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## Eighth Blackbird: "Folktales & Legends"

Department of Music, University of Richmond

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MXX050223P



Wednesday, February 23, 2005 • 7:30 pm

Modlin Center for the Arts

Camp Concert Hall, Booker Hall of Music

ICM Artists, Ltd.  
presents

**eighth blackbird**  
***“Folktales & Legends”***

**Molly Alicia Barth, *flutes***  
**Michael J. Maccaferri, *clarinets***  
**Matt Albert, *violin***  
**Nicholas Photinos, *cello***  
**Matthew L. Duvall, *percussion***  
**Lisa Kaplan, *piano***

*Department of Music Ensemble-in-Residence*

**with Lucy Shelton, *soprano***  
**and Blair Thomas and Co.**  
**Blair Thomas, *director***

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*The Modlin Center thanks Style Weekly  
for media sponsorship of the 2004-2005 season.*

## Tonight's Program

*Les Moutons des Panurge* (1969)

Frederic Rzewski  
(b. 1938)

*Here Comes the Moon* (2005)

Renee Favand

*Tied Shifts* (2004)

Derek Bermel

—Intermission—

*Pierrot Lunaire* (1912)

Arnold Schoenberg  
(1874-1951)

with Lucy Shelton, *sprechstimme*, and Blair Thomas and Co.

Directed by Blair Thomas

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Molly Alicia Barth plays on a Lillian Burkart flute and piccolo.  
Matthew Duvall endorses Pearl Drums and Adams Music Instruments.

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## About the Artists



### **eighth blackbird**

**Molly Alicia Barth, flutes**

**Matt Albert, violin & viola**

**Matthew Duvall, percussion**

**Michael J. Maccaferri, clarinets**

**Nicholas Photinos, cello**

**Lisa Kaplan, piano**

Regarded as one of the premier new music groups in the world, eighth blackbird has established a reputation for its provocative and engaging performances. The winners of the Naumburg Chamber Music Award and the Concert Artists Guild International Competition, where they were the first contemporary ensemble to win first prize, the group is also a three-time recipient of the CMA/ASCAP Award for Adventurous Programming. Other awards include top prizes at the Fischhoff and Coleman National Chamber Music Competitions. The group has been featured on CBS' "Sunday Morning" and was the subject of an extended profile in *The New York Times*. The ensemble is currently in residence at the University of Richmond and the University of Chicago.

The 2004-05 season includes eighth blackbird's western European debut with the Ijsbreker festival in Amsterdam, as well as performances in Toronto, New York, San Francisco and throughout the East Coast and Midwest. In recent seasons the sextet has performed in South Korea, Mexico, Poland and throughout the United States, including concerts at Lincoln Center's Alice Tully Hall, Carnegie Hall, the Kennedy Center, the Library of Congress and Herbst Theater. In the last year, the ensemble appeared as soloists with the Utah Symphony, American Composers Orchestra and the Oberlin Orchestra. eighth blackbird has performed several times at the Norfolk Chamber Music Festival and Cincinnati's Music X, and has also appeared at the Bravo! Vail Valley Music Festival, the Caramoor International Music

Festival, the Great Lakes Chamber Music Festival and the inaugural season of the Deer Valley Music Festival.

Since its founding in 1996, eighth blackbird has been active in commissioning new works from eminent composers—most notably Frederic Rzewski, George Perle and Joseph Schwantner—as well as ground-breaking works from Jennifer Higdon, Derek Bermel, David Schober, Daniel Kellogg, Carlos Sanchez-Gutierrez, David Ludwig and the Minimum Security Composers Collective. The group received the first BMI/Boudleaux-Bryant Fund Commission and the 2004 NEA/CMA Special Commissioning Award, and has received grants from BMI, Meet the Composer, the Greenwall Foundation and Chamber Music America.

