

# Nikolay MYASKOVSKY

## VOCAL WORKS, VOLUME TWO:

### COMPLETE SONGS FOR BARITONE AND PIANO

FROM THE LYRIC POETRY OF STEPAN SHCHIPACHYOV, OP. 52

OF MANY YEARS, OP. 87: NOS. 1, 6, 7 AND 10

SIX POEMS OF ALEXANDER BLOK, OP. 20

TWO SONGS OF POLAR EXPLORERS

AT THE DECLINE OF DAY, OP. 21

THREE SKETCHES TO WORDS

BY STEPAN SHCHIPACHYOV

AND LEV KVITKO, OP. 45

Ilya Kuzmin, baritone  
Dzambolat Dulaev, baritone  
Olga Solovieva, piano

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## NIKOLAY MYASKOVSKY Vocal Works, Volume Two

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<b><i>Six Poems of Alexander Blok, Op. 20</i></b> (1920)	<b>18:00</b>
1 No. 1 A full moon has risen over the meadow	3:53
2 No. 2 The evenings' chill is dreadful	2:45
3 No. 3 Dear friend!	2:02
4 No. 4 The autumn day declines on its slow course	3:12
5 No. 5 I will arise in the foggy morning	1:39
6 No. 6 In the silent night	4:29

<b><i>At the Decline of Day: Three Sketches to Words by Fyodor Tyutchev, Op. 21</i></b> (1922)	<b>3:59</b>
7 No. 1 It is not given to us to tell	0:57
8 No. 2 Your friendly voice prompts no living spark	1:43
9 No. 3 However distressing the final hour...	1:19

<b><i>Three Sketches, Op. 45</i></b> (1938)	<b>7:08</b>
10 No. 1 The Flower	1:46
11 No. 2 The Little Birch Tree	2:39
12 No. 3 A Conversation	2:43

<b><i>From the Lyric Poetry of Stepan Shchipachyov, Op. 52</i></b> (1940)	<b>18:06</b>
13 I Fair-haired Wind	1:29
14 II At the Spring	1:39
15 III It sometimes seems to me...	1:41
16 IV The Sunflower	1:10
17 V Superstitions	2:09
18 VI To you	1:52
19 VII It's easy, my love, with you	1:04
20 VIII Mount Elbrus and the Aeroplane	1:52
21 IX After glancing at a card	2:31
22 X By the Sea	2:39

***Songs of Many Years, Op. 87*** (1901–36; rev. 1950)

23	No. 1	Thus yearns the soul	7:33
			1:38
24	No. 6	Song of the Collectors	2:56
25	No. 7	In the struggle with a heavy fate	1:13
26	No. 10	Sonnet of Michelangelo	1:46

***Two Songs of Polar Explorers*** (1939)

27	No. 1	Song	7:52
			4:57
28	No. 2	Song of the Polar Sailors	2:55

**Ilya Kuzmin, baritone** 1–6 10–22  
**Dzambolat Dulaev, baritone** 7–9 23–28  
**Olga Solovieva, piano**

**TT 62:44**

FIRST RECORDINGS

## MYASKOVSKY'S SONGS FOR BARITONE

by Patrick Zuk

Recent years have seen a resurgence of interest in the music of Nikolay Myaskovsky (1881–1950), an older contemporary of Prokofiev and Shostakovich who was regarded during his lifetime as one of the most significant Russian composers of his era. The neglect into which it fell after his death, even in his native country, was largely due to unpropitious circumstances and the cloud of ideological opprobrium with which it was surrounded by Soviet commentators, who repeatedly criticised his compositions for their failure to conform sufficiently to the doctrines of Socialist Realism. The predominantly serious, introspective tone of Myaskovsky's work presented a further hindrance: its eschewal of brilliant effects and obvious surface appeal made it unattractive to Soviet star performers and concert promoters, and prevented it from gaining a place in the regular repertoire. Outside the Soviet Union, his compositions were championed by leading conductors such as Leopold Stokowski and Frederick Stock in the 1920s and 1930s, but with the advent of the Cold War they all but disappeared from western concert programmes. A more extensive rediscovery of Myaskovsky's output is long overdue: at its best, his music evinces a consummate craftsmanship and is imbued with a powerful authenticity of feeling.

In common with a number of his Russian predecessors (amongst them, Borodin, Rimsky-Korsakov and Tchaikovsky), Myaskovsky's early musical education was haphazard and he was in his twenties before he acquired a solid grounding in the composer's craft. Destined by family tradition for a career as a military engineer, he resigned his commission at the age of 25 and enrolled on the composition diploma course at the St Petersburg Conservatoire in 1906. He came to wider attention with the performances of the symphonic poem *Silence*, Op. 9, in Moscow in 1911 and his Second Symphony, Op. 11, the following year. Contemporary reviewers hailed the

appearance of a promising new talent, but Myaskovsky's efforts to establish himself in his new profession were frustrated by the outbreak of the First World War. As a former officer, he was legally obliged to serve in the militia: he was called up immediately and soon dispatched to the western front in Galicia, territories straddling modern-day Poland and Ukraine. The region witnessed some of the fiercest fighting of the war: Myaskovsky's unit was constantly close to the front lines, and he was fortunate to escape death or serious injury. Reassigned to a Russian naval fortress in Reval (the old name for Tallinn) in late 1915, he would remain in the armed forces not only for the remainder of the war, but for several years thereafter: his hopes of a swift return to civilian life after the October Revolution and Russia's ensuing withdrawal from the conflict were rendered infeasible by the collapse of the economy and the outbreak of civil strife. In 1921, a few months after his 40th birthday, he was appointed to a teaching post at the Moscow Conservatoire, and could at last devote himself to music once more.

