

Jane Austen: The French Connection

Gillian Dooley (voice)
Christine Morphett (harp)
Mark Smith (cello)

Barr Smith Library Reading Room, Adelaide University
3pm, Saturday 17 October 2020

A benefit concert for the Barr Smith Library

Arranged by the Friends of the Library and the Jane Austen Society of Adelaide

Program

Song in *La Fée Urgèle* – Egidio Duni (1708-1775)

De *Richard Coeur-de-Lion* – André-Ernest-Modeste Grétry (1741-1813)

Air [Plus ne veux jamais m'engager] – Anon

Duo du *Roi Théodore* – Giovanni Paisiello (1740-1816)

Ouverture de *Renaud d'Ast* – Nicolas-Marie Dalayrac (1753-1809)

Pauvre Jacques – attrib. Marie Antoinette (1755-1793) & Marquise de Travanet
(1753-1828)

Chanson Béarnaise – Anon

Captivity – Stephen Storace (1762-1796)

Romance du concerto en fa – Jean-Baptiste Krumpholtz (1742-1790)

Romance [Que j'aime à voir les hirondelles] – François Devienne (1759-1803)

Air du *Marquis de Tulipano* – Giovanni Paisiello arr. C.J.A. Gourbillon

[Laisse là sur l'herbette] – Benoît Pollet

[Sous un berceau de Jasmin] – attrib. André Grétry

Air for harp with variations – Krumpholtz

[Vous l'ordonnez] – Antoine Laurent Baudron (1742-1834)

[Since then I'm Doomed] – adapted from Baudron

The Waterloo – Anon.

The Marseilles March – Claude Joseph Rouget de Lisle (1760-1836)

Jane Austen: The French Connection

Jane Austen (1775-1817) is often thought of as provincial, apolitical and quint-essentially English. She never travelled abroad. But she had a cousin, Eliza Hancock, who moved to Paris in 1779 with her mother and married Jean-François Capot de Feuillide, a young military officer from Nérac in the province of Guienne, in 1781. Eliza often visited the Austen family in Steventon during Jane's childhood and teenage years. She was fourteen years older than Jane, but they were close, sharing an interest in music. Eliza played both the piano and the harp. Following the execution of her first husband in Paris in 1794, Eliza married Jane's favourite brother, Henry in 1797.

Some of the music on today's program is drawn from Eliza's surviving music collections, including several instrumental pieces. In one case Jane carefully copied an overture from Eliza's printed music into one of her own manuscript books cheekily titled 'Juvenile songs and lessons for young beginners who don't know enough to practise.'

Most of the songs, however, are from Jane's own manuscript music books. The first bracket includes four songs each of which contemplates the nature of love. In the first, love is *chose jolie* – a pretty thing – to be celebrated and enjoyed. In the second, a sixteen-year-old lad is besotted by his fifteen-year-old girlfriend and they take every opportunity they can of evading her mother's watchful presence. In complete contrast, the singer in 'Plus ne veux jamais m'engager' is thoroughly disillusioned and wishes to have nothing further to do with love. And finally, in an aria in the tradition of Cherubino's *Voi che sapete* from Mozart's *Marriage of Figaro*, an ingenuous young man asks some beautiful young women to instruct him in the mysteries of love.

Following an arrangement for harp of the overture to Dalayrac's opera *Renaud d'Ast*, the whole of the second bracket is concerned with the French royal family. The first song, *Pauvre Jacques*, may have been written by Marie Antoinette or one of her companions. It is supposed to be based on the lament of a young Swiss woman employed in the Queen's dairy, who is sorely missing her lover. The next song comes from after the French Revolution, and is a Royalist ballad attacking the treachery of those who have imprisoned Louis XVI and his queen. The third is one of several English songs composed about the plight of Marie Antoinette imprisoned and awaiting her fate at the hands of the revolutionary government.

Czech musician Jean-Baptiste Krumpholtz was a popular and prolific composer of music for the harp. The middle section of the Romance from this concerto in A minor is a melody that is included elsewhere in Austen's manuscript books as a song titled 'Hither, Love, thy beauties bring'. Although these words were published with another tune, another source for the setting in Austen's MS has not been found.