The ensemble recently signed a three-record agreement with Cedille Records. Repertoire for the first release, titled *thirteen ways* and released in April 2003, included works by Joan Tower, George Perle, David Schober and Thomas Albert. The second CD, titled *beginnings*, which includes Daniel Kellogg's "Divinum Mysterium" and George Crumb's "Vox Balaenae," was released in May 2004, and the third disc, entitled *fred* and featuring the music of Frederic Rzewski, will follow in Spring 2005. *Round Nut Tool*, eighth blackbird's debut CD, was self-released in 1999.

eighth blackbird is active in teaching young artists about contemporary music and has taught master classes and conducted outreach activities throughout the country, including the Aspen Music School System (grades K-12), the La Jolla Chamber Music Series, the Candlelight Concert Series and Hancher Auditorium at the University of Iowa.

The members of eighth blackbird hold degrees in music performance from Oberlin Conservatory, the University of Cincinnati College-Conservatory and Northwestern University. The group derives its name from the Wallace Stevens poem "Thirteen Ways of Looking at a Blackbird." The eighth stanza reads:

I know noble accents  
And lucid, inescapable rhythms;  
But I know, too,  
That the blackbird is involved  
In what I know

Visit the ensemble's official website at [www.eighthblackbird.com](http://www.eighthblackbird.com) for more information.

### **Lucy Shelton, soprano**

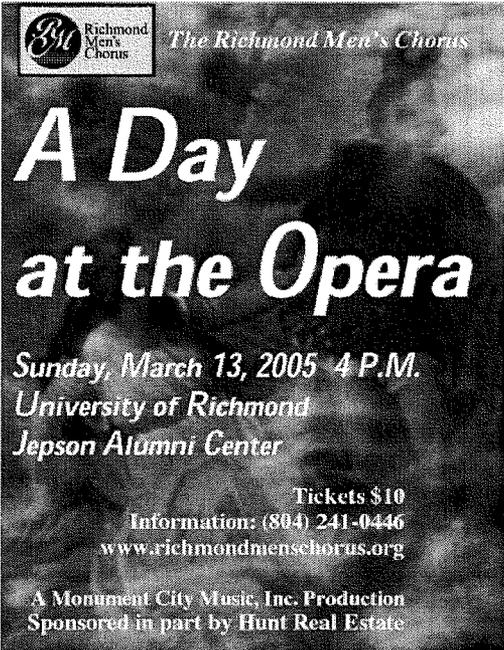
The "mellifluous, creamy phrasing and breathtaking virtuosity" (*London Sunday Times*) of soprano Lucy Shelton has captivated audiences worldwide. Ms. Shelton demonstrates her exceptional artistry in an extensive repertoire ranging from the Baroque to the Contemporary. She is one of the foremost interpreters of today's composers, having premiered over 100 works, more than 60 of which have been written for Ms. Shelton.

Some highlights of Ms. Shelton's career to date include staged performances of Schoenberg's *Pierrot Lunaire* ("Moondrunk") on tour with Da Camera of Houston and Berio's *Passaggio* with the Ensemble Intercontemporain in Paris; the role of Jenifer in Tippett's *The Midsummer Marriage* for Thames Television; her BBC Proms debut in Dallapiccola's *Il Prigioniero*; and her Vienna and Berlin debuts singing Kurtág's *The Sayings of Peter Bornemisza* with Andras Schiff. Her most recent solo recordings (on the KOCH International label) are "Songs of Love and Death" (Messiaen's *Harawi*) and "Of Challenge and Of Love" (the complete songs with piano of Stravinsky and Carter—including Carter's 1995 song cycle written for Ms. Shelton).

A native Californian, Ms. Shelton's musical training began early with the study of both piano and flute. After graduating from Pomona College she pursued singing at the New England Conservatory and at the Aspen Music School where she was privileged to work with Jan de Gaetani. Ms. Shelton is currently on the faculty of the Tanglewood Music Center.

