous levons!  
Là-bas la lumière!  
Et tous les sons si clairs  
Dans la nuit

My smile is white and black,  
Forget my orange words...  
Your face is like a pear,  
Calm and very strange...  
But arise  
And sing to the lovely morning!  
The light! Its brightness!  
Gradually we think  
Of the work I must do  
And now we get up!  
The light over there!  
And all the sounds so clear  
In the night

Chanson au loin,  
Belles sont au coin  
Chantez au rêve de la nuit;  
Belle-famille mange leurs biscuits!

Allez doucement et capricieusement  
Aux sons mécaniques  
Dans les bureaux et fabriques.  
En pays et mer  
Et la danse de la terre,  
Comme les oiseaux coupent le ciel bleu,  
Tel l'amour sépare, lumineux,  
Les rideaux de la nuit.  
Ce soir, cherchez encore  
Les rêves en suie...

A distant song,  
Beauties in the corner.  
Sing to the night's dream;  
The in-laws munch their biscuits!

Go gently and capriciously  
To the mechanical sounds  
In the offices and factories.  
In the country and sea  
And the dance of the land,  
As birds cut through the blue sky,  
So bright love opens  
The curtains of the night.  
This evening, look once again  
For dreams in the soot-dark...

*translated by Edward McGuire*

**Edward McGuire** (b.1948) is from Glasgow. His works have been regularly broadcast and commissions have come from the New Music Group of Scotland, the BBC Scottish Symphony Orchestra, the St Magnus Festival, and the Edinburgh International Festival. In recent years he has produced several large-scale works to critical acclaim: the ballet score *Peter Pan*, *A Glasgow Symphony*, a chamber opera *The Loving of Etain*, and concerti for guitar, trombone, viola, violin and double bass. McGuire also plays flute with, and writes for, the Scottish folk group The Whistlebinkies. He was the recipient of a British Composers Award 2003 and a Creative Scotland Award 2004. His music has wide appeal with a sparkle and drama often arising from fresh melodic ideas crossing swords with a darker atonality. He decided to write his own poem specially for this commission. Inspired by the French surrealist tradition, it explores the dawn of a working day as the unreal confusion of the dreamworld clears...

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**Judith Bingham** *La Jeune Morte* (The Young Dead Woman)  
*José-Maria Heredia*

Qui que tu sois, Vivant, passe vite parmi  
L'herbe du tertre où gît ma cendre inconsolée;  
Ne foule point les fleurs de l'humble mausolée  
D'où j'écoute ramper le lierre et la fourmi.

No matter who you are, you are alive: pass quickly  
Among the grasses by my humble vault:  
Don't crush the flowers where I lie unconsoled  
Listening to the climbing ivy and the ants.

Tu t'arrêtes? Un chant de colombe a gémì.  
Non! qu'elle ne soit pas sur ma tombe immolée!  
Si tu veux m'être cher, donne lui la volée.  
La vie est si douce, ah! Laisse-la vivre, ami.

Le sais-tu? Sous le myrte enguirlandant la porte,  
Epouse et vierge, au seuil nuptial, je suis morte,  
Si proche et déjà loin de celui que j'aimais.

Mes yeux se sont fermés à la lumière heureuse,  
Et maintenant j'habite, hélas! Et pour jamais,  
L'inexorable Erêbe et la Nuit Ténébreuse.

I think you stopped. That singing was a dove: it moaned.  
Oh no, don't sacrifice it on my tomb.  
To earn my favour, give it flight and freedom.  
Life is so sweet: oh let it live, my friend.

It was under the myrtle garland, at the door,  
On the sill of marriage I died, a virgin wife,  
So near - already far from him I used to love.

So were my eyes closed to the happy light.  
And now I stay - alas for evermore -  
With Erebus unheeding, in the dark embrace of Night.

*translated by Judith Bingham*

**Judith Bingham** (b.1952) was a BBC Singer before taking up composition full-time. The most important influence on her musical thinking as a student was Hans Keller. Her individual voice attracted early attention and since the 70s has led to many requests for works and won her several awards. The première of *Chartres* in 1993 proved a breakthrough and led to a succession of major performances and commissions, including *Beyond Redemption* (BBC Philharmonic), *The Red Hot Nail* (LSO) and *Evening Canticles* (King's College, Cambridge). She is now one of the UK's most internationally performed composers. While it is her orchestral and, particularly, choral works that have had the widest impact, she has written a number of songs including *Blacker* for baritone and piano (1987) and *Unheimlich* for soprano and treble recorder (1998).

**José-Maria Heredia** (1842–1905) was of Spanish-French parentage and applied formal Parnassian principles to his writing. His choice of the sonnet as a structure led to the concision and symmetry which characterise his work.