In the third bracket of songs, we return to variations on the eternal subject of love. The first song tells of the swallows who return each year to herald the coming of spring, and to provide an example of faithful love unto death. The next, one of very few songs in a minor key in Austen's repertoire, is a dramatic and passionate plea to a faithless lover to return and restore the singer's faith in her and in their future together.

The following two songs demonstrate two varieties of courtship. The first anticipates the #MeToo movement by two hundred years. The over-confident Lucas meets his match in the feisty shepherdess he is trying to seduce, but it takes him some time to get the message. The shepherdess says 'no' a total of sixty-six times by the end of the song. By contrast, the *belle endormie* – sleeping beauty – in the last song in this

group is wordless but compliant, and this charming love song envisages a life lived *enchâîner* with this beautiful woman in the greatest possible happiness.

Another work for harp solo by Krumpholtz from Eliza de Feuillide's manuscript collection follows. The book into which this piece was copied is in private hands, and is not among the Austen Family Music Collection digitised by the University of Southampton. It has been transcribed, edited and published by London-based historic harp specialist Dr Mike Parker.

The final bracket of songs begins with two variants of the same melody. 'Vous l'ordonnez' is the original setting of the Count's serenade in Beaumarchais' controversial play *The Barber of Seville*. He is posing as a poor *bachelier* – a student of lowly birth – to woo Rosina. 'Since then I'm doom'd' is an example of an extremely common practice of the time, where a pre-existing melody from French or Italian repertoire was adapted for the London stage. There is a mystery about the authorship of the play *The Spoil'd Child*. It is said to be by Isaac Bickerstaff, who, when it was staged in the late 1780s, had been living abroad for nearly twenty years, apparently in exile because of his homosexuality. It was a great success, owing to the outrageous character of the prankster 'Little Pickle', who bakes his aunt's pet parrot in a pie. He sings this song when his father and aunt finally order him out of the house.

Finally, following a short dance called 'The Waterloo' which has not been found elsewhere but is likely to be one of the last pieces of music Austen copied into her manuscript books, we end by giving the French the last word with 'The Marseille March'. Although when the song was composed in 1792 France and England were not at war, evidence suggests that Austen copied the melody and six verses in French no earlier than 1794, after her cousin's husband had been executed by the revolutionary government, and after the outbreak of war between Britain and France in February 1793.

Jane Austen knew the French language and had connections with France throughout her life. This selection of French music from her collection shows that she was well aware of the dramatic events across the channel and took an interest in the musical and theatrical culture of France.

Gillian Dooley is an Honorary Senior Research Fellow at Flinders University, South Australia. She has published widely on various topics, including Jane Austen, often with an emphasis on music. One of her ongoing projects is creating a detailed index of each of the 500-600 items in the Austen music collections. For more information on Austen and her music collection see <https://sites.google.com/site/janeaustensmusic/home>

Christine Morphett is a passionate Celtic harper and is one half of the band *Telemn Tri*, who perform at Celtic festivals around Australia. Christine has created an SA harp orchestra that has performed at festivals and will be at the Fringe next year. She participates in harp festivals in Scotland, Ireland and Brittany. Christine plays an 1813 double action pedal harp made in London by Erat.

Mark Smith did his Ph.D. at Flinders University from 1976 to 1983 on the Cello Suites of Johann Sebastian Bach. He has been a specialised performer on Baroque Cello since c.1975. Since then he has also done very extensive research on Bach, and on early cellos and their methods of playing. Mark plays an English cello c.1680-1710 which has been restored to its probable original design and proportions, and his bow is a copy of a very rare original 1720 English bow that he owns.

Translations and sources

Translations from the French by David Robjant

‘Ah! que l’amour est chose jolie’ from *La Fée Urgèle* – Egidio Duni

Song in Jane Austen’s hand in a scrapbook-style book containing print and manuscript items. *La Fée Urgèle* was first performed in Paris in 1765. The libretto, by Charles-Simon Favart, is based on Voltaire’s *Ce qui plaît aux dames* and Chaucer’s *The Wife of Bath’s Tale*.