### **Blair Thomas, *director***

Blair Thomas started Chicago's award winning Redmoon Theater in 1989 to create large-scale spectacles, pageants, parades and performances. He was the principal creator behind productions such as "You Hold My Heart Between Your Teeth", "Moby-Dick", "Frankenstein", "The Winter Pageant" and the "Halloween Parade" until he left in 1998. He served as co-curator of both of Chicago's International Puppet Festivals in 2000 and 2001 and became an associate adjunct professor at the School of the Art Institute of Chicago. In 2002 he started Blair Thomas & Co. to focus on touring work he calls chamber puppet theater. He has made an evening of solo shows from the writing of Federico Garcia Lorca and six installments of a collaboration entitled "108 Ways to Nirvana," among other works. He has toured to Boston, Pittsburgh, Baltimore, Tampa, Atlanta, Phoenix, Madison, Bloomington and Spain. He was the 2004 guest artist at the O'Neill Puppetry Conference in Connecticut, awarded an UNIMA citation for excellence in puppetry in 2001 and the Illinois Arts Council Fellowship for New Performance in 2002 and 2004.



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## Notes on the Program

### **Frederic Rzewski: *Les Moutons des Panurge* (1969)**

Born in Westfield, Mass. in 1938, Frederic Rzewski studied with Charles Mackey, Walter Piston, Roger Sessions, Milton Babbitt and Luigi Dallapiccola. His compositional career has had many phases; his music from the late sixties and early seventies (*Les Moutons de Panurge*, *Coming Together*) combine elements of written and improvised music, which in the seventies led to a greater experimentation with forms in which style and language are treated as structural elements (*The People United Will Never Be Defeated*). He briefly returned to experimental and graphic notation (*Le Silence des Espaces Infinis*, *The Price of Oil*), before exploring new uses of the twelve-tone technique in the '80s (*Antigone-Legend*, *The Persians*). His more recent work (*Whangdoodles*, *Sonata*) adopts a more free and spontaneous approach.

*Les Moutons des Panurge* (*the Sheep of Panurge*) takes its title from a story found in the fourth book of Francois Rabelais' *Gargantua and Pantagruel*. Pantagruel is traveling by ship with his rascally companion, Panurge, when their boat meets with a merchant ship carrying sheep. The merchants make fun of Panurge, though Panurge manages to buy one sheep from them after much haggling. Panurge then chucks the sheep into the sea, whereby all of the other sheep follow the first sheep overboard, one after another. To this day, the phrase "sheep of Panurge" implies a person who blindly follows the lead of another.

Rzewski's work, which is for any instruments, follows this concept in several ways. The work is constructed of only 65 notes, though Rzewski instructs the performer to follow an additive and then subtractive process. The performer plays the notes as follows: 1, 1-2, 1-2-3, 1-2-3-4 etc. until the 65th note is reached, at which point the process is reversed by subtracting notes from the beginning (1-2-3-4...65, 2-3-4...65, 3-4...65, etc), until the 65th note is reached and held. The pitfall is, of course, that no two people can stay together the whole time, and Rzewski indicates that when a performer gets off from the others, they stay off and continue to follow the rules. We have found that in rehearsing this work, as soon as one person gets off, other people gradually begin to get off as well, and so each player is obliged to follow the lead of the person who originally got lost.

—Nicholas Photinos

### **Renée Favand: *Here Comes the Moon* (2005)**

For composer Renée Favand, the voice is a primary expressive medium in both writing and performing. The *New York Concert Review* writes, "Ms. Favand writes extremely well for the voice and exploits the strengths of the singer...full of invention, showing her highly developed structural skills." Recent engagements include the American Opera Projects 2004 Composers and the Voice Workshop, a 2005 commission from baritone Robert Gardner, a 2005 CD release on the Koch label of a work commissioned by Sequitur, and in 2006 a

new collaboration with the Trip Dance Theater. Ms. Favand's music has been performed on the Sequitur, Prism Quartet, Pro Musicis, Outer Voices and the American Living Room Series in New York City; at Weill Hall at Carnegie Hall and Pickman Concert Hall in Boston; and broadcast live on WGBH Boston. She has collaborated with the Group Motion Dance Company in Philadelphia and Trip Dance Theatre in Los Angeles, as well as with video artist Christine Sciuili. Ms. Favand's honors include a grant from the American Music Center, a Charles Ives Scholarship from the American Academy of Arts and Letters and the Bearnis Prize from Columbia University. She earned her composition degrees from the Eastman and Yale Schools of Music, and currently lives in New York City. About her work, Ms. Favand writes:

*Here comes the moon*, a cycle of three songs for soprano and marimba, is based on poems by Denise Levertov, whose clear and lyrical voice is continually appealing to me. *Taking Charge*, the first song, is a haiku-like text introducing the arrival of the moon into the sun-flushed sky as a metaphor for transformative action. The music setting, like haiku, is a simple arc-shaped phrase that signals first the moon's dramatic ascent, then the gradual fading of the sunset. In the second song, *Wanting the Moon*, the moon shifts into different forms before being revealed as the jester who plays his sorrowful tune while seemingly indifferent to the rushing river. This poetic idea translates for me musically into a loose variation form in which motivic material continually appears in different "guises", various harmonic, melodic and textural contexts. The last song, *On the Eve*, beautifully captures a still moment of intimacy between two people. To signal suspended time, a major second ostinato sounds throughout with subtle harmonic changes inspired by the description of delicate changes of light and intensity that are revealed in a moment of true presence. I am honored to write this work for Matthew and Lucy, two artists whom I admire immensely.

—Renée Favand

### **Derek Bermel: *Tied Shifts* (2004)**

*Written for eighth blackbird with funds from the Oscar M. Ruebhausen Commission of The Greenwall Foundation*

Derek Bermel has been widely hailed as clarinetist, composer and jazz and rock musician. He has been featured at numerous international music festivals and his commissions have included those from the National, Saint Louis, Albany and New Jersey Symphonies, Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center, American Composers Orchestra, De Ereprijs (Netherlands), Birmingham Royal Ballet, Pittsburgh New Music Ensemble, New York International Fringe Festival and cellist Fred Sherry. He has also received many of today's most important awards, including the Rome Prize, Guggenheim and Fulbright Fellowships and residencies at the Lincoln Center Directors Lab, Tanglewood, Banff and Yaddo. As clarinetist, he has premiered dozens of new works, including his clarinet concerto, "Voices," which created a sensation when it was premiered at Carnegie Hall and performed with the Los Angeles Philharmonic, BBC Symphony and Boston Modern Orchestra Project. His first recording, a disc of his chamber

music, was recently released. Derek Bermel is the founding clarinetist of Music from Copland House and co-founder, music director and co-artistic director of the Dutch-American interdisciplinary ensemble TONK. About *Tied Shifts*, the composer writes:

In August of 2001 I traveled to Plovdiv, Bulgaria to spend a month working with the great Bulgarian folk clarinetist Nikola Iliev. Fascinated by the melodies in odd meters executed at lightning speeds, I desired to gain firsthand knowledge of the Thracian folk style by learning to play the songs from a master musician. In transcribing melodies with compound meters—5/8, 7/8, 9/8 (sometimes), 11/8, 13/8, 15/8 and combinations thereof—I was particularly struck by the practice of tying melodic notes over a barline, resulting in an obscuring of the meter. This process made it virtually impossible to guess the meter of a song simply by listening, as downbeats could conceivably be inaudible. Thus, though implied and felt, the odd metrics of a song could remain unstressed; the knowledge of the “base” meter would be for players and familiar listeners alone. To make matters even more confusing to an uninitiated ear, tied notes were often decorated with mordents—I use the term generally designated for inflection similar to the baroque ornamentation—leaving the impression that the meter was in a state of constant flux, shifting with each passing measure. These impressions are those of a Western musician, and they became the points of departure for this piece. I attempted to fashion philosophical and physiological implications of the tied shifts into a work that structurally owes more to Western than to Thracian music.