Although he chose to remain in Russia after the Revolution rather than live abroad, unlike Prokofiev, Rachmaninov and Stravinsky, Myaskovsky's private attitudes to the Bolshevik regime were anything but enthusiastic. Like many other members of the intelligentsia, he survived by adopting a strategy of 'inner emigration'. A shy, retiring man who had few close personal relationships, he maintained a low public profile and held himself aloof from politics. When Soviet artists came under pressure from the late 1920s onwards to subordinate their creativity to political ends, he compromised only to the extent that was absolutely necessary for professional self-preservation. Crass propagandistic scores are conspicuously absent from his catalogue of works: his compositions on overtly ideological themes amount merely to two short cantatas and a dozen or so songs and choral pieces for amateurs. In contrast to the outputs of his contemporaries, which are generally much more varied, most of Myaskovsky's *œuvre* comprises 'abstract' instrumental works in the small number of genres that remained firmly at the centre of his creative preoccupations: the piano sonata, the string quartet and, above all, the symphony. Aside from the piano miniature, the only other genre that engaged Myaskovsky's attention with any regularity was the *romans*, the Russian equivalent of the French *mélodie* or German *Lied*. Over the course of his career,

he composed more than 120 songs. Roughly half are early works, written between 1901 and 1914, and a further seventeen (comprising Opp. 20, 21 and 22) were completed between 1920 and 1925. He did not return to the genre until 1935 and contributed to it only occasionally thereafter.

The *Six Poems of Alexander Blok*, Op. 20 [1]–[6], were written in 1920 during the Civil War – a grim chapter in Russian history during which millions perished as a result of state repression, violent conflict, malnourishment and epidemics of cholera and other deadly diseases. This phase of Myaskovsky's life is sparsely documented, but it is evident that he experienced his share of the widespread hardship caused by the dire shortages of food, fuel and other basic necessities. Concert life was severely disrupted, and only the musical evenings held in the apartments of his friends Pavel Lamm and Maxim Gube afforded occasional respite from his demanding administrative duties at the Naval General Staff and the harsh conditions of everyday life. Gube, an economist by profession, was a fine amateur baritone and was often partnered in performances of German *Lieder* and Russian song repertoire by Lamm, a highly regarded chamber musician and accompanist.

The Blok settings were composed as an expression of gratitude for these gatherings, which Myaskovsky described as a 'spiritual oasis' in a touching letter to Gube, the dedicatee.<sup>1</sup> His decision to set texts by a contemporary poet was unsurprising, given his long-standing interest in Zinaida Hippus, Konstantin Balmont and other Silver Age writers. The six poems that he selected were all written between 1898 and 1902, during the earliest phase of Blok's mature creativity. These exquisitely wrought lyrics were eminently amenable to musical elaboration, and Myaskovsky's settings are finely attuned to their atmospheric evocations of nature and explorations of psychological states ranging from sombre foreboding to spiritual exaltation. In spite of their intimacy of expression, the songs are in no way redolent of the salon: the treatment of the texts is notable for its understated restraint and avoidance of the obvious, despite the comparative simplicity of the compositional means employed.

<sup>1</sup> Unpublished letter from Myaskovsky to Maxim Gube, dated 16 July 1920 and preserved in the Russian State Archive of Literature and Art (RGALI), Moscow, f. 2012, op. 2, yed. khr. 208, l. 2.

*At the Decline of Day*, Op. 21 [7]–[9], was completed in April 1922 as an Easter gift for another singer of the composer's acquaintance, Yekaterina Koposova-Derzhanovskaya. She had been one of Myaskovsky's earliest supporters and performed his songs before the war in concerts organised by her husband, the music critic Vladimir Derzhanovsky. The set comprises three settings of lyrics by Fyodor Tyutchev (1803–73), a professional diplomat who had received little recognition as a creative writer during his lifetime, but came to be regarded after his death as one of the finest Russian poets of his era. These highly compressed, terse poems all date from the late 1860s, a period when Tyutchev was preoccupied with sombre reflections on transience, mortality and loss. Such themes had a heightened resonance for Myaskovsky, who had been deeply affected by recent events. His father died in tragic circumstances in 1918, apparently as a result of mob violence. The loss three years later of his father's sister, who had helped to raise the composer and his siblings after their mother's early death, came as another heavy blow. Myaskovsky's musical responses to Tyutchev's poems memorably captures their bleak atmosphere: although the dynamic throughout all three songs never rises above *piano*, their densely dissonant harmonic idiom and closely worked contrapuntal textures imbue them with a smouldering intensity of expression.

With the progressive tightening of state controls on artistic production from the late 1920s onwards, music evocative of darker states of mind was increasingly condemned as a manifestation of 'bourgeois individualism' and 'decadent' foreign influences. Myaskovsky steadfastly ignored exhortations that composers should concentrate on writing tuneful operas and other text-based works on officially recommended themes such as the 'building of socialism'. Nonetheless, he had little choice but to make at least occasional shows of conformity to the Marxist-Leninist creative aesthetic of Socialist Realism after its introduction in 1932.

His decision in 1938 to set verse by Stepan Shchipachyov (1898–1980) and Lev Kvitko (1890–1952), contemporary poets regarded as notable exponents of the doctrine, was largely dictated by circumstances. The choice of poems for the *Three Sketches*, Op. 45 [10]–[12], was suggested by the bass-baritone Alexander Okayomov

(1905–43), a well-known singer of the period, who invited Myaskovsky to compose songs for him. Myaskovsky told his student Dmitry Kabalevsky that he thought the texts ‘dreadful,’<sup>2</sup> but he persevered with the task. In the tense prevailing climate caused by the escalation of state terror, which claimed several of his colleagues and students amongst its victims, Myaskovsky, like other composers, sought to minimise his potential exposure to risk by fulfilling safe commissions of this kind. In common with much Socialist Realist literature, Shchipachyov’s and Kvitko’s verses are didactic in intent and rehearse well-worn themes – Soviet resilience and heroism, the benefits of agricultural collectivisation, and the drive of the state to dominate nature. Both writers would have been considered thoroughly orthodox and unlikely to arouse objections on ideological grounds – a highly important consideration.

