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An Evening of the Romantics

Carol Neblett

Chapman University

Grace Fong

Chapman University

Mary Palchak

Chapman University

Jacob Braun

Chapman University

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CHAPMAN UNIVERSITY

Conservatory of Music

presents

An Evening of the Romantics

Carol Neblett, soprano

Grace Fong, piano

Mary Palchak, flute

Jacob Braun, cello

March 26, 2012 ■ 8:00 P.M.

Salmon Recital Hall

Program

Il Tramonto – (the Sunset)

Carol Neblett, soprano
Grace Fong, piano

Ottorino Respighi
(1879-1963)

Vocalise

Mary Palchak, flute
Grace Fong, piano

S. Rachmaninoff
(1873-1943)

Sonata for Cello and Piano, op. 19

- 3 Lento – Allegro moderato
- 4 Allegro scherzando
- 5 Andante
- 6 Allegro mosso

Jacob Braun, cello
Grace Fong, piano

S. Rachmaninoff
(1873-1943)

Chansons madécasses op. 78

- 7 I. Nahandove
- 8 II. Aoua!
- 9 III. Il est doux . . .

Carol Neblett, soprano
Grace Fong, piano
Jacob Braun, cello
Mary Palchak, flute

Maurice Ravel
(1875-1937)

Artists

Jacob Braun enjoys a multi-faceted career as a soloist, chamber musician and teacher. He has earned praise as one of the most versatile and accomplished cellists of his generation, a cellist with "a distinctly warm . . . and gorgeous dark tone" (The St. Louis Dispatch).

Mr. Braun joined the Penderecki String Quartet in the fall of 2009 and is Professor/Artist in Residence at Wilfrid Laurier University in Waterloo, Canada. With this ensemble, he has appeared worldwide, having recently completed auspiciously recognized tours of China, Brazil, Argentina, Mexico and Spain.

As a recitalist, Mr. Braun has appeared live on BBC Radio 3 in London, WFMT in Chicago and CBC Radio Canada. Mr. Braun has performed with many leading artists including Grace Fong, Shmuel Ashkenasi, Cho-Liang Lin, Ida Kavafian, David Finckel and members of the Brentano, Calder, Juilliard, Miami, Shanghai and Tokyo String Quartet.

Jacob was a winner of the 2003 Naumburg Chamber Music Award with the Biava Quartet. He has performed numerous times in Lincoln Center, Wigmore Hall and Jordan Hall and frequently appears as a guest artist for numerous festivals, including the 2011 Amsterdam Cello Congress, String Academy at Indiana University and the Innsbrook Institute.

Mr. Braun received his degrees from the Cleveland Institute of Music (B.M. 02), the New England Conservatory (M.M. 04) and Yale University (A.D. 06), studying with Richard Aaron, Paul Katz, Aldo Parisot, and Clive Greensmith. While studying at Yale University, Mr. Braun served as a teaching assistant to the Tokyo String Quartet and was Paul Katz's teaching assistant at NEC. Mr. Braun plays on an Antonius Mariani cello made circa 1619.

Praised as "positively magical," an artist of "rare eloquence and grace," American pianist **Grace Fong** enjoys a career as an international concerto soloist, recitalist, chamber musician and teacher. She has gained critical acclaim in the United States, Canada, Europe, and Asia, making appearances at major venues around the world, including Carnegie Hall, Lincoln Center, Disney Hall, the Kennedy Center, Phillips Collection, Hollywood Bowl, Great Hall in Leeds, UK, Severance Hall in Cleveland, Ohio, the Liszt Academy in Budapest, Konzerthaus Dortmund, Germany, among others. Radio/television broadcasts have included British Broadcasting Company, WCLV-FM 104.9, KUSC 91.5 FM in Los Angeles, the "Emerging Young Artists" series in New York, and "Performance Today" on National Public Radio.

Dr. Fong is a prizewinner of numerous international competitions, including the prestigious Leeds International Piano Competition in the United Kingdom and the 2009 American Pianists Association Classical Fellowship Award, among others. She is also a recipient of the Presidential Scholar in the Arts Award, where she was presented a medallion by former President Clinton at the White House. An avid educator, Dr. Fong appears frequently as a guest artist and teacher at festivals including the 2012 Schlern International Festival

(Italy), Innsbrook Institute, the New Hampshire Music Festival, the Salt Spring Piano Festival, the Montecito Summer Festival, and the Sitka Chamber Music Festival.

Dr. Fong completed her undergraduate studies with a double major and minor at the University of Southern California; she was awarded the prestigious Renaissance Scholar Prize, and was named "The USC Thornton School of Music Keyboard Department's - Most Outstanding Student - B.M." She completed her Masters and Doctoral Studies at the Cleveland Institute of Music. Former teachers include Sergei Babayan, John Perry, Louise Lepley, Paulina Drake, and Norberto Cappone. Dr. Fong is the Director of Keyboard Studies at Chapman University, Conservatory of Music.