Mordents occupy a central place in this piece, on both local and larger formal levels. The inflections generate their own material and melodies are spawned from the contour of the rising mordent itself. The shape of all the melodic material stems from an obsessively repetitive cell that rises to a mordent-inflected appoggiatura, then inches up farther, always clinging to its origin. I imagined this tension—manifest throughout the work—as a physical being determined to stretch itself, to explore the outer edges of its horizon, but continually finding itself snapped back, as if tethered by an invisible rubber band its place of origin.

Within the octatonic harmonic language of the first movement, I emphasize certain chords, notably a particular inversion of the “sharp 9th” chord that forms the harmonic underpinning for several of my earlier pieces and that—though also derived from the same scale—would not be found in Bulgarian music. The second movement opens in a different harmonic world—a diatonic hymn, derived from the opening melodic material. As the hymn is overlaid with a variation of the original octatonic melody, the two harmonic fields collide and the mordents and inflections often assume the quality of “blue” notes. A second, mostly octatonic, hymn appears, this time in tight harmonic clusters typical of folksong settings rendered by Bulgarian womens’ choirs.

During the writing process of *Tied Shifts*, I had considerable trouble deciding how to notate the agogic accents so that Western players would be able to negotiate the difficult rhythmic displacements most effectively. For their

patience in considering several versions of the notation, I acknowledge the wonderfully competent and thorough musicians in eighth blackbird, for whom this piece was commissioned. Special thanks to Lisa Kaplan who initiated the collaboration, to the Oscar M. Ruebhausen Commission from the Greenwall Foundation, Yaddo and to Barbara Eliason, Daniel Nass and Maggie Heskin, who provided invaluable assistance along the way.

—Derek Bermel

### **Arnold Schoenberg: *Pierrot Lunaire* (1912)**

Arnold Schoenberg (1874-1951), is considered one of the most significant composers of the 20th century. He taught himself composition, with help in counterpoint from the Austrian composer Alexander Zemlinsky, and in 1899 produced his first major work, the tone poem *Verklärte Nacht* (*Transfigured Night*) for string sextet. In this and other early works, the influences of Brahms, Mahler and others can be seen, though as his compositional style developed it became more concise and contrapuntally intricate. At the same time, Schoenberg's chromaticism intensified to the point that any strong tonal focus disappeared, which later led to his abandonment of conventional tonal harmony in favor of the twelve-tone and later the serial methods of composition, the styles with which his music is most often associated. Schoenberg held posts at the Academy of Arts in Berlin and, after fleeing Nazi Germany in 1933 and relocating to the United States in 1934, in Boston and at the University of California at Los Angeles, where he taught from 1936 to 1941. About *Pierrot Lunaire*, H. V. Doyle, Jr. remarks:

Arnold Schoenberg was attracted to the expressionist theatre of pre-World War I Vienna and Berlin, including a sort of high-class cabaret that used melodrama, words spoken to a musical accompaniment. The actress-singer Albertine Zehme, who sometimes declaimed poetry to the music of Chopin, was the artist for whom Schoenberg composed *Pierrot Lunaire*. She had been singing a song cycle by the now-forgotten Otto Wrieslander to poems by that name of the Belgian Albert Giraud, in German translation by Otto Erich Hartleben, but asked Schoenberg for a cycle of recitations with music for her evening cabaret performances. The composer saw this as a marvelous idea and selected 21 of the 50 poems, dividing them into three parts, each with a different tone. In Part I, Pierrot, under the influence of the moon, fantasizes on love, sex and religion. In Part II, we (and Pierrot) are in a nightmare underworld of violence, crime and blasphemy. Part III finds Pierrot heading home to Bergamo, with his past haunting him.