In 1940, Myaskovsky produced another group of songs for Okayomov, *From the Lyric Poetry of Stepan Shchipachyov*, Op. 52 [13–22]. The poems featured here explore a somewhat wider range of subject matter, including experiences of a more personal nature such as the loss of love and growing old. Even so, Socialist Realist tropes also make their appearance: ‘Mount Elbrus and the Aeroplane’ [20], for example, echoes official propaganda about the boundless opportunities for self-realisation that the new classless society supposedly opened up for its citizens, no matter how humble their origins. Umar, a Caucasian shepherd boy, becomes a Soviet airman who can fly his plane over Mount Elbrus (in the western Caucasus and the highest peak in Russia and Europe), where he had formerly led his flock to pasture. Although Shchipachyov’s wooden verses might seem unlikely to elicit music of much distinction, Myaskovsky’s settings display considerable resourcefulness and skill even within the stylistic constraints imposed by the commission.

The last years of Myaskovsky’s life were clouded by his public condemnation, together with Shostakovich, Prokofiev and other notable composers, in a notorious Central Committee edict on music promulgated in 1948. Myaskovsky bore his ordeal with dignity and, unlike the other proscribed composers, refused to make a public apology, despite being placed under considerable pressure to do so. His health, already

<sup>2</sup> Unpublished letter from Myaskovsky to Kabalevsky, dated 24 June 1938 and held in RGALI, f. 2017, op. 1, yed. khr. 91, l. 4.



delicate, deteriorated further, and in the spring of 1950 he was discovered to be suffering from advanced stomach cancer, a diagnosis that was concealed from him. Feeling too ill to undertake any new creative tasks, he sought to distract himself by revising his juvenilia and various unpublished works. *Songs of Many Years*, Op. 87, comprises fifteen solo vocal compositions with piano accompaniment – ten from the period 1901–9 and the remainder from 1933–36. Four are featured here, starting with Myaskovsky's earliest known song 'Thus yearns the soul' [23], a setting of a lyric by Pushkin's contemporary Aleksey Koftsov (1809–42). The evocation of a young person's ardent longing for freedom was highly relevant to Myaskovsky's personal circumstances at the time of its composition, when he felt trapped in a military career that he found wholly uncongenial. The remaining three songs, which respectively date from 1906, 1908 and 1909, show the emergence of a more individual compositional voice and an extension of expressive range. The haunting 'Song of the Collectors' [24] is notable for its exploration of modal harmonies, and 'In the struggle with a heavy fate' [25], with its declamatory vocal lines and turbulent accompaniment figurations, evinces a keen dramatic sense. Most impressive of all, perhaps, is the misleadingly entitled 'Sonnet of Michelangelo' [26] – the text of which is not a sonnet, but Michelangelo's celebrated epigram about his sculpture 'Night' ('Caro m'è 'l sonno, e più l'esser di sasso'), translated by Tyutchev. Myaskovsky's setting eloquently captures its despairing mood, rising to an impassioned culmination before subsiding into a brief keyboard postlude that dies away inconclusively on an unresolved dissonance.

The *Two Songs of Polar Explorers* (1939) are amongst Myaskovsky's rare contributions to the genre of the Soviet 'mass song' – simple vocal compositions on edifying political or ideological themes intended for widespread dissemination and designed for performance by amateurs. The texts were typically strophic with a recurrent refrain. The subject matter of the two songs featured here was highly topical at the period – the daring feats of Soviet adventurers and explorers in the remoter and more inhospitable regions of the country. The text of the first [27], by the prominent poet and playwright Mikhail Svetlov (1903–64), was also set by a number of other composers, including

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<sup>3</sup> 'Dear is sleep to me, and even more so, my being of stone.'

Prokofiev in the third of his Seven Songs, Op. 79. ‘Song of the Polar Sailors’ [28] is a more conventional representative of the genre, with its stirring chorus portraying Soviet heroism and indomitability. Even here, however, Myaskovsky cannot entirely suppress his creative individuality, and the foursquare predictability of the march is offset by unexpected metrical displacements and quirky melodic turns of phrase.

None of Myaskovsky’s mass songs ever became popular – which would not have surprised him. ‘The requirements that they are now imposing in regard of “music for the masses” don’t attract me very much’, he wrote to his colleague Maximilian Steinberg in 1936: ‘I cannot write “happy music” and have absolutely no feeling for it.’<sup>4</sup> Tellingly, Myaskovsky did not assign opus numbers to any of these efforts – a clear indication that he did not regard them as forming part of his ‘real’ output.

*Patrick Zuk is Professor of Russian Cultural Studies and Music at Durham University. His publications include Nikolay Myaskovsky: A Composer and His Times (Boydell Press, 2021).*

The baritone **Ilya Kuzmin** was born in 1972 in Moscow. In 2000 he graduated from the Russian Academy of Music in Moscow (class of Valentina Nikolaevna Levko) and was invited to join the company of Novaya Opera in Moscow, where he is a soloist to this day, performing leading roles. He won the Third Prize at the Elena Obraztsova International Competition for Young Opera Singers in St Petersburg in 2003 and the First Prize at the prestigious Belvedere International Competition in Vienna in 2004. He has taken part in productions in various opera houses in Russia and abroad: La Scala in Milan, the Berlin State Opera, the Bolshoi Theatre of Russia, the Musa Jalil Tatar Academic State Opera and Ballet Theatre and the Perm Opera and Ballet Theatre. In 2010 he was nominated for the Russian National Theatre ‘Golden Mask’ award for the role of Gianni



<sup>4</sup> Unpublished letter of Myaskovsky to Steinberg, dated 19 March 1936, preserved in the Russian Institute for Art History in St Petersburg (KR RIII, f. 28, op. 1, yed. khr. 487, l. 115ob.).