Mary Palchak is active as a flutist and teacher in Southern California. She has played with the Pasadena, Pacific and Long Beach Symphonies, as well as with Long Beach Opera, numerous touring ballet productions at the Dorothy Chandler Pavilion and OCPAC, and throughout the United States for the Yamaha Music Education program. As artistic director of the California Concert Artists she organized and performed concerts with many of Southern California's most noted musicians, premiering new works and reviving old repertoire. Her CD *Flute Music by French Composers*, produced in collaboration with Louis Moyes, received critical acclaim in Fanfare Magazine and is a best-selling classical CD world-wide. Ms. Palchak is proud of her association with the Chapman University College of Performing Arts, and takes great pleasure in helping her students develop their talent and artistry.

One of America's greatest and most acclaimed sopranos, **Carol Neblett's** career has spanned over forty years, performing opera's most coveted roles in the world's greatest opera houses, including the Metropolitan Opera, La Scala, Covent Garden, San Francisco Opera, Salzburg, Hamburg and Chicago Lyric Opera.

Ms. Neblett began her career in 1964, at the age of eighteen, as a soloist with the Roger Wagner Chorale, making her professional debut at Carnegie Hall in Handel's Oratorio Esther. That same year, Ms. Neblett also appeared as the Angel in Respighi's Laud to the Nativity at the Los Angeles Music Center. From 1965 to 1969, under the guidance of impresario Sol Hurok, Ms. Neblett toured the world performing recitals, oratorio and symphonic concerts.

Ms. Neblett made her operatic debut in 1969 with the New York City Opera as Musetta, in La Boheme. Amidst huge acclaim, she performed over twenty-five leading roles with the company over the next five years. Critical triumphs included the dual roles of Margherita and Helen of Troy in Boito's Mefistofele. Her performance of Korngold's Die Tote Stadt was so successful that it was subsequently recorded with the renowned Erich Leinsdorf conducting, and won a number of coveted awards, including a Grammy in 1975.

Ms. Neblett's signature roles include Puccini's Tosca as well as Minnie in The Girl of the Golden West. In 1976 she made her debut at the Lyric Opera of Chicago as Tosca with Luciano Pavarotti, and has sung this role more than 400 times. Ms. Neblett was invited to sing Minnie with Placido Domingo for Queen Elizabeth's 25th Jubilee Celebration at Covent Garden, which was filmed live as well as recorded. Ms. Neblett made her Metropolitan Opera debut in 1979 as Senta in Jen-Pierre Ponelle's production of Der Fliegende Holländer, conducted by James Levine. Throughout her career, Ms. Neblett sang regularly with the Met in productions such as Tosca, Don Giovanni, Manon Lescaut, Un Ballo in Maschera, Falstaff, and La Fanciulla del West. In the 1993-94 opera season, she celebrated her 25th operatic anniversary by reviving her role as Musetta.

Throughout the world's major opera houses, Ms. Neblett has sung more than eighty-five leading roles and more than 100 oratorio and symphonic works. Her recordings include Musetta in La Boheme for Angel/EMI, James Levine conducting; Minnie in La Fanciulla del West with Placido Domingo and Sherrill Milnes, Zubin Mehta conducting (DG); Marietta in Korngold's Die Tote Stadt, Erich Leinsdorf conducting (RCA); Mahler's Symphony No. 2 with Claudio Abbado and the Chicago Symphony Orchestra; and a special recording with Roger Wagner on Angel/EMI entitled Magnificat. In celebration of the 100th anniversary of the Chicago Symphony Orchestra, a compact disc was issued of Ms. Neblett singing Soprano No. 1 in Mahler's Symphony No. 8, James Levine conducting. She is featured in "James Levine's 25th Anniversary" with the Metropolitan Opera, singing the role of Alice Ford in Falstaff with Giuseppe Taddei; an international television broadcast of Beethoven's Ninth Symphony with Maestro Carlo Maria Giulini; television broadcast from the Kennedy Center, A Tribute to George London, subsequently released on RCA.

Ms. Neblett is currently on the vocal staff as Artist-in-Residence at Chapman University. She conducts master classes for young artist programs worldwide, concentrating on role preparation for the professional singer, as well as maintaining a private studio in the Los Angeles area. Additionally, May 3rd through June 9th, Ms. Neblett will sing Old Heidi Schiller in Follies and the Ahmanson Theater.

