

German Romantic composer **Franz Schubert** is perhaps best known for his *Lieder*, or German art song. He was a prolific composer, crafting 600 *Lieder* alongside numerous other genres in his short 31 years of life. His seminal *Die schöne Müllerin* was the earliest extended song cycle to be widely performed. The piano accompaniment in this work is particularly notable for its descriptive nature, not simply playing a background role but taking on the characters of a horse or a stream when required. *Halt!* begins our story, as the main character notices his dream occupation seeming to materialize in the woods - a beautiful mill! He immediately begins to work for the mill's master, though he laments that he is not a stronger man in *Am Feierabend*. The singer has noticed the beautiful miller's daughter, and decries in wrathful melodic segments his invisibility to her because of his weakness. In *Mein!*, the miller believes he has finally stolen the daughter's heart - despite the fact that they have yet to hold even a single conversation. The manic piano accompaniment and strained emotion indicated in the vocal line highlight the beginnings of madness in the miller. The final selection, *Der Müller und der Bach*, follows the miller as he dejectedly departs from the mill in a minor key. The nearby brook offers solace in a major key and a reminder that while women are unfaithful, nature will not betray him. He agrees with this notion and sinks into the brook, finding his final resting place in its clear and cool waters.

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart is one of the most well-renowned Classical composers of all time. He is known for his musically complex yet relatable works across all genres. His offerings from the operatic scene are clear examples of his seemingly effortless style and grace. "Un aura amorosa" is a famous tenor aria from Mozart's *Così fan tutte*. The piece showcases themes of true love and ecstatic joy, believing that one's heart can sustain itself on the breath of a lover alone. The melismatic nature of the singer's melody emphasizes the romantic text, lending time and weight to every syllable. This affords the performer an opportunity to express all the emotions that love contains.

Samuel Barber was a celebrated American composer of modern works ranging from the operatic to the orchestral. He received the Pulitzer prize for music twice alongside the prestigious Edward MacDowell award for "significant contribution to American culture". His works for voice and piano are as enchanting as they are challenging. *Hermit Songs* took its text from a collection of anonymous Irish monks who scrawled the verses in the side of hand-copied versions of the Bible. "The Monk and His Cat" is a favorite among the set, known for its strange and hard-to-follow rhythms. The sighing vocal melody transports one to the dreary task of working in a stuffy library all day. Expressive uses of chromaticisms can be seen as indicators of boredom and desire for expression by these hard-working men of the cloth.

Alberto Ginastera was an Argentinian modern composer of the first half of the twentieth century, famous for his expressive and at times nationalistic works. His songs for voice often utilize traditional Argentinian melodies and rhythmic patterns. In *Canción al árbol del olvido*, Ginastera uses the rhythms of *milonga*, an ancestor of the *tango*, to create a framework for the piece. *Canción a la luna lunanca*, on the other hand, relies on *Sesquialtera*, where the beat alternates from two groups of three beats to three groups of two beats. This effect gives a certain speed to the rhythm, as well as an affable dance-like feeling. *Gato* similarly employs *Sesquialtera* alongside a classic Argentinian folk melody.

The **Epitaph of Seikilos** is the oldest surviving complete musical composition, including musical notation, from anywhere in the world. While some partial fragments of earlier Egyptian music exist, only the Epitaph remains fully intact. The lyrics and melody were found carved on a tombstone as a dedication to an unknown departed soul. The inscription has a brief yet stirring message: Live with no regrets, because life is short. The simple yet mournful melody and bare accompaniment evoke a mournful and respectful tone. The scale is not of traditional Western origin. The seemingly alien nature of the tune lends a certain mystery to any modern day performance of the piece.

Lamma Bada Yatathanna is an ancient Arabic muwashshah, consisting of a repeated refrain and a few strophic verses. The poem is considered one of the most famous Arabic pieces of art, and performance of the traditional melody with variations has continued well into the modern day. Artists within the Arabic music community commonly record this piece as proof of their skill and understanding of the history. The gentle swaying nature of the music draws the listener in, and the plaintive vocal line expresses the emotions of forbidden desire felt by the poet. The lines leave much room for ornamentation, which is not only allowable but expected in this genre of music. This means no two performances of this piece are the same.

The English composer **Henry Purcell** is one of the Baroque period's most famous composers. While he spent many years writing almost exclusively sacred music, he found time to erect landmarks works for opera, theater, and art song. His secular pieces tend to express extreme emotion and dramatic vocal lines. *The fatal hour comes on apace* is about a lover who feels betrayed, despite their many sacrifices for an ungrateful partner. The intense melody suggests a more modern feel despite the piece's 17th century origins. Extreme repetition in the A section imparts the singer's sorrow, while the faster B section represents anger and disbelief.

Francis Poulenc was a French composer notable as a member of *Les Six*, a group of young modernist composers who collaborated and performed in Paris for the first half of the 20th century. Poulenc was widely known for his more light-hearted works and high spirits. His song cycle *Banalités* illustrates Poulenc's irreverent style through its wildly varying styles and contrasting subsections. *Chansons d'Orkenise* wonderfully crafts a traditional folk scene while giving the singer an opportunity to 'wink' at the audience with its lofty leaps and charming affect. *Hôtel* is much more subdued harmonically but still provides a cheeky surprise: "I don't want to work, I just want to smoke!"

Francesco Paolo Tosti was a significant Romantic Italian composer of the late 19th and early 20th centuries. While initially an impoverished pianist in Italy, he found great fame as a composer in England. *L'Ultimo bacio* was published in 1888 at the height of Tosti's popularity. At this time, Tosti was living in England and writing regularly for the nobility. This piece represents the idea that love is eternal, even in the face of betrayal. The singer loves a woman who has cheated on him. The proud vocal lines at first suggest that the singer has moved on, but by the end the singer dramatically rises up the scale to proclaim his everlasting love. Tosti composed *L'Ultima canzone* in 1905, shortly before his knighting. It has a similar theme of eternal love despite obstacles: The singer loves a woman who, he has just learned, is getting married tomorrow. He pleads with her via repeated desperate phrases, and, despite his anger, intermingles them with sweet choruses full of flowery language about her beauty.