Schicchi in Puccini's opera, a production that was also awarded the Special Prize of the Musical Theatre Jury. He has worked with many orchestras, including the Evgeny Svetlanov Russian State Symphony Orchestra, the Novaya Russia State Symphony Orchestra and the Musica Viva Chamber Orchestra in Moscow. He also presents song recitals. In 2011 he was awarded the Commendation of the Minister of Culture of Russia, and in 2017 the Commendation for his contribution to the development of the culture of the city of Moscow and many years of conscientious work.

The baritone **Dzambolat Dulaev** was born in 1992 in the city of Vladikavkaz in the Republic of North Ossetia-Alania in Russia. In 2018 he graduated from the Russian Institute of Theatre Arts (GITIS) from the class of Olga Fyodorovna Mironova. Since 2023 he has been a soloist of the Chamber Stage of the Bolshoi Theatre of Russia. He has received first prizes at several All-Russian and International competitions, including the All-Russian competition 'Vivat, Vocal! Vivat, Artiste!' in 2015 and 2017, the Pavel Lisitsian International Competition for Young Vocalists in Vladikavkaz in 2017, the Elena Obraztsova International Competition for Young Opera Singers in St Petersburg in 2019 and the Muslim Magomayev International Vocal Competition in Moscow in 2021. In 2022 he was awarded the Certificate of Honour of North Ossetia for fruitful work in the art of music. He has taken operatic roles on the stages of many opera houses in Russia, including the historical stage of the Mariinsky Theatre in St Petersburg, the Vladikavkaz branch of the Mariinsky Theatre, Helikon Opera in Moscow and Novaya Opera in Moscow. A production of Gian Carlo Menotti's opera *Martin's Lie* by the Amadeus Musical Theatre, with Dzambolat Dulaev in one of the main roles, was nominated in 2020 for the Russian National Theatre 'Golden Mask' Award. He also presents song recitals.



The pianist **Olga Solovieva** was born in Moscow into a non-musical family (the only professional musician was the singer Natalia Kurtener, the sister of Olga's grandmother). She graduated from the Russian Academy of Music in Moscow and took a postgraduate course as an assistant to Leonid Blok. Since 2004 she has been a professor at the Gnessin Musical College, and has given master-classes in Ireland and Belgium. She was a prize-winner in the Glinka Medal and the Russian Open Taneyev Chamber Music Competition in 1999, and a finalist at the Twentieth Chamber Music Competition in Trapani, Italy, in 2000. At the Twelfth International Tchaikovsky Competition in Moscow in 2002 she was awarded the 'Best Accompanist' prize. In 2010 she was the winner of the Boris Tchaikovsky Society Award. In May 2019 she received the Glinka medal and the Russian public award for her contribution to the development of the art of music.



She has performed in Russia and abroad (Belgium, Brazil, France, Germany, Ireland and Lithuania), including such festivals as the West Cork Chamber Music Festival in Ireland and Raritäten von Klaviermusik in Husum, Germany; she has also played in some major venues, among them the Sala São Paulo (with the conductor Wagner Polistchuk), the Small Hall of the Moscow Conservatoire and the Moscow Kremlin. Her partners in chamber music have included The Vanbrugh Quartet, Vilnius String Quartet, the violinists Haik Kazazyan, Sergey Kostylev, Fanny Clamagirand and Tai Murray, the cellists Roel Dieltiens, Christopher Marwood and Alexander Rudin, the clarinetist Julian Bliss and the flautist William Dowdall.

Her discography consists of a number of recordings for Toccata Classics (with music by Boris Tchaikovsky, Herman Galynin and Vissarion Shebalin) as well as for such labels as Naxos, Grand Piano and Albany Records, the complete piano music by Anatoly Lyadov (on four albums from Northern Flowers), and the complete piano music by Alexey Stanchinsky (on two albums from Grand Piano). Her recordings have received nominations for the International Classical Music Awards (2019) and won silver medals in the Global Music Awards (2019 and 2020). In October 2019 she received three First Prizes (in three nominations; the Myaskovsky recordings with Ilya Kuzmin for this album was a winner in the vocal-chamber-music category) at the 'Pure Sound' International Award for the best audio recordings of Russian music (2019), as well as the Second Prize for her album of music of Vissarion Shebalin (TOCC 0327).

*[www.olga-solovieva.ru](http://www.olga-solovieva.ru)*

*Шесть стихотворений А. Блока, соч. 20*

**1** **Полный месяц встал над лугом**

Полный месяц встал над лугом  
Неизменным дивным кругом,  
Светит и молчит.  
Бледный, бледный луг цветущий,  
Мрак ночной, по нем ползущий,  
Отдыхает, спит.  
Жутко выйти на дорогу:  
Непонятная тревога  
Под луной царит.  
Хоть и знаешь: утром рано  
Солнце выйдет из тумана,  
Поле озарит,  
И тогда пойдёшь тропинкой,  
Где под каждую былинкой  
Жизнь кипит.

**2** **Ужасен холод вечеров ...**

Ужасен холод вечеров,  
Их ветер, бьющийся в тревоге,  
Несуществующих шагов  
Тревожный шорох на дороге

Холодная черта зари –  
Как память близкою недуга  
И верный знак, что мы внутри  
Неразмыкаемого круга.

*Six Poems of Alexander Blok, Op. 20*

**1** A full moon has risen over the meadow

A full moon has risen over the meadow –  
An unchanging wondrous circle,  
It shines and is silent.  
Pale, pale is the blossoming meadow,  
The gloom of the night, creeping o'er it,  
Rests, sleeps.  
It is terrifying to set out on the road:  
A strange disquiet  
Reigns under the moon.  
Though you know: early in the morning  
The sun will emerge from the mist,  
Light up the field,  
And then you will take a path  
Where life surges  
Under every blade of grass.

**2** **The evenings' chill is dreadful**

The evenings' chill is dreadful,  
Their wind, flailing in alarm,  
The disquieting scuffle  
Of non-existent footsteps on the road.

The cold streak of dawn  
Is like the memory of a familiar malaise  
And a sure sign that we are inside  
An unbreakable circle.

**3 Милый друг!**

Милый друг! Ты юною душою

Так чиста!