Refrain:

*O what a pretty thing is love!
With love, a whole life passes like a day!*

*1. On the flowering spine,
All the birds from hereabouts,
In their sweet melody,
Repeat each in their turn:
O what a pretty thing is love! etc.*

*2. If I sleep, he wakes me;
If by chance I doze,
Attentive to my happiness,
He comes sweetly to say in my ear:
O, O, O what a pretty thing is love! etc*

‘La danse n’est pas ce que j’aime’ from *Richard Coeur-de-Lion* – André Grétry

Song in Jane Austen’s hand in her manuscript album labelled ‘Songs and Duets’. The opera *Richard Coeur-de-Lion* was produced in Paris at the Comédie-Italienne in 1784.

*1. It isn’t the dance that I love,
But the daughter of Nicolas;
While I hold her in my arms,
When my pleasure is extreme,
I press her against me.*

*2. She is fifteen, and I’m sixteen.
Oh, if only the mother
Wasn’t always following our tracks.
Oh well – however much that offends,
In her company I am quite at ease.*

*3. And then we talk to each other,
In low voices.
How I pity you! – you won’t see her!*

Plus ne veux jamais m’engager – Anon, words by Heurtier

Song in Jane Austen’s hand in her manuscript album labelled ‘Songs and Duets’. No composer is given and music is not yet identified. The words of this song appear in the 1806 *Petite encyclopédie poétique* with the title ‘La Résolution’, by Heurtier, who has not been identified.

*1. I will never involve myself again –
Such is my fancy.
Because every lover is flighty,
To really love is madness.
Faith is no more, nor integrity;
It’s a strange thing –
People love only in vanity,
That people change is vanity.*

*2. Never in the past was favour
Followed by regret;
Where Love dictated a choice to us
So it was for life.
But today, what a difference!
Oh good God how people love!
People get hold of each other without
knowing how,
And separate the same way.*

3. *Thus were the most beautiful lover
To tell me 'I love you',
I would tell him, 'all your pledges,
And nothing – it's all the same.'
Elsewhere you say this about it:
'Girl, who's listening to you?'
For having loved faithfully –
I know the cost of it!*

Filles charmantes from *Le Roi Théodore* – Giovanni Paisiello

In Jane Austen's hand in her manuscript album labelled 'Songs and Duetts'. This is an arrangement of a duet and chorus in Paisiello's *Le roi Theodore a Venice* or *Il re Teodoro in Venezia*. This version of the French translation has not been found elsewhere. A French version published in 1786 begins 'Vous dont les âmes sentent les flames', while the Italian words (1784) begin 'O giovinette innamorate'.

*Charming girls, young lovers
Deign to teach me what love is.
Is it delirium, is it martyrdom?
Deign to teach me on this beautiful day,
Deign to tell me what love is.
Charming girls, young lovers
Come and teach me what love is.
My breast beats, my heart's a-do,
I feel my soul breaking out in flames-
I know now what love is.*

Ouverture de *Renaud d'Ast* – Nicolas-Marie Dalayrac, arranged by P.P. Blattman

Arrangement for keyboard or harp in Jane Austen's hand in her manuscript album labelled 'Juvenile Songs and Lessons for young beginners who don't know enough to practise.' The printed music of this piece also appears among printed music belonging to Eliza de Feuillide (née Hancock), Austen's cousin, whose husband was executed by the French revolutionary government in

1794. Dalayrac's comic opera *Renaud d'Ast* premiered in Paris in 1787.

Pauvre Jacques – attrib. Queen Marie Antoinette and the Marquise de Travanet

Song in Jane Austen's hand in a scrapbook-style book containing print and manuscript items. No composer given. Many arrangements of this tune have been published. In some the tune is attributed to Queen Marie Antoinette and the words to the Marquise de Travanet, or vice versa. There is a French Wikipedia page for this song which gives details of the various theories, and provides a date of 1789.