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## **Roger Redgate *Mirlitonrades* (Doggerel verses)**

*Samuel Beckett*

rêve  
sans fin  
ni trêve  
à rien

dream without end or respite for anything

écoute-les  
s'ajouter

listen to how they add words to words without words,

les mots  
aux mots  
sans mots  
les pas  
aux pas  
un à  
un

steps to steps, one by one

en face  
le pire  
jusqu'à ce  
qu'il fasse rire

the worst right opposite what makes you laugh

imagine si ceci  
un jour ceci  
un beau jour  
imagine  
si un jour  
un beau jour ceci  
cessait  
imagine

imagine if this one day, a beautiful day, were to end

*Text by Samuel Beckett reprinted by permission of The Samuel Beckett Estate/Calder Publications Ltd*

**Roger Redgate** (b.1958) was the recipient of a DAAD scholarship in Germany, studying composition with Brian Ferneyhough and attending Klaus Huber's masterclasses. From 1989 to 1992 he was the Northern Arts Composer Fellow and has lectured at the Universities of Durham and Newcastle upon Tyne. He has been a regular guest composer and conductor at the Darmstädter Ferienkurse für Neue Musik where he received the Kranichsteiner Musikpreis for composition. He is conductor and artistic director of Ensemble Exposé. He has also worked in the fields of jazz, rock, improvised music and performance art, and written music for film and television, including programmes for the BBC and Channel 4. He has published articles on Brian Ferneyhough and Michael Finnissy and is now a Senior Lecturer at Goldsmith's College, London.

**Samuel Beckett** (1906–89) was born in Ireland but made Paris his home and French his chosen language because, he explained, it made it easier to write without style. His name and literary legacy became bywords of the late twentieth century.



## Howard Skempton *Le Pont Mirabeau* (The Mirabeau Bridge)

Guillaume Apollinaire

Sous le pont Mirabeau coule la Seine  
Et nos amours  
Faut-il qu'il m'en souvienne  
La joie venait toujours après la peine

Vienne la nuit sonne l'heure  
Les jours s'en vont je demeure

Les mains dans les mains restons face à face  
Tandis que sous  
Le pont de nos bras passe  
Des éternels regards l'onde si lasse

Vienne la nuit sonne l'heure  
Les jours s'en vont je demeure

L'amour s'en va comme cette eau courante  
L'amour s'en va  
Comme la vie est lente  
Et comme l'Espérance est violente

Vienne la nuit sonne l'heure  
Les jours s'en vont je demeure

Passent les jours et passent les semaines  
Ni temps passé  
Ni les amours reviennent  
Sous le pont Mirabeau coule la Seine

Vienne la nuit sonne l'heure  
Les jours s'en vont je demeure

Under the Mirabeau Bridge the Seine flows on  
And our loves  
Must I remember it  
Joy always followed pain

Let night come let the hour chime  
The days pass away I remain

Hands in hands let us stand here face to face  
While under  
The bridge of our arms flow  
The weary waters of eternal gazing

Let night come let the hour chime  
The days pass away I remain

Love passes away like this running water  
Love passes away  
How slow life is  
And how violent is Hope

Let night come let the hour chime  
The days pass away I remain

Let the days pass and weeks pass  
Neither time past  
Nor loves come back again  
Under the Mirabeau Bridge the Seine flows on

Let night come let the hour chime  
The days pass away I remain

**Howard Skempton** (b.1947) studied with Cornelius Cardew during the 1960s and was a founder member of the Scratch Orchestra in 1969. He has become best known for his miniatures for solo piano or accordion, but commissions in recent years have led to increased interest in vocal and choral music. He has remained independent of all mainstream tendencies in new music, his work growing from its roots in the experimental tradition. He lives in Leamington Spa.

Howard Skempton's concise setting of *Le Pont Mirabeau* evokes the sounds of Paris and the flow of the river Seine.

## **Graham Fitkin *Les Aliments Blancs* (White Food)**

*Erik Satie*

Je ne mange que des aliments blancs:  
des oeufs, du sucre, des os rapés;  
de la graisse d'animaux morts;  
du veau, du sel, des noix de coco,  
du poulet cuit dans de l'eau blanche;  
des moisissures de fruits, du riz, des navets;  
du boudin camphré, des pâtes,  
du fromage (blanc), de la salade de coton  
et de certain poissons (sans la peau).

I eat only white food:  
eggs, sugar, grated bone marrow,  
the fat of dead animals,  
veal, salt, coconuts,  
chicken cooked in white water,  
mouldy fruit, rice, turnips,  
camphorated white pudding, pasta,  
cheese (white), cotton salad  
and certain fish (without the skin).