Спи пока! Душа моя с тобою,

Красота!

Ты проснёшься, будет ночь и вьюга

Холодна.

Ты тогда с душой надёжной друга

Не одна.

Пусть вокруг зима и ветер воет –

Я с тобой!

Друг тебя от зимних бурь укроет

Всею душой!

**4 Медлительной чредой нисходит день  
осенний**

Медлительной чредой нисходит день

осенний,

Медлительно крутится жёлтый лист,

И день прозрачно свеж,

и воздух дивно чист –

Душа не избежит невидимого тленья.

Так, каждый день стареется она,

И каждый год, как жёлтый лист кружится,

Всё кажется, и помнится, и мнится,

Что осень прошлых лет была не так

грустна.

**3 Dear friend!**

Dear friend! In your young heart you are

So pure!

Sleep awhile! My heart is with you,

Beauty!

You will awake, there will be night and a

blizzard

Cold.

You are then with the faithful heart of a friend –

Not alone.

Let the winter and the wind howl around –

I am with you!

A friend will shield you from winter's blasts

With all his heart!

**4 The autumn day declines on its slow  
course**

The autumn day declines on its slow course,

The yellow leaf slowly spins,

And the day is limpidly fresh,

the air wondrously pure –

The heart cannot escape invisible decay.

So each day it ages,

And each year, like the yellow leaf, it eddies;

It always seems, and is recalled, and imagined

That in previous years autumn was not so sad.

**5] Встану я в утро туманное...**

Встану я в утро туманное,  
Солнце ударит в лицо.  
Ты ли, подруга желанная,  
Всходишь ко мне на крыльцо?

Настежь ворота тяжёлые!  
Ветром пахнуло в окно!  
Песни такие весёлые  
Не раздавались давно!

С ними и в утро туманное  
Солнце и ветер в лицо!  
С ними подруга желанная  
Всходит ко мне на крыльцо!

**6] В ночь молчаливую**

В ночь молчаливую чудесен  
Мне предстоит твой светлый лик.  
Очарованья старых песен  
Объемлют душу в этот миг.

Своей дорогой голубою  
Проходишь медленнее ты,  
И отдыхают над тобою  
Две неподвижные звезды.

**5] I will arise in the foggy morning...**

I will arise in the foggy morning,  
The sun strikes me in the face.  
My longed-for love,  
Are you climbing the steps to my porch?

The heavy gates are wide open!  
A gust of wind came through the window!  
Such merry songs  
Have not resounded for a long time!

With them in the foggy morning  
The sun and wind in the face!  
With them my longed-for love  
Climbs the steps to my porch!

**6] In the silent night**

Wondrous in the silent night  
Your radiant countenance appears before me.  
The enchantments of old songs  
Embrace the soul in this moment.

On your azure path  
You pass more slowly,  
And above you rest  
Two motionless stars.

*На склоне дня (Три наброска на слова  
Ф. Тютчева), соч. 21*

**7** Нам не дано предугадать

Нам не дано предугадать,  
Как слово наше отзовется, –  
И нам сочувствие дается,  
Как нам дается благодать...

**8** Нет боле искр живых

Нет боле искр живых на голос твой  
приветный –  
Во мне глухая ночь, и нет для ней утра.  
И скоро улетит – во мраке незаметный –  
Последний, скудный дым с потухшего  
костра.

**9** Как ни тяжёл последний час...

Как ни тяжёл последний час –  
Та непонятная для нас  
Истома смертного страдания, –  
Но для души ещё страшней  
Следить, как вымирают в ней  
Все лучшие воспоминанья...

*At the Decline of Day: Three Sketches  
to Words by Fyodor Tyutchev, Op. 21*

**7** It is not given to us to tell

It is not given us to tell  
How our words will resonate –  
And sympathy is given us  
As grace is given us...

**8** Your friendly voice prompts no living  
spark...

Your friendly voice can prompt no living spark –  
Dead night in me reigns, and no hope of  
dawn...  
And the last wisp of smoke from the quenched  
fire  
Will soon disperse unseen in the dark.

**9** However distressing the final hour...

However distressing the final hour –  
And incomprehensible to us  
That agonised weariness unto death –  
For the soul it is even more dreadful  
To witness the expiration  
Of all her happiest memories...



*Три наброска, соч. 45*

**10** О цветке

*Слова С. Щипачева*

Была недолгой жизнь цветка...  
Зима. Метелица метёт,  
Буран влетает в сени.  
Но аромат цветка живёт  
В сухом колхозном сене,  
В струе парного молока  
Звонит степная жизнь цветка,  
И если песня хороша,  
Любую тронь строку –  
Пусть выги все запорощат –  
И в песне жить цветку.

**11** Берёзка

*Слова С. Щипачева*

Её к земле сгибает ливень,  
почти нагую, а она  
рванётся, глянет молчаливо –  
и дождь уймётся у окна.  
  
И в непроглядный зимний вечер,  
в победу веря наперёд,  
её буран берёт за плечи,  
за руки белые берёт.  
  
Но, тонкую, её ломая,  
из силы выбьется...Она,  
видать, характером прямая,  
кому-то третьему верна.

*Three Sketches, Op. 45*

**10** The Flower

*Words by Stepan Shchipachyov*

The flower's life was not long...  
Winter. The blizzard rages,  
The snowstorm flies into the porch.  
But the flower's scent lives on  
In the dry collective-farm hay,  
In the stream of steaming milk  
The flower's steppe life tinkles,  
And if the song is good  
No matter what line you touch –  
Even if blizzards powder everything –  
The flower will still live in the song.

**11** The Little Birch Tree

*Words by Stepan Shchipachyov*

The downpour bends her to the ground,  
almost naked, but she  
springs up, glances silently –  
and the rain eases off on the window.  
  
And on a pitch-dark winter evening,  
confident of victory beforehand,  
the snowstorm seizes her by the shoulders,  
seizes her by her white hands.  
  