Refrain:

*Poor Jacques, when I was near you,
I didn't feel my poverty;
But now that you live far from me,
I lack for everything on this earth.*

1. *When you came to share my chores,
I found my task light,
Do you remember,
Every day was a beautiful day?
Who will give us back this prosperous time?
Poor Jacques etc*

2. *When the sun shines on the meadows,
I cannot bear his light,
And when in the shadows of the forests,
I blame the whole of Nature.
Poor Jacques etc.*

Chanson Béarnaise – Anon

Song in Jane Austen's hand in her manuscript album labelled 'Songs and Duetts', including only the melody plus the words of nine verses. An anti-revolutionary song which was apparently circulating on the streets of Paris after the arrest of Louis XVI and Marie Antoinette.

*1. A Gascon Troubadour,
His eyes flooded with tears,
Sang to his mountain men,
This verse and spring of fears,
Louis the son of Henri,
Is a prisoner in Paris.*

*2. He saw the blood flow
From that faithful guard,
Who had just offered, in dying,
A beautiful example to the French.
But Louis the son of Henri,
Is a prisoner in Paris.*

*3. He has trembled for the days
Of his dear companion,
Who found no help
But in her own resources;
She follows the son of Henri,
Into the prisons of Paris.*

Captivity – Stephen Storace

Song in Jane Austen's hand in her manuscript album labelled 'Songs and Duets'. Austen appears to have copied it from J. Dale's edition of 1793, with the title 'Captivity: a ballad supposed to be sung by the unfortunate Marie Antoinette during her imprisonment in the Temple. The words by the Revd. Mr Jeans, Dibden Hants.' Joshua Jeans, like Austen's father and eldest brother, was a Hampshire clergyman.

Romance du concerto en fa – Jean-Baptiste Krumpholtz

This piece for harp appears among printed music belonging to Eliza de Feuillide. The melody of the central major section also appears elsewhere as a song titled 'Hither, Love, thy beauties bring' in Austen's hand.

Que j'aime à voir les hirondelles – François Devienne

Decades after Austen's death, her niece Caroline recalled that she often sang this

song to her own accompaniment on the piano. It is not in Austen's surviving collection, but appears among Eliza de Feuillide's printed music. The lyrics come from the pastoral novel *Estelle and Nemorin* by Jean-Pierre Claris de Florian (1755-1794).

*1. How I like to see the swallows,
At my window, every year,
Come to bring me news
Of the approach of the sweet spring!
The same nest, they say to me,
Will see again the same loves:
It is for none but some faithful lovers,
Announcing the fine days to you.*

*2. When the first frosts
Make the leaves of the woods fall
The assembled swallows,
All call to each other above the roofs.
'Let's go! Let's go,' they say to each other,
'Let's flee the snow and the south winds.'
No winter for the faithful hearts:
They are always in springtime.*

*3. If, by misfortune on the way,
Victim of some cruel child,
A swallow put in a cage
Cannot get back to his love,
You see the swallow die,
Of his troubles, of pain and love,
While his faithful love,
Nearby, dies the same day.*

Je croyais ma belle from Marquis de Tulipano – Giovanni Paisiello

From Austen's manuscript book titled 'Songs and Duets.' This aria comes from a 'parody opera' based on the music of Paisiello by Joseph-Antoine de Gourbillon. The melody originated in Paisiello's 1779 opera *Il matrimonio inaspettato*.

1. *I thought, my love,
I could taste forever such perfect
pleasures,
(Alas, my love)
In being faithful to those perfect
pleasures.
To cap my troubles,
Sleep escapes me;
I spend the night
Cursing my fate;
In vain I pretend
To flee your attractions;
Ever more lamenting
I find myself, alas.*

2. *I thought, my love
To find you here.
(Alas, my love)
Appear then, cruel one,
Or I'll die of trouble;
(Alas, my love.)
To cap my troubles,
Sleep escapes me;
Etc.*

