

Nordic Chamber Music: Norway - Musical Migration

Song Texts and Translations

Norrønna-kvad

text by Bjørnstjerne Bjørnson

Norrønnafolket det vil fare,
det vil føre Kraft til Andre.
Kampens Glavind kaster Gjenglands,
Æren øger Folkets Arbejd!

Da vi kom fra Jorsaltoget,
Tændtes Sangens alle Bauner,
Og vor Ungdom stod om Luen,
Og det lyste langt af Landet.

Kan du glemme gamle Norge?

Norwegian-American Folk Song

Kan du glemme gamle Norge?
Aldri jeg det glemme kan.
Som med stolte kippe borge,
Er og blir mitt fødeland.

Kan du glemme Norges skover?
Med sin furu, birk og gran?
Kan du glemme sjøens vover,
Alt du da forglemme kan.

Svever stundom ei din tanke,
Dithen hvor din vugge stod?
Føler du ei hjerte banke
For det land som du forlat?

O Herre

text by Wilhelm Krag

O Herre, jeg er meget træt,
O Herre, skjænk mig hvile!
Min sjæl er tung af megen sorg,
min fod af mange mile.

Min fod har trådt mangt mødigt steg
for glæden mig at finde.
Og jeg har set al jordens pragt,
men glæden ingensinde.

Min sjæl har søgt så mangan sjæl
for freden mig at finde.
Og jeg fik tusind gode råd
men freden ingensinde.

Jeg ønsker, jeg var barn igjen
og så min moder smile!
O Herre, jeg er meget træt!
O Herre, skjænk mig hvile!

Song of the Norsemen

translation by Steven Luksan

The Norse folk long to voyage,
To bring their strength to others.
The battle spear is thrown,
Honor encourages the work of our people!

When we returned from our crusade,
The beacons of song were lit,
And our youth stood around the fire,
And it shone far out to sea.

Could you forget old Norway?

translation by Steven Luksan

Could you forget old Norway?
I could never forget it.
With cliffs towering like castles,
It is, and will always be, my homeland.

Could you forget Norway's forests?
With their pines, birches, and spruce?
If you can forget the waves of its seas,
Then you could forget anything!

Don't your thoughts sometimes return
To that place where your cradle once stood?
Don't you feel your heart beating
For the land that you left?

How can you forget old Norway?
And its narrow fjords so grand.
Can you ever find another?
It was my home, my native land.
It is my own, my native land.

Oh Lord

translation by Laura Loge

Oh Lord, I am so very tired,
O Lord, grant me rest!
My soul is heavy with so much sorrow,
my foot with many miles.

My foot has tread many tiring paths
looking for happiness.
And I have see all of the world's splendor,
but happiness was nowhere to be found.

My soul has searched for so many souls
looking for peace.
And I received much good advice
but peace was never found.

I wish I was a child again
and could see my mother smile!
Oh Lord, I am so very tired!
Oh Lord, grant me rest.

Barcarole

Norwegian version by M. B. Landstad

Bryt, bryt, bryt,
 vilde hav mot øens kyst!
Løp derind med en flok av bølger
 og bryt dette steile bryst.
Min sorg er så våndefuld stor,
 som den jammer du har i din barm.
Å syng dine såre ord,
 mens du løfter med vælde din arm!
For din bølge har tårens dryss
 over smertens ulmende vé.
De dage, der lektes under solens kyss,
 får jeg aldrig på jord at se.
Jeg har elsket og tabt.
 Å! mit hjerte for sorg kun blev skapt.
Bryt, bryt, bryt, vilde hav,
 der du stormer hen.
I din klages sus, midt i bølgenes brus,
 jeg drømmer min drøm igjen.

A Cradle Song

text by Marion Morris Gleason

When the little moon tilts in the garden of night
She tumbles out soft baby dreams.
They scamper down star-bordered paths of delight
And set sail on the milky way streams.
As they float along through the star dust mists
They sleepily sing the while,
We're on quest for the love of the world which hides
In the curve of a sleeping babe's smile.
Smile, little drowsy one, sleep.

Naar fjordene blaaner

text by John Paulsen

Naar Fjordene blaaner som Markens Fiol,
Og Brærne glitrer i spillende Sol,
Naar Liljekonvallen ved Foden af Hæg
Staar duftende skjøn langs med Klippernes Væg,
Mens Elven bag Orkrattet danser sig vild
Og Trosten fra fra Granlien synger dertil,
Da røres, da røres mit Bryst, da blot hviske jeg kan:
"Gud signe dig Norge, mit deilige Land!"

