

SONGS FROM MANUSCRIPTS

Aria. Sophie [Wq 117/40]

O lovely time,
ready for pleasure,
ah, hurry; delay
not a moment!
My whole heart
desires your play,
desires your goodness;
longingly casts
its gaze after you.

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“On the Wings of the Dawn” [Wq 202/O/1]

1. On the wings of the dawn,
over weeping meadows,
my heart's sigh soars away
towards my Betty.
2. Alas, in deceitful dreams I saw
her heavenly face,
the lovely one smiled kindly.
(Oh, what an angel she is!)
3. She said: “My darling, I love you!”
Tenderly she kissed my eyes;
alas, and sank into these arms,
upon my heaving breast.
4. And I knew not what I became!
Trembling delight shuddered through me;
around me, day and light became twilight,
spring shone on the landscape.
5. Still the dream fluttered around me. Still,
behold, still I held her fast in my arms!
Alas, then it faded—I called:
“Betty, Betty, where are you?”
6. And on the wings of the dawn
the yearning sigh soars away,
away to her: “O my Betty!
Betty, Betty, where are you?”
7. For me play and dance are over,
laughter is no more.
I hate fiddle and pipe
and prefer to lament and weep.
8. She was as innocent as a lamb,
never hurt anyone,
and lived chastely and virtuously,
to everyone's delight.
9. She had cheeks full and round,
and smoother than a peach,
a blue eye and a mouth
that was redder than a cherry.
10. If she looked at someone, they
couldn't bear her gaze,
and when she laughed, one had to
cast his eyes down.
11. How, just recently,
I leapt about with her on May Day!
We danced until the evening
and flirted and sang;
12. there she took my hat and,
quicker than I realized,
wound around it a forest green ribbon,
and looked at it and laughed.
13. O God! Who would have thought then,
as I gratefully kissed her,
that so quickly the green trim
would be changed to black?
14. Now, dear ribbon, around me
no more may you flutter in the wind;
I must put you down,
and exchange you for crepe!
15. I will choose the cemetery
as my favorite place,
and on many moonlit evenings
I will steal away there.
16. There I will strew it
with marjoram and herbs;
a black cross, with verses on it,
shall stand in the middle.

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Peasant's Lament [Wq 202/O/2]

1. The entire village lines up
for dancing at the fair;
everyone is happy, but for me
nothing further can bring delight.

13. A myrtle wreath shall adorn
the wall of our church
and near it the green ribbon
will hang as a memento;
14. at every service I will sit
next to the wreath,
I will look at it with moist eyes
and suffer over it;
15. until at last, when it pleases God
to grant my wish,
and from this world he brings me as well
to my little Hannah.

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From Cramer's Psalm 107 [Wq 202/O/3]

Come, let us sing of his grace,
and to him, since he is so helpful, so good
and works such wonders for humanity,
bring praise, thanks, and rejoicing.

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"There Strikes the Farewell Hour" [Wq 202/O/4]

1. There strikes the farewell hour,
to hideously part us!
How could I live,
O maiden, without you?
A stranger to all joys,
I live only to suffer;
and you—perhaps forever
Daphne will forget me now!
2. Often from the distant shore
your name floats upon my lips.
"Where," I ask field and cliff,
"lingers Daphne now?"
My heart beats for you, I send
gazes of longing your way;
and you—perhaps forever
Daphne will forget me now!
3. A delirious thought
with weak strokes outlines then
my dwindling happiness,
and it never abandons me!
At your side my spirit will
accompany you wherever you are;
and you—perhaps forever
Daphne will forget me now!
4. I remember with tears the time
that so delighted me,
when still at Daphne's side
my life gently passed.
Only, only to pain me
would that time occur to me;
and you—perhaps forever
Daphne will forget me now!

5. There, I remember, the spring flowed,
where she burned with anger;
yet quickly softening, she turned
her gracious gaze on me!
In one moment sadness struck me down,
in the next I lived, hoped again;
and you—perhaps forever
Daphne will forget me now!
6. Captured by your charm,
perhaps once again
you are surrounded by a host of lovers
with oaths of eternal devotion.
O God! What if, amid tears,
they now declare their hearts!
O God!—Perhaps forever
Daphne will forget me now!
7. Alas, remember this parting,
how much it troubled me,
that I still loved you
as happiness and hope faded;
how with floods of tears
I tore myself away from you;
remember, alas—perhaps forever
Daphne will forget me now!

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Song [Wq 202/O/5]

The loveliest shall, in sunshine,
always stand before my eyes;
the amiable alone, at night,
will go to bed with me;
the domestic shall set meat and fish
before my nose;
at table, the clever shall always
delight me with her chatter.
To the youngest I say: "lovely child";
and "little mother" to the elder.
By these means I manage the household
in good serenity.