**Graham Fitkin** (b.1963) studied with Peter Nelson and Nigel Osborne and at the Koninklijk Conservatorium, Holland, with Louis Andriessen. He has written extensively for dance, working with Wayne McGregor's Random Dance, the Royal Ballet, Shobana Jeyasingh Dance Company, New York City Ballet, Pacific Northwest Ballet and Munich Ballet. From 1994 to 1996 he was Composer-in-Association with the Royal Liverpool Philharmonic Orchestra, for whom he wrote five orchestral works. This led to commissions from the Hallé, BBC Philharmonic and London Chamber Orchestra. In 1997–98 he was Composer in Residence at the Harbourside Centre in Bristol. He now lives in Cornwall.

Of his choice to set a portion of Satie's food diary he writes, 'Text and music – always a challenge for me – poems aren't my way, beautiful prose is difficult too, sonnets hopeless, but a straight dietary aid, informative and to the point, might well work.'

**Eric Satie** (1866–1925) was the witty, off-centre composer of *Gymnopédies*, remembered for his stylistic innovations and his wide influence on generations of French composers. His most important artistic collaboration was with Cocteau on the ballet *Parade*.

**Alison Smart** was appointed to the BBC Singers in 1996, and has acquired unrivalled experience of a vast range of new music through working with the world's greatest composers and conductors.

After studying Classics at Clare College, Cambridge, she took post-graduate diplomas at the RNCM and TCM and won the Elisabeth Schumann Lieder Competition. Her extensive solo career includes concerts, operas and broadcasts with the BBC Symphony Orchestra, the BBC Concert Orchestra, The Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment and at the Salzburg Festival, under such conductors as Sir Roger Norrington, Sir Andrew Davis, Jane Glover and Stephen Cleobury. Repertoire has ranged from Telemann and Bach to the latest compositions.

With Katharine Durran she recorded *Peripheral Visions: British Music for Voice and Piano since 1970* (MSV CD 92025), which received critical acclaim. Other recordings include *Messiah* with the English String Orchestra (Nimbus), songs by Spohr (Naxos) and *Ausencias de Dolcinea* by Rodrigo (EMI).

She currently studies with Marie Hayward Segal.



Photograph by Gerald Place



**Katharine Durran** has developed highly acclaimed parallel careers as solo pianist, exponent of new music and song accompanist. Recent projects include performing late Beethoven alongside J.S. Bach's *Goldberg Variations* and commissioning three new extended settings for mezzo and piano of the poetry of Friedrich Rückert.

She gave her first concerto performance in Edinburgh at the age of 11. After reading Music at Cambridge University she studied piano at the Royal College of Music in London under Kendall Taylor and Geoffrey Parsons. More recently she has studied with Joyce Rathbone. She has featured in three *Piano* magazine symposiums, discussing J.S. Bach, British piano music and issues relating to women pianists of today.

As the commissioner of new works for solo piano and for ensembles she has performed numerous premières on BBC Radio 3 and on television, as well as discussing the rôle of song accompanist in today's musical society. Her many CD recordings with singers have been highly praised. Future recordings with singers include *New Rückert Lieder* and *Scotland in Lieder*.

Photograph by Angus Leigh

# New French Song

new settings of French words by British composers

**Alison Smart (soprano) & Katharine Durran (piano)**

1	Tarik O'Regan	<i>Sainte</i>	3:39
2	Sadie Harrison	<i>...issu stellaire..</i>	6:12
3	Will Todd	<i>Le Pont Mirabeau</i>	5:09
4	Edward Cowie	<i>Les Hiboux</i>	4:12
5	Bob Chilcott	<i>L'enfant dort</i>	1:43
6	John Casken	<i>Colloque Sentimental</i>	6:12
7	Laurence Crane	<i>Tour de France Statistics 1903–2003</i>	4:47
8	Adam Gorb	<i>La Cloche Fêlée</i>	6:27
9	Gabriel Jackson	<i>A la Mémoire de Claude Debussy</i>	3:24
10	Michael Finnissy	<i>Salomé</i>	3:09
11	Andrew Keeling	<i>Artémis</i>	4:31
12	Hugh Wood	<i>Alicante</i>	1:47
13	Diana Burrell	<i>Longtemps ce fut l'été</i>	2:15
14	Helen Roe	<i>Pourquoi?</i>	5:48
15	Nicola LeFanu	<i>Billet à Whistler</i>	6:38
16	Edward McGuire	<i>Rêves de la Bonne Heure</i>	4:52
17	Judith Bingham	<i>La Jeune Morte</i>	2:31
18	Roger Redgate	<i>Mirlitonades</i>	1:57
19	Howard Skempton	<i>Le Pont Mirabeau</i>	1:34
20	Graham Fitkin	<i>Les Aliments Blancs</i>	1:44

Total Time 79:36



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