The poems of Giraud (1860-1929) are cast in strict rondel form, and Hartleben keeps the form, if not the content, in his German versions. We have nothing quite like this in English, so strict adherence to the rondel form could sound stilted to us. Yet Schoenberg's music, which largely ignores the structure of the poems, helps prevent this from happening. He uses a variety of older forms, including canon and fugue, passacaglia and free counterpoint. He also varies the instrumentation so that no two poems sound alike. The entire en-

semble plays only in the last poem. And Schoenberg employs, not the 19th century spoken melodrama (like Richard Strauss' setting of Lord Tennyson's *Enoch Arden*), but a system of precise speech-rhythms with the approximate pitch at which the "reciter" should speak each syllable indicated in musical notation. This is called *sprechgesang*, "speechsong," and the "reciter" is not referred to by conventional vocal category, but as *sprechstimme*, "speaking voice," Schoenberg gave specific instructions that the "reciter" not use either conventional singing or conventional speech. The pitch was to be sounded, but not held, the "reciter" immediately moving up or down to the next pitch.

There is a fascinating variety of effects to be enjoyed in this work. One thing not normally associated with Schoenberg—humor—is also present, in somewhat sardonic form. Connoisseurs of viola jokes will appreciate No. 19, *Serenade*, in which Pierrot is pictured playing a viola with a huge bow. Guess which instrument does not play in No. 19. And then listen to which instrument tries to sound like a viola, and plays *arco* where the poem calls for *pizzicato*. A sort of double viola joke! The texts themselves, of course, provide much that is grotesque, fantastic, puzzling and thought provoking. No. 12, *Galgenlied*, is all of these. Here Giraud's original French provides the key to the meaning, in the expression *etranglante caresse*, usually rendered "embrace." "Stranglehold" would be closer, and it becomes clear that the noose itself is the "final par-amour."

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## Text & Translations

Renée Favand: *Here Comes the Moon* (2005)

### *Taking Charge*

Here comes the moon,  
bright rim  
slicing importantly  
through windrows of  
grey thistledown cloud just losing  
their sundown flush.

### *Wanting The Moon*

Not the moon. A flower  
on the other side of the water.

The water sweeps past in flood,  
dragging a whole tree by the hair,

a barn, a bridge. The flower  
sings on the far bank.

Not a flower, a bird calling  
hidden among the darkest trees, music

over the water, making a silence  
out of the brown folds of the river's cloak.

The moon. No, a young man walking  
under the trees. There are lanterns

among the leaves.  
Tender, wise, merry,

his face is awake with its own light,  
I see it across the water as if close up.

A jester. The music rings from his bells,  
gravely, a tune of sorrow,  
I dance to it on my riverbank.

### *On the Eve*

The moon was white  
in the stillness. Daylight  
changed without moving,  
a hint of sundown  
stained the sky. We walked  
the short grass,  
the dry ground of the hill,  
beholding  
the tinted west. We talked  
of change in our lives. The moon  
tuned its whiteness a tone higher.

*Taking Charge*, *Wanting the Moon* and *On the Eve* By Denise Levertov, from  
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## PIERROT LUNAIRE – ACT ONE

### 1. MOONDRUNK

The wine we drink with our eyes  
Pours in green waves from the moon,  
Submerging us all too soon,  
Erasing horizons and skies.

Sweet lusts that we should despise  
Swim free in that lagoon:  
The wine we drink with our eyes  
Pours in green waves from the moon.

The poet, thrilled with the lies  
Absinthe creates, beguiled,  
Breathes the strange stuff, goes wild,  
Head in the clouds and skies—  
The wine we drink with our eyes.

### 2. COLOMBINE

Ghostly flowers of moonshine,  
Roses of pure white light  
That bloom on summer nights,  
If just one could be mine!

On Lethe's banks my pain  
Makes verses I recite  
To ghostly flowers of moonshine,  
Roses of pure white light.

My sorrows would decline  
My soul would know delight  
If fate gave me the right  
To crown you with this sign:  
A ghostly flower of moonshine.

### 3. THE DANDY

The moon sends a wild ray  
That gleams among the flasks  
Next to the mirror that masks  
Bergamo's silent dandy.

The brassy fountain's spray  
Laughs to perform its tasks;  
The moon sends a wild ray  
That gleams among the flasks.