Program Notes

Il Tramonto

OTTORINO RESPIGHI

Born July 9, 1879, Bologna

Died April 18, 1936, Rome

In 1816 the 24-year-old Percy Bysshe Shelley married 19-year-old Mary Wollstonecroft, who would write *Frankenstein* two years later. That spring, Shelley wrote a poem titled *The Sunset*, which touches many themes central to the romantic imagination: the mingling of love and death, the power of grief, the longing for rest, and the effect of time. Though parts of the poem had appeared before Shelley's drowning in 1822, the complete poem was not published until his widow gathered a number of works as his *Posthumous Poems* in 1824.

Exactly a century after *The Sunset* was written, it attracted the attention of Ottorino Respighi, who knew it – in an Italian translation by R. Ascoli – as *Il Tramonto*. At this time Respighi was still virtually unknown as a composer. In 1913, at the age of 34, he had become a professor of composition at Saint Cecelia's in Rome, and over the next few years he composed the work that would bring him fame, *The Fountains of Rome*. At the same time he was writing *Fountains*, Respighi made a setting of *Il Tramonto* for the unusual ensemble of soprano and string quartet, and both *The Fountains of Rome* and *Il Tramonto* were first heard in February 1918.

Those who know Respighi only as the composer of the splashy Roman trilogy will be in for a surprise with *Il Tramonto*, for here the Italian master of orchestration writes with subtlety and refinement for this much more restrained palette. Respighi subtitles this work "poemetto lirico," and he is quite sensitive to Shelley's text: the soprano sings virtually throughout, with only the briefest instrumental interludes, and in fact the entire work is shaped by the evolving moods of Shelley's poem. Just as the events of the poem change sharply, moving from the passion of the lovers to the aging woman's plea for release, so Respighi shifts tempo and harmony constantly. The mood remains generally restrained: only occasionally does the dynamic rise above *mezzo forte*, and the climax – on the word "Peace" – is marked triple *piano* before *Il Tramonto* fades into silence on a postlude that Respighi marks *dolcissimo*.

~Notes by Eric Bromberger

Sergei Rachmaninoff (1873-1943) premiered his own piano and cello sonata, often referred to as his fifth piano concerto because of its uncommonly difficult piano part. He dedicated it to Anatoliy Brandukov, the Russian cellist who worked closely with Rachmaninoff and premiered works by Pyotr Tchaikovsky and Anton Rubenstein as well. The sonata stretches the technical demands of the pianist and requires only a virtuoso to play the part. Written in four movements, Rachmaninoff completed and performed the work in 1901, but it was overshadowed by another one of his compositions, his Piano Concerto No. 2, which premiered just 2 months before.

Rachmaninoff was one of the greatest concert pianists of his time. His extremely large hands, combined with an impeccable technique and warm melodic phrasing made his performances stand alone among the top echelon of the greatest pianists. Even today, many pianists are quite envious of the size of his hands, as many of his chords require almost impossible stretches. Besides the piano, Rachmaninoff had an affinity for the cello and had written for the piano and cello combination in his Romance in f minor and Two pieces for Cello and Piano, Opus 2. He preferred the cello to the violin because it more closely resembled the human voice, therefore reflecting the inner soul of the Russian voice. The piano and cello sonata is as rich in texture and lyricism as any that has ever been written for the genre. Both the piano and cello are used as expressively as possible; there seems to be no limits to the intensity of emotion.

The piano and cello sonata was written at a point during which Rachmaninoff was in the midst of a comeback. Several years earlier, he was sent into a deep depression as a result of harsh critics and attacks on his music and was so distraught he gave up composing. He was only brought back with the help of Dr. Nikolay Dahl, who used hypnosis on his talented patient. Rachmaninoff gained his confidence back and wrote the 2nd piano concerto and just 2 months later, the piano and cello sonata. Of his very small chamber music output, this was to be his final chamber music composition. Rachmaninoff was only 28 at the time.

It had become increasingly common in the romantic era, since the expansion of the sonata form by Beethoven, to shift the weight of the movements towards the last movement of a four-movement composition, whereas in the classical era, the first movement was the heavier, more important movement. In the piano and cello sonata, Rachmaninoff does this masterfully. The yearning, inward and mysterious 1st movement g minor melody leaves us wanting more. The rhapsodic, quick paced and dramatic 2nd movement keeps the tension in the air. The Andante is often played alone as it is considered one of the most gorgeous single movements written for any combination. This is the heart and soul of this work, a timeless tender and loving melody. Rachmaninoff comes full circle in the Finale with a victorious and exciting G Major conclusion.

~Notes by Jacob Braun

Chansons Madécasses

MAURICE RAVEL

Born March 7, 1875, Ciboure, Basses-Pyrénées

Died December 28, 1937, Paris

The *Chansons Madécasses* come from later in Ravel's life, and they offer some of his most advanced music. In 1925 Ravel received a commission from the American patron of arts Elizabeth Sprague Coolidge for a set of songs, and she made an unusual request: Ravel was free to choose the texts, but she asked that they be accompanied, if possible, by an ensemble of flute, cello, and piano. Ravel-who had just completed *Tzigane* and his orchestration of Musorgsky's *Pictures at an Exhibition*-accepted that condition, and then he in turn made a surprising choice of texts.