But slender though she is,  
It wears itself out breaking her...  
She clearly has an upright character,  
And remains faithful to another.

## 12 Разговор

*Слова Л. Квитко*

Так дуб сказал:

– Я от вершины до корней  
Всех выше, крепче и сильнее.  
Но я мечтаю об одном –  
Стать быстроногим скакуном.  
Тогда увижу я просторы –  
Леса, луга, поля и горы.

А конь сказал:

– Когда на воле я скачу,  
Мне кажется, что я лечу.  
Но я мечтаю об одном –  
Стать птицей – соколом, орлом,  
Увидеть под собой просторы –  
Леса, луга, поля и горы.

Орёл сказал:

– Я вью гнездо в ущельях скал  
И где я только ни летал.  
Но я завидую тому,  
Кто – человек. Его уму.  
Ему подвластны все просторы –  
Леса, луга, поля и горы.

## 12 A Conversation

*Words by Lev Kvitko*

Thus said the oak tree:

'From my crown to my roots  
I am taller, sturdier, and stronger than all.  
But I dream of only one thing –  
Of being a fleet-footed racehorse.  
Then I would see the vast open spaces –  
Forests, meadows, fields, and mountains.'

And the horse said:

'When I gallop in the wild  
I feel as though I am flying.  
But I only dream of one thing –  
Of being a bird – a falcon, an eagle,  
Of seeing vast open spaces underneath me –  
Forests, meadows, fields and mountains.'

The eagle said:

'I build a nest in the mountain gorges,  
And wherever I have flown.  
But I envy him  
Who is a man. His mind.  
All the vast open spaces are subject to him –  
Forests, meadows, fields, and mountains.'

**13 Русый ветер**

Русый ветер, какой ты счастливый!  
Эх ты, ветрена голова!  
У тебя для берёзки, для ивы  
одинаково нежны слова.

Русый ветер, какой ты счастливый!  
А вот я, словно кто приковал,  
об одной, о далёкой, красивой,  
столько лет тосковал!

**14 У родника**

От луны бело в степи.  
В тишине родник звучит,  
и над самым родником  
в светлом небе на цепи  
ковш серебряный висит.

Ветром, травами дышать,  
слушать, как звенит вода,  
хорошо в тиши такой.  
Только пью не из ковша:  
не дотянешься рукой.

**15 Мне кажется порой...**

Мне кажется порой, что я  
вот так и буду жить и жить на свете!  
Как тронет смерть,  
когда кругом – друзья,  
когда трава, и облака, и ветер –  
всё до пылинки – это жизнь моя?

**13 Fair-haired wind**

Fair-haired wind, how happy you are!  
Oh, you feather-brained wind!  
For the birch, for the willow  
You have the same tender words.

Fair-haired wind, how happy you are!  
And here am I, like one chained  
to her, to the distant and beautiful one,  
For whom I have pined for so many years!

**14 At the Spring**

It is white on the steppe from the moon.  
The spring ripples in the silence,  
and above the stream itself  
on a chain in the bright heavens  
a silver dipper<sup>1</sup> hangs.

To scent the wind, the grasses,  
to listen to the rippling water  
is good in such stillness.  
Except I do not drink from the dipper:  
you can't reach it with your hand.

**15 It sometimes seems to me...**

It sometimes seems to me  
that I shall live and live just like this on the earth!  
How can death touch me,  
when friends are all round,  
when there's grass, and clouds, and wind –  
does my life all come to dust?

<sup>1</sup> The constellation known as 'The Plough' in Britain is called 'The Big Dipper' (Большой Ковш) in Russia, as in the United States.

### 16 Подсолнух

Подсолнуху от ливня  
Не скрыться никуда:  
В грязи увязли ноги,  
Меж грядками вода.  
Веснушчатый и рыжий,  
Стоит он в картузе.  
Зачем сбежит он с грядки,  
Когда он рад грозе.

### 17 Приметы

В одной рубашке дрожь берёт.  
Слышал, примета есть в народе:  
когда черёмуха цветёт,  
холодный ветер на свободе.

Пора домой. Но в ясный вечер  
нам хорошо сидеть одним.  
О, эти худенькие плечи  
под синим пиджаком моим!

Поди, и звёзды понимают,  
что нас обоих дрожь берет...  
Но так всегда бывает в мае,  
когда черёмуха цветёт.

### 16 The Sunflower

The sunflower from the downpour  
Has nowhere to hide:  
His feet are struck in the mud,  
There's water between the vegetable patches.  
Freckled and red-haired,  
He stands in his peaked cap.  
Why would he run away from the vegetable  
patch  
When he is delighted with the storm?

### 17 Superstitions

You'd get a fit of the shivers wearing just a  
shirt.  
I've heard that there's a folk superstition:  
when the bird-cherry blossoms  
there's a cold wind on the loose.

Time to go home. But on a bright evening  
we like sitting on our own.  
Oh, those slender shoulders  
under my navy-blue jacket!

I dare say that the stars understand too  
why we've both got a fit of the shivers...  
But that always happens in May  
when the bird-cherry blossoms.

**18 Тебе**

Две липы у окна.  
Они родились вместе  
под тёплым ветерком,  
и подымались вместе,  
и старятся рядком –  
и счастливы они!  
Но разве знают липы,  
как счастьем дорожить!  
Скажи, ну как могли бы  
мы друг без друга жить?  
И в прошлое порой  
мне страшно оглянуться:  
росла ты далеко –  
и в жизни так легко  
могли мы разминуться.

**19 Легко, любимая, с тобой**

В снегу закаты и леса.  
И соль земли на волосах.  
Твой тёмный локон стал седым.  
Легко на лыжах молодым,  
Легко, любимая, с тобой  
Бежать вот, так одной тропой.  
Пусть на бегу захватит дух  
У звёзд, у мира на виду.  
Легко, любимая, с тобой.