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The Alster [H 763/1]

1. Facilitator of many pleasures,
you delightful Alster River!
You enhance Hamburg's uniqueness
and its happy enjoyments.
To honor you,
you playful stream,
let choirs sing
and jubilant spirits ring forth.
2. The Elbe's channel may make us richer;
the Alster teaches fellowship!
Through the former our warehouses are filled;
on the latter imported wine is tasted.

In busy rowboats
drift concord and pleasure,
and freedom and laughter
enliven the breast.

3. A row of lindens adorns the bank,
among which gracious beauties can be glimpsed,
who, when the heat of the day abates,
charmingly stroll up and down there.
Scarcely, in times past,
the nymphs of the hunt,
at Diana's side,
had laughed so charmingly.
4. Oh, can you ever behold without delight,
Hammonia [Hamburg], the glorious bank,
when the blue waves moisten it,
and every spring makes it more beautiful?
When that riverside,
adorned by Flora,
pleasantly spies
so many water nymphs?
5. Sound out, you playful songs,
from our pleasure boats by the shore!
The stiff prude, the pompous boaster
the Alster drives away from the land.
You empty drivel,
devoid of human wit!
Oh, go to the frogs,
just don't bother us!
6. Here one hears, in pleasure-filled nights,
the strike of the drum, the call of the horn;
with wine and sweet draughts here
lively freedom governs everywhere.
Nothing lives constrained
that shares friendship here.
O happy hours,
O delightful voyage!

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Harvstehude [H 763/2]

1. I am a friend of monasteries,
and I particularly desire and enjoy
the true essence of the holy vows
of virginal spirituality.
How the devout ones rule their lives
can, will, and must be revered,
and the pious sisters' wellbeing
shall always be rich in tributes.
2. You noble Sisters of St. John,
goodness and honor stream upon you;
you are a model of chaste thinking
in Harvstehude's secure peace.
How rarely do you hear the laments
of amorous endearments!
No scourges oppress you,
no incubus, and no heresy.
3. Nothing is as fair as Harvstehude,
and therefore it is worthy of you,
where even the most miserly tightwad [originally: Jew]
eagerly exhausts his cash.
I swear this by the ancient oak,
in which so many birds roost,
and which table and bank and branch
shades with ninety-nine boughs.
4. Here, into the high arching skies
rises the sun right pleasantly,
and smiles on the flowery pastures
beholding the Alster's path with delight.
Often a lovely swimmer bathes
in the reflection of its rays;
often its first beams entice
even the beasts to happiness.
5. We climb by the narrow passageway
out of ark and boat to the beach,
then spring or summer accompany
our pastimes in the countryside.
Quickly comes the attentive vendor
so friendly and so obsequious,
just as at the Bober river
the hostler offers respite to good friends.
6. He sees for himself with delight
that these surroundings please us,
and provides us from the best wares
that his wine cellar contains.
He says, almost as Achilles might have uttered:
"Lord Phoenix, Ajax, and Ulysses— — —"
Let the gentlemen be seated— — —we will cook,
and fine wine will surely follow.
7. Where would you find such a good host
as among the heroes of that time?
When a wanderer had gotten lost,
then their inn stood ready for him.
Here daily their example is followed,
and each guest is given food and drink;
and for us this Comus shrine becomes
such that even a Cornaro would not disdain it.
8. In the open meadow one employs
first sight, then taste;
often, piercing the pituitary,
a choice bagpipe squeals.
And since even for men of learning
the path of fools shamefully beckons,
so lightning enthusiasts come here
to watch the electrical storms.
9. Perhaps it would be wise for my song...
a new sight revives it:
a hill full of graduate students,
the arrival of a group of officers.
Yet what's this? Here comes a blabbermouth,
disrupting idea and pleasure.

Oh, if only I had not begun!
Enough! I poeticize no more.

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On the Return of Herr Dr. E. [Wq 231]

1. He lives! Let our songs celebrate him.
Healthy and happy he returned,
the man dear to our souls.
He went away from our circle,
we wished him a happy journey,
and our wishes were heard.
2. Hail to you! Our souls greet you
no longer distant from that spring,
whence for you new life flowed.
You are close to our happy gazes;
you hasten, with a joyful thrill,
into your wife's embrace.
3. Greeted by all who know you,
who call you husband and father,
you join our circle once more.
Bedewed with tears of joy
upon your happy return, you give
your best wishes to those who regard you well.
4. You come and present yourself to us anew,
as we rejoice in the lovely fellowship,
which has long since united our hearts.
Hail to you! Climb up life's ladder,
healthy and happy, ever farther
to the highest rung: noble joy.
5. Strengthened with newly created powers
for your lofty duties,
there you stand, to our delight.
Be greeted by us with jubilant songs,
which a soft echo reflects:
Hammonia [Hamburg] wishes you joy.
6. In the future, never be far from them,
and until the very latest times
be their faithful doctor, as you have always been.
May your future days be
gentle, cheerfully smiling, free from complaints,
until you reach the highest step.

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