Laisse là sur l'herbette – Anon

*Song in Jane Austen's hand in a
scrapbook-style book containing print
and manuscript items. No composer
given. University of Oxford Library
holds a chanson by Benoît Pollet with
the same first line, lyrics by 'Mr B***',
titled 'Le Refus', estimated date given in
their catalogue of 1810. The tune and
words of this edition are the same but
the accompaniment is different from the
MS.*

1. **He:** *Leave there on the fine grass,
Your dog and your crook.
Come with me into this thicket.
In the mystery of the shadows,
I want, young shepherdess,
I want to take your flower...*
She: *No, no, I don't want to.
No, leave me alone, Lucas, No, no, I
don't want to.*

*No, leave me alone, Lucas, No, no, no,
I don't want to.*

2. **She:** *Lucas leave, please god,
My flower as it was.
What would you do with this sneak?*
He: *Oh well, let's have no anger,
I give in to your prayer -
But let me kiss your hand.*
She: *No, no, etc.*

3. **He:** *Right, I see you smiling,
I feel you sigh -
In your eyes I read my good luck.
You give in to my tenderness,
To what sweet intoxication -
I'm happy, I have your heart.*
She: *No, No, that's not it,
You've got it all wrong Lucas,
No, no, etc.*

Sous un berceau de Jasmin

This song appears with no title or
composer in Austen's manuscript book
'Songs and Duetts'. There is a doubtful
modern attribution to Grétry, and a song
with this title in a 1793 collection is
listed in an online catalogue of music
from the Picardy region.

1. *Under a bower of Jasmine,
Finding a beauty asleep,
Sweetly to kiss her hand,
Is a luck that is worthy of envy.
But to let the happy days flow
To connect one's loves with her for
always
That is the happiness of life.*

2. *The lightest of breezes
Brushes her pretty mouth,
Which smiles already from pleasure-
That is a turn worthy of desire.
But to let the happy days flow
To connect one's loves with her for
always
That is the happiness of life.*

Air for harp with variations – Jean-Baptiste Krumpholtz

A set of variations on an air from an opera by Rousseau. Set for the harp by Krumpholtz, and found in a number of manuscript collections, including one belonging to Eliza de Feuillide now held privately. Transcribed and edited by Mike Parker.

Vous l'ordonnez from *Le Barbier de Séville* – Antoine Laurent Baudron

This song is in a manuscript book of Elizabeth Austen, wife of Jane's wealthy brother Edward (later Knight). It is Count Almaviva's incognito serenade to Rosina from the first production of Beaumarchais' play *Le Barbier de Séville* (Paris 1775).

1. *You require it, I will make myself known.
No more hidden, I have dared to adore you.
What could I hope for, in naming myself?
No matter! One must obey one's master.*
2. *I am Lindor; my birth is common;
My sentiments are those of a simple student,
So I offer nothing, alas, of a brilliant cavalier,
Giving you his rank and his fortune.*
3. *From here, with tender voice each morning,
I will sing out my love without hope!
I will restrict my joys just to seeing you,
And may you find joy in hearing me!*

Since then I'm Doomed – Baudron (arranged Anon).

In Austen's hand in the scrapbook-style book containing print and manuscript items. This song from Isaac Bickerstaffe's stage play *The Spoil'd Child* is adapted by an unknown arranger from Baudron's melody for 'Vous l'ordonnez'.

The Waterloo

A short dance, unidentified elsewhere, which seems to be one of the last pieces Austen wrote out by hand, presumably in 1815 after the Battle of Waterloo.

The Marseilles March – Claude Joseph Rouget de Lisle

This song appears in Austen's manuscript book 'Songs and Duetts'. Although she writes the title in English, Austen's version has words in French. This is the tune now known as The Marseillaise, with slight differences in the rhythm and melody.

*Come on, children of the Fatherland,
The day of glory has arrived!
Against us tyranny's
Bloody standard is raised (repeat).
Do you hear, in the fields,
His ferocious soldiers roar?
They come right into your reach-
To slit your sons' throats, your mates!
To arms, citizens
Form your battalions.
March, march!
May an impure blood
Water our furrows.
Let's march, let's march!
May an impure blood
Water our furrows.*

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