Men naar jeg ser Folket, som ryder den Jord,
Som virker paa Fjeld og ved fiskerig Fjord,
De tusinde Mænd, som tilsjøs og tillands,
I Arbeidets Sved vinder Norge en Krans;
De tuseinde Kvinder, som yndig og tro
Med Kjærlighed sysler i Hjemlivets Bo,
Da svinger jeg Hatten, da Hjertet faar Tolk:
Hurra for mit brave, mit kraftige folk!

Barcarole

text by Alfred, Lord Tennyson

Break, break, break,
On thy cold gray stones, O Sea!
And I would that my tongue could utter
The thoughts that arise in me.
O, well for the fisherman's boy,
That he shouts with his sister at play!
O, well for the sailor lad,
That he sings in his boat on the bay!
And the stately ships go on
To their haven under the hill;
But O for the touch of a vanish'd hand,
And the sound of a voice that is still!

Break, break, break
At the foot of thy crags, O Sea!
But the tender grace of a day that is dead
Will never come back to me.

The little dreams sail through the star dust mists
To the slumber sea, quiet and deep.
And then they steer for the island of love
Where my own little dream lies asleep.
So smile, little drowsy one, grant them their quest,
For the light of the morning comes soon,
When the love-laden dreams must go back to their beds
In the heart of the tip-tilted moon.
Smile, little drowsy one, sleep.

When the fjords turn blue

translation by Steven Luksan

When the fjords turn blue as violets in the field,
And the glaciers glitter in the playful sunlight,
When lily-of-the-valley under the chokecherry
Stands beautifully fragrant along the cliff's walls,
While the river dances wildly through alder bush
And the thrush from the spruce forest sings, too.
Then, my heart touched, I can't help but whisper:
"God bless you, Norway, my wonderful land"

But when I see the people who clear the land,
Who work in the mountains and fjords full of fish,
The thousands of men, working on land and sea,
The sweat of their labor gives Norway a crown;
The thousands of women, so graceful and faithful
Build their homes with love,
So I wave my hat, so my heart exclaims:
Hurrah for my brave, my powerful people!

Sæterjentens Søndag

text by Jørgen Moe

Paa Solen jeg ser, det lider alt frem,
Snart er det ved Høimessesetide –
O den som en Stund fik ønske sig hjem
Blandt Folk, som paa Kirkevei skride!
Naar Solskiven stiger lidt, saa den staar
Der midt over Skaret i Kammen,
Da ved jeg, i Dalen Klokkerne gaar,
Da ringer fra Taarnet det sammen.

Gudrids Romance

text by Conrad Thuland

Vi spøjte og lo, da han afsked tog
og i solskin glad over vesterhav drog.
Hver falk og hver maage, som fløi over sjø,
bar Leif bud fra hans islandsmø.

Men aarene gik,
ei bud jeg fik,
Og taarerne randt,
Og haabet svandt.

Vi spøjte og lo sidst vi sammen sad,
men siden jeg aldri var glad.

Urolig som hav er en kvindes sind,
det bølger under hver brusende vind.
Men kommer der stille, hun dølger sin sorg
dybt inde i mindernes borg.

Og taarer, som randt
da haabets svandt,
i mindernes høst
gi'r fred og trøst.

Og taarerne randt den gang haabet svandt,
Men siden jeg dulgte min sorg.

Maanesang

text by Conrad Thuland

Kjedlen syder, gygren byder
jer alle: Stig frem!
I sottesengs aander,
stig frem, stig frem!

Kjedlen syder, gygren byder
jer alle: Stig frem!
I slumrende jætter,
I jordehaugs vætter,
I sortalfer grimme,
stig frem, stig frem!
Alt, som er skjult,
ukjendt og dulgt,
melde i gygren.

Edderkops spind jeg kaster ind,
blandet med gjedegalde!

Austre! Vestre! Nordre! Sydre!
I himmelhvælvs bærere,
stig frem, stig frem!

The Shepherd Girl's Sunday

English version by Constance Purdy

I look at the sun, it rises on high,
The hour for Mass nearer growing,
Ah, would I were home, my loved ones nigh,
And with them to church might be going.
When over the range the sun shall appear,
Its rays on the cleft yonder falling,
I'll know in the dale the bells sweet and clear,
The faithful to prayer will be calling.