**18 To you**

Two linden trees by the window.  
They were born together  
under the warm breeze,  
and rose together  
and are growing old next to each other –  
and they are happy!  
But do lindens really know  
how to value happiness!  
Tell me, how could we really  
live without one another?  
And I'm sometimes afraid  
to look back at the past:  
you grew up far away –  
and in life we could so easily  
have passed one another without meeting.

**19 It's easy, my love, with you**

Sunsets and forests in the snow.  
And salt of the earth in the hair.  
Your dark curl has turned grey.  
It's easy for a young couple to ski.  
It's easy, my love, with you  
To glide as on one track.  
Let our flight take the stars' breath away  
In full view of the world.  
It's easy, my love, with you.

**20 Эльбрус и самолёт**

Ой, высок же ты, Эльбрус,  
Синий лёд!  
Только выше пролетел  
Самолёт.  
Босиком у ног твоих,  
Князь князей,  
Пас овец чабан  
Умар по росе.  
Ой, высок же ты, Эльбрус,  
Синий лёд!  
Но Умар ведёт у звёзд  
Самолёт.

**21 Взглянув на карточку**

Тебе покажется - дотла  
Любовь сгорела, опустело имя,  
И вдруг над тишиной стола  
Она, забытая, глаза подымет.  
И вспомнишь всё до мелочей:  
Апрельский полдень, ветки над тропею,  
Скамейку вспомнишь и ручей,  
И в нём окурок, брошенный тобою,  
И как влюблённые глаза  
У самых глаз твоих в слезах блестели...  
Но позабыты адреса,  
Давно листки в блокноте  
пожелтели.

**20 Mount Elbrus and the Aeroplane**

Oh, how tall you are, Elbrus,  
Dark blue ice!  
Only an airplane  
Flew higher.  
Barefoot at your feet,  
Prince of Princes,  
The herdsman Umar  
brought his sheep to pasture in the dew.  
Oh, how tall you are, Elbrus,  
Dark blue ice!  
But Umar pilots his airplane  
By the stars.

**21 After glancing at a card**

It will seem to you that love  
Has burned to ashes, the name – a void,  
And suddenly over the silence of the table  
She, forgotten, will raise her eyes.  
And you will remember it all down to the last  
detail:  
An April afternoon, branches over the path,  
You will remember the bench and the stream,  
And the cigarette butt that you threw into it,  
And how the loving eyes glistened with tears  
Just in front of your own eyes...  
But the addresses are forgotten,  
And the notebook's small pages  
turned yellow long ago.

**22 У моря**

Знаю я, как волны с камнем спорят.  
Меж сырых голубоватых скал  
повстречал я девушку у моря.  
– Хорошо здесь! – только и сказал.  
Долго мы на берегу стояли.  
Под вечер она опять пришла.  
Круглобокий колыхался ялик,  
на песке лежали три весла.  
И легко нам было в разговоре,  
слов особенных я не искал.  
Смуглые, забрызганные морем,  
маленькие руки целовал,  
И сегодня – нет её милее,  
так же все ладонь её тепла.  
Пусть твердят, что и моря мелеют,  
я не верю, чтоб любовь прошла.

**Из собрания песен За многие годы, соч. 87**

**23 No. 1: Так и рвётся душа**

*Слова А. Кольцова*

Так и рвётся душа  
Из груди молодой!  
Хочет воли она,  
Просит жизни другой!

То ли дело – вдвоём  
Над рекою сидеть,  
На зелёную степь,  
На цветочки глядеть!  
То ли дело – вдвоём

**22 By the Sea**

I know how the waves quarrel with the stone.  
Between damp blueish rocks  
I met a girl by the sea.  
I simply said: 'It's nice here!'  
We stood on the shore for a long time.  
She came again towards evening.  
The round-sided skiff rocked,  
three oars lay on the sand.  
And it was easy for us to talk,  
I didn't try to find any particular words.  
I kissed those dusky  
Sea-spattered little hands,  
And today – there is no-one dearer,  
And her palm is all warm.  
Let them keep saying that the seas become  
shallow,  
I do not believe that love has passed.

**From Songs of Many Years, Op. 87**

**23 No. 1: Thus yearns the soul**

*Words by Aleksey Koltsov*

Thus yearns the soul  
In the young breast!  
It wants freedom,  
It asks for a different life!

How much better – to sit  
Together on the riverbank,  
To look at the verdant steppe,  
And the little flowers!  
How much better – to while away

Зимню ночь коротать,  
Друга жаркой рукой  
Ко груди прижимать;

Поутру, на заре,  
Обнимать-проводать,  
Вечерком у ворот  
Его вновь поджидать!

**[24] No. 6: Песня сборщиков**  
*Слова В. Брюсова*

Пожертвуйте, благодетели,  
На новый колокол,  
Глас Господень.  
Звон колокольный  
С напевом ангельским  
Дивно сходен.

Святые отшельники  
В виденьях слышали  
Лик небесный;  
Святые отшельники  
Верно запомнили,  
Нездешние песни.

Наш звон православный  
Напевом ангельским  
Поёт и трубит.  
Пожертвуйте, православные,  
На новый колокол,  
Что милость будит.  
Вас Бог не забудет.

The winter night,  
To clasp a friend to one's breast  
With a warm hand;

Early in the morning, at dawn  
To embrace and part,  
In the evening by the gates  
To await him once more!

**[24] No. 6: Song of the Collectors**  
*Words by Valeriy Bryusov*

Donate, benefactors,  
For a new bell,  
The voice of the Lord.  
The peal of the bell  
Is wondrously like  
Angelic chant.

Holy hermits  
Heard in visions  
The heavenly host;  
Holy hermits  
Faithfully recalled  
Unearthly songs.

Our Orthodox chime  
Sings and trumpets  
Angelic chant.  
Give generously, benefactors,  
For a new bell,  
Which awakes God's grace.  
God will not forget you.