His face is waxy candy;  
Does it need red, he asks,  
Or green, from Asian casks?  
His choice, though both are handy:  
The moonlight's wild ray!

### 4. A PALLID LAUNDRESS

She is a pallid laundress  
Washing pale clothes all night  
Bare arms in silver light  
Next to the stream's caress.

The winds, to show delight,  
The wrinkled waters bless,  
As she, a pallid laundress,  
Washes pale clothes all night.

Sweet maid, she knots her dress  
High up around her thighs,  
The branches spill with light,  
Her linens bleach, and yes,  
She is a pallid laundress.

## 5. CHOPIN WALTZ

It's blood coughed up, still warm  
From a consumptive's lung,  
This music, faintly sung,  
And death provides its charm.

The red brings thoughts of harm,  
Cold dreams of dying young:  
It's blood coughed up, still warm  
From a consumptive's lung.

A sweet, disturbing theme,  
A waltz whose rhythms cling,  
And haunt me with a song  
That leaves me quite disarmed—  
It's blood coughed up, still warm.

## 6. MADONNA

Oh Mother of Sorrows, blessed,  
Come to my poem's shrine!  
What furious sword's design  
Has wounded your old breasts?

Those open sores, undressed,  
Are eyes that gaze in mine:  
Mother of Sorrows, blessed,  
Come to my poem's shrine!

Your son's corpse, turning green,  
You hold in your thin hands,  
And show him to mankind,  
Which looks away and jests,  
Oh Mother of Sorrows, blessed!

## 7. SICK MOON

Oh moon, sick patient, lying  
At rest on your black pillow,  
Your face all flushed and hollow  
Charms me like music, dying.

Mad love, so terrifying  
Has left you drained and sallow,  
Oh moon, sick patient, lying  
At rest on your black pillow.

Some lovers who go sighing  
May find your moonlight mellow,  
Easy to love and follow,  
And not discern your dying,  
Oh moon, sick patient, lying.

## ACT TWO

### 8. NIGHT

Evil black moths, in swarms  
Rise up to blot out the sunlight  
While the horizon turns, each night,  
To an inky book of charms.

Incense from out of sight  
Our memory disarms,  
Evil black moths, in swarms  
Come to blot out sunlight.

Invisible winged forms,  
Strange monsters bent on harm,  
Attack—it is their right  
To drink our blood all night:  
Evil black moths, in swarms.

### 9. SUPPLICATION

Pierrot, where is my laughter?  
I have forgotten how!  
I've lost my brightness now.  
Dissolved, forever after!

I've nailed it to my masthead,  
This black flag waves there now;  
Pierrot, where is my laughter?  
I have forgotten how!

Oh help me and allow,  
Here and forever after,  
As I grow daft and dafter,  
(You with your icy brow)  
Pierrot, some saving laughter!

### 10. THEFT

Rubies, red and glowing,  
Crusted with antique doom  
Sleep in the chambered gloom  
Among the dead, unknowing.

Pierrot, cups overflowing  
Decides he can exhume  
Rubies red and glowing,  
Crusted with antique doom.

His terror now is showing:  
His friends stare round the room  
They see the jewels loom  
Like eyes of ghosts, displaying  
Rubies red and glowing

### 11. RED MASS

A savage Eucharist  
Among the brilliant gold:  
The candles flicker cold;  
Pierrot acts as the priest.

His hand rips up his vestments  
And all the Grace they hold:  
A savage Eucharist  
Among the brilliant gold.

And then, to earn their trust,  
He turns to show the crowd  
The thing his fingers hold:  
His bleeding heart, as Host,  
A savage Eucharist.

## 12. GALLOWS SONG

That skinny whore  
With the long, long neck  
Will be his wreck,  
His last amour.

In his brain, there,  
A nail is stuck—  
That skinny whore  
With the long, long neck.

She know the score!  
He can't respect  
Her hug. His neck?  
She'll make him sore,  
That skinny whore.

