

Schubert - Schwanengesang

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Poems by Ludwig Rellstab

- i) Liebesbotschaft
- ii) Kriegers Ahnung
- iii) Frühlingssehnsucht
- iv) Ständchen
- v) Aufenthalt
- vi) In der Ferne
- vii) Abschied

Poems by Heinrich Heine

- i) Fischermädchen
- ii) Am Meer
- iii) Die Stadt
- iv) Der Doppelgänger
- v) Ihr Bild
- vi) Der Atlas

Die Taubenpost

PROGRAM NOTES

Franz Schubert (1797 - 1828) wrote over 600 art songs in his short life. Among those were two genuine song cycles (Liederkreis), *Die Schöne Müllerin* and *Winterreise*. In the last months of his life, he was working on a number of songs that were later collected by his publisher - after Schubert's death - in a cycle they called *Schwanengesang* (Swan-Song).

Unlike the previous two song cycles, this is not a narrative told by a protagonist from beginning to grim ending. It seems Schubert never intended these particular songs to go together, but due to his premature death, that is how they have come down in history.

The first seven songs are set to poems by Ludwig Rellstab, a jack-of-all-trades who is not remembered in German literature for his poetry. However Schubert often used poetry that was less than masterful; he provided his own subjective readings and emotional atmosphere with his endlessly inventive music.

The next six are set to the famous poet Heinrich Heine. These, on the other hand, can be formed to tell a story of a protagonist and his lost love - the fishing maiden - and his descent into madness. They are taken from a much larger collection by Heine called *Die Heimkehr*.

The final song sets a poem by Johann Gabriel Seidl. It is Schubert's final song
composition. -----

Rellstab Lieder

- I. Liebesbotschaft (Love's Message) - Singer asks brook to carry a message to his beloved.
- II. Kriegers Ahnung (Soldier's Foreboding)- Soldier remembers warmth and love while dying in the battlefield.
- III. Frühlingsehnsucht (Springtime Longings)- Singer celebrates the many facets of Spring and yearns for love.
- IV. Ständchen (Serenade) - A pleading serenade for requited love.
- V. Aufenthalt (Resting Place) - Loner commiserates in his natural hermitage.
- VI. In der Ferne (In the Distance) - Wanderer reflects on being severed from happy life.
- VII. Abschied (Farewell) - Cheerful farewell and celebration for what is to come.

Heine Lieder

- I. Fischermädchen (The Fishing Maiden) - An intimate scene by the sea of two troubled lovers.
- II. Am Meer (On the Sea) - Having parted, the singer bitterly reproaches the other for rejection.
- III. Die Stadt (The City) - The singer returns after a time away and from the ferry sees the house of his lost beloved.
- IV. Der Doppelgänger (The Doppelgänger) - One of Schubert's darkest songs, the singer sees himself in that house.
- V. Ihr Bild (Her Portrait) - Entering the home, the singer sees a portrait of his beloved abandoned on the wall, and imagines it coming to life.
- VI. Der Atlas (The Atlas) - Furious singer rails against his tribulations.

Die Taubenpost (The Carrier Pigeon) - An ode to the carrier pigeon, who is named Sehnsucht ('Longing.')