**25 No. 7: В борьбе с тяжёлою судьбой**

*Слова Е. Баратынского*

В борьбе с тяжёлою судьбой  
Я только пел мои печали:  
Стихи холодные дышали  
Души холодною тоской.  
Когда б тогда вы мне предстали,  
Быть может, грустный мой удел  
Вы облегчили б. Нет! едва ли!  
Но я бы пламеннее пел.

**26 No. 10: Сонет Микеланджело**

*Слова Микеланджело Буонаротти,  
перевод Ф. Тютчева*

Молчи, прошу, не смей меня будить.  
О, в этот век преступный и постыдный  
Не жить, не чувствовать – удел завидный...  
Отрадно спать,  
отрадной камнем быть.

***Две песни полярников***

**27 Песня**

*Слова М. Светлова*

Над полярным морем неба не видеть,  
Над полярным морем птицы не слышать.  
Но в полярной ночи  
чудится во мгле  
Русская берёза на большой земле...

**25 No. 7: In the struggle with a heavy fate**

*Words by Yevgeniy Baratinskiy*

In the struggle with a heavy fate  
I only sang of my sorrows:  
Cold verses expressed  
The heart's sad longing.  
Had you appeared to me then  
Perhaps you could have alleviated  
My sad destiny. No! I think not!  
But I would have sung all the more ardently.

**26 No. 10: Sonnet of Michelangelo**

*Words by Michelangelo Buonarroti,  
translated into Russian by Fyodor Tyutchev*

Be silent, I pray, do not dare to wake me.  
O, in this evil and shameful age  
Not to live, not to feel is an enviable lot.  
'Tis a comfort to sleep,  
and greater comfort being stone.

***Two Songs of Polar Explorers***

**27 Song**

*Words by Mikhail Svetlov*

On the polar sea you can't see the sky,  
On the polar sea you can't hear birds.  
But in the polar night you fancy  
you can see in the gloom  
A Russian birch tree on the mainland...

За берёзой белой в дали голубой  
Протянулись ленты по стране родной.  
Может быть, далёко в этот самый час  
Тихие семейства вспоминают нас...

Нам в полярной ночи чудятся во мгле  
Маленькие дети на большой земле.  
И доносит ветер с южной стороны  
Тёплое дыхание солнечной страны...

Над полярным морем неба не видеть,  
Над полярным морем птицы не слышать.  
Русская берёза чудится  
во мгле,  
Любят нас и помнят на большой земле...

**28 Песня моряков-полярников.**

*Слова Ю. Зельвенского*

Мы в полярных морях умножаем  
Нашей Родины славу и честь.  
На приказы страны отвечаем  
Нашим флотским прославленным «есть!»  
Не страшат нас седые туманы,  
Ветра свист и безмолвие льдов,  
Боевые ведут капитаны  
Караваны советских судов.

Behind the white birch in the azure distance  
Train tracks stretch out across our native land.  
Perhaps far away at this very hour  
Our nearest and dearest are thinking of us.

In the polar night we fancy we can see in the  
gloom  
Little children on the mainland.  
And the wind from the southern quarter  
Brings the warm breath of our sunny land.

On the polar sea you can't see the sky,  
On the polar sea you can't hear the birds.  
We fancy we can see a Russian birch tree  
in the gloom,  
They love us and remember us on the  
mainland.

**28 Song of the Polar Sailors**

*Words by Yuly Zel'vensky*

In the polar seas we multiply  
The glory and honour of our Motherland.  
We answer our country's orders  
With our renowned naval 'Aye, aye!'  
We are undaunted by the grey fogs,  
The howling of the wind and the silence of  
the ice,  
Our captains feistily lead  
Convoys of Soviet ships.

[Припев]

Далеко от земли мы ведём корабли,  
Нам полярное светит сиянье,  
И пылает над ним, надо льдом голубым  
Нашей Родины алое знамя!

Любим мы ледяные просторы,  
А военные грянут года,  
И пойдут крейсера и линкоры  
Мимо кромки полярного льда,  
Мимо Диксона, мимо Чукотки.  
Не страшна никакая пурга!  
Поведём мы подводные лодки  
На эскадры любого врага.

[Chorus]

Far from the land we steer ships,  
The polar light shines on us,  
And above it, above the blue ice,  
Flutters the scarlet banner of our Motherland!

We love the icy expanses,  
And when the years of combat break out  
Our cruisers and battleships will sail  
Past the rim of the polar ice,  
Past Dikson and Chukotka.  
No blizzard daunts us!  
We sail submarines  
Towards the fleets of any enemy.<sup>2</sup>

—*English translations by Patrick Zuk*

<sup>2</sup> Dikson, which is named after the Swedish Arctic pioneer Oscar Dickson (1823–97), is a port on Russia's Arctic Ocean coast, and one of the world's northernmost settlements. The Chukotka Peninsula in Siberia is the easternmost territory in Asia: its tip lies only 37 miles from the coast of Alaska.



Recorded on 15 and 22 January 2018 (*From the Lyric Poetry of Stepan Shchipachyov*), on 20 January 2022 (*At the Decline of Day, Songs of Many Years*) in Studio One of Russian Radio House, Moscow; on 4 and 18 February (*Six Poems of Alexander Blok*) and 23 March (*Three Sketches, Op. 45*) 2019 in the Concert Hall of the Academy of Choral Arts, Moscow; and on 14 January 2022 in Studio No. 1 of the Production Complex Tonstudio, Mosfilm, Moscow (*Two Songs of Polar Explorers*)  
Sound producer, engineer, editor and mastering: Ilya Dontsov  
Production direction and co-ordination: Igor Prokhorov, The Boris Tchaikovsky Society

Booklet notes: Patrick Zuk

Cover design: David M. Baker (david@notneverknow.com)

Typesetting and lay-out: Kerrypress, St Albans

Executive Producer: Martin Anderson

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Toccata Classics, 16 Dalkeith Court, Vincent Street, London SW1P 4HH, UK

Tel: +44/0 207 821 5020 E-mail: [info@toccataclassics.com](mailto:info@toccataclassics.com)