## 13. THE BEHEADING

The moon, a gleaming scimitar  
Upon a black silk cushion,  
Shines in a deadly fashion,  
This night without a star.

Pierrot, who walks in fear,  
Shrinks from its admonition,  
The moon, a gleaming scimitar  
Upon a black silk cushion.

He feels it coming near,  
And faints—imagination  
Has staged his execution.  
His head will not roll far.  
A gleaming scimitar.

## 14. CROSSES

Poems are holy crosses  
Where poets bleed and die.  
Around them vultures fly  
Like swarming fears and losses.

Sharp swords have made caresses,  
They redden hip and thigh.  
Poems are holy crosses  
Where poets bleed and die.

Far from the noisy masses,  
They droop their heads and sigh,  
Crowned by their matted tresses,  
Under a twilight sky.  
Poems are holy crosses!

## ACT THREE

### 15. NOSTALGIA

Like a gentle crystal sigh  
From Italy's old pantomime,  
It's clear that, over time,  
Pierrot has lost his energy.

It echoes as a long goodbye  
Through heart and soul, a muffled rhyme,  
Or like a gentle crystal sigh  
From Italy's old pantomime.

But this sad moon he will defy!  
The moon will help him climb.  
His longing grows sublime,  
And rises to the sky  
Like a gentle crystal sigh!

### 16. CRUELTY

Into Cassander's shiny skull,  
(Who cries out in distress),  
With hypocritical tenderness  
Pierrot inserts a chisel.

He stuffs a little parcel  
Of fine tobacco, with finesse,  
Into Cassander's shiny skull,  
(Who cries out in distress).

He twists a tube of rosewood  
Into the black of the head, and yes,  
He lights it, puffs in bliss.  
Clouds of tobacco roll  
From Cassander's empty skull.

### 17. PARODY

Knitting needles shining  
In her old gray hair  
She sits and murmurs there,  
The old duenna, pining;

For Pierrot she is whining!  
She says a little prayer,  
Knitting needles shining  
In her old gray hair.

And then, as she's reclining,  
The breeze makes her aware:  
The moon is mocking her,  
Its beams of light outlining  
Knitting needles shining.

### 18. THE MOONBEAM

There's a little fleck of moonlight  
On the back of his black coat,  
As through warm evening light  
Pierrot strolls out tonight.

His get-up isn't right—  
And something makes him note  
The little fleck of moonlight  
On the back of his black coat.

He thinks it's just a spot,  
He'll scrub it out of sight.  
But he rubs hard all night  
And can't erase that mote,  
That little fleck of moonlight.

## 19. SERENADE

With his great viola bow  
Pierrot scrapes out a tune;  
He's a stork beneath the moon  
On one leg, pizzicato.

Cassander, angry at this show,  
Scolds the poor nocturnal loon  
As with his great viola bow  
Pierrot scrapes out a tune.

Pierre's annoyed by this, and so  
He drops the fiddle and quite soon  
Grabs him firmly, that poltroon,  
And fiddles *him*, a quid pro quo,  
With his great viola bow.

## 20. GOING HOME

A moonbeam is his oar,  
His boat's a water lily.  
He's sailing homeward, truly,  
To where he lived before.

The river and its shore  
Sing as he sails by slowly:  
A moonbeam is his oar,  
His boat's a water lily.

To Bergamo, his home of yore,  
Pierrot returns; dawn's coming palely,  
The green horizon's burning slyly,  
Day is coming, as before.  
And the moonbeam is his oar.

## 21. THE OLD PERFUMES

Oh, fairy-tale perfumes,  
You make my senses drunk!  
A host of jokes and pranks  
Flit through the thinning gloom.

Fulfilled desire blooms  
And I, once sad, give thanks.  
Oh fairy-tale perfumes  
Who make my senses drunk!

Spleen's charms have all gone blank  
And through my window I resume  
My love for worlds that loom  
In blissful distances. Great thanks,  
Oh fairy-tale perfume!