Gudrid's Romance

translation by Steven Luksan

We joked and we laughed when he left
And in merry sunshine sailed o'er the western sea.
Every falcon and gull that flew over the ocean,
brought Leif tidings from his Icelandic maiden.

But the years passed,
and I received no reply,
and tears flowed,
and hope was lost.

We joked and we laughed when we last sat together,
But I have not been happy since.

Unsettled like the sea is a woman's mind,
it undulates with every rushing wind.
But in silence she hides her grief
deep in the fortress of her memories.

And tears, which flowed
when hoped was lost,
in fading memories
give peace and comfort.

And tears flowed when hope was lost,
But I have since hidden my grief.

Summoning Song

translation by Steven Luksan

The cauldron boils, the giantess commands
all of you: Rise up!
Ye spirits of the deathbed,
rise up, rise up!

The cauldron boils, the giantess commands
all of you: Rise up!
Ye slumbering giants,
Ye creatures of the hills,
Ye ugly dark elves,
rise up, rise up!
Everything that is concealed,
unknown and hidden,
join with the giantesses!

Spider's web I toss in,
Mixed with goat bile!

Austri! Vestri! Nordri! Sudri!
Ye who bear the vault of the heavens,
rise up, rise up!

Kom Urd! Kom Verdandel!
Kom Skuld, saa huld!
Bring Odins øie fra Mimers hjem!
Stig frem, stig frem!

Uglestjerter med rypehjerter
og katteøine i kjelden sig høine!

Kom Ask og Embla
i ørneham!
Kom sjøtrolde stygge
paa hvalerygge
i hvidbjørns ham!
Stig frem, stig frem!

Kjedlen syder, gygren byder
jer alle: Stig frem!

Hello Wisconsin (Won't you find my Yonnie Yonson?)

text by Bert Kalmar & Eddie Leslie

On a little farm in Norway
Miss Hilda Honson one day
Sold all her pigs, horses and rigs,
Packed up and sailed away.
When in old New York she landed
They asked her, "are you alone?"
She answered, "No, I've got a beau,
Yust let me telephone."

Chorus:
"Hello Wisconsin! Won't you find my Yonnie Yonson?
Yust tell him his Hilda Honson
Yust got off the boat by Yimminy
How she wants him!

A Nice Little Girls in Seattle I Know

text by Baard Stordahl

A nice little girl in Seattle I know;
I think of her early and late.
In every action she seems to show;
Truthfulness, love, and fate.
With her eyes she controls a hypnotic power;
She has got me a-going it seems.
She is drawing me closer to her every hour.
She appears like the girl in my dreams.
She is here, she is there, and everywhere.
Wherever I go, she seems to be near.

Chorus:
In every hour, through night and day,
She seems to stay right in my way:
I can read her eyes of blue.
I can see her love beam through.
I like her way, I like her talk,
The way she smiles, the way she walks.
The smallest fraction of her action is attraction
To my heart.

Come Urd! Come Verdandi!
Come Skuld, so loyal!
Bring Odin's eye from Mimir's home!
Rise up, rise up!

Owl tails with grouse hearts
and cat eyes into the cauldron be raised!

Come Ask and Embla
In the form of an eagle!
Come ugly sea trolls
on the backs of whales
wearing polar bear skins!
Rise up, rise up!

The cauldron boils, the giantess commands
all of you: Rise up!

You'll know Yon Yonson
'Cause he's over six feet high
He'll yump with yoy
When he knows I came
'Cause my Yonnie Boy
Gonna change my name from Honson to Yonson
So Wisconsin, Goodbye."

When she landed in Wisconsin
Her Yonnie Yonson was there
Yon full of pride, made her his bride,
Oh, what a happy pair!
Years have showered them with blessings
Two little babies so high
When shadows creep, they go to sleep
Hearing this Lullaby...

I know in Seattle a nice little girl.
She's not of the prettiest may be.
But she is good natured, and pure as a pearl;
And as good as a girl can be.
She is not quite as stylish as some girls in town;
But best of them all every while
On her little face there is never a frown;
But a modest and tenderly smile.
She is here, she is there, and everywhere.
Wherever I go, she seems to be near.