The title Chansons Madécasses means "Songs of Madagascar" or "Madagascan Songs." For these songs, Ravel set three poems that Évariste Parry claimed to have translated from the original in 1787 under the title *Chansons madécasses, traduites en français, suivies de poésies fugitives*. Scholars have doubted the authenticity of these "fugitive poems," suggesting that rather than translating native poetry, Parry (1753-1814) wrote them himself while living in India and based their style on poems from Madagascar. Whatever their origin, these songs and their shocking texts caused a sensation at their first performance on June 13, 1926 in Paris: the poems are surprising in their explicit sexuality and in their political sentiments, and some members of the audience walked out of that first performance. The almost visceral appeal of these songs was underlined by the lithographs that appeared in the first edition of the songs: dark, expressionistic, and violent, these crude woodcuts captured the spirit of the "native" songs perfectly.

Some observers have detected an unexpected influence on these songs: Arnold Schoenberg. The use of a solo singer and small instrumental ensemble recalls Schoenberg's *Pierrot Lunaire* of 1912, and Ravel freely admitted being aware of Schoenberg when he wrote these songs: "I am quite conscious of the fact that my *Pierrot Lunaire* are in no way Schoenbergian, but I do not know whether I ever should have been able to write them had Schoenberg never written."

The first song, *Nahandove*, is explicitly erotic. "Nahandove" is the name of the poet's lover, and both poet and composer clearly like that name, lingering over it as much as they can. The poet waits for his lover in the moonlight. She arrives, they make love, then collapse together in the warm air; she leaves, and he is left alone, caught in the same longing he felt at the beginning.

If the first song was soft and erotic, the second song is violent and political. It opens with the singer's shouted "Aoua!" and then she warns "Méfiez-vous des blancs": beware of the white men who came making fine promises but who built forts and tried to subjugate the

people. The piano plays a grim ostinato that drives the song to its climax when the natives revolt and drive out the white man; at this climax, the flute shouts out trumpet-like fanfares, but the song fades away on a final warning about the white man. France was fighting a colonial war in Morocco when this song was première in Paris, and several members of the audience rose and walked out ostentatiously, proclaiming that they would not listen to such subversive music while their nation was at war.

Il est doux . . . is a song of complete ease and languor: the poet lies in the moonlight as women move around him, anxious to serve. This atmosphere is captured by the free flute solos and cello in harmonics, as the poet celebrates the "attitudes of pleasure" around him. The final line is all the more effective for being unaccompanied.

~Notes by Eric Bromberger

Text and Translations

The Sunset

There late was One within whose subtle being,
As light and wind within some delicate cloud
That fades amid the blue noon's burning sky,
Genius and death contended. None may know
The sweetness of the joy which made his breath
Fail, like the trances of the summer air,
When, with the lady of his love, who then
First knew the unreserve of mingled being,
He walked along the pathway of a field
Which to the east a hoar wood shadowed o'er,
But to the west was open to the sky.
There now the sun had sunk, but lines of gold
Hung on the ashen clouds, and on the points
Of the far level grass and nodding flowers
And the old dandelion's hoary beard,
And, mingled with the shades of twilight, lay
On the brown massy woods - and in the east
The broad and burning moon lingeringly rose
Between the black trunks of the crowded trees,
While the faint stars were gathering overhead.
"Is it not strange, Isabel," said the youth,
"I never saw the sun? We will walk here
To-morrow; thou shalt look on it with me."

Il Tramonto

Già v'ebbe un uomo, nel cui tenue spirto
(qual luce e vento in delicata nube
che ardente ciel di mezzo-giorno stempri)
la morte e il genio contendeano. Oh! quanta
tenera gioia,
che gli fè il respiro venir meno
(così dell'aura estiva l'ansia talvolta)
quando la sua dama, che allor solo conobbe
l'abbandono
pieno e il concorde palpar di due creature che
s'amano,
egli addusse pei sentieri d'un campo,
ad oriente da una foresta biancheggiante om-
brato
ed a ponente scoperto al cielo!
Ora è sommerso il sole; ma linee d'oro
pendon sovra le cineree nubi,
sul verde piano sui tremanti fiori
sui grigi globi dell' antico smirnio,
e i neri boschi avvolgono,
del vespro mescolandosi alle ombre. Lenta
sorge ad oriente
l'infocata luna tra i folti rami
delle piante cupe:

That night the youth and lady mingled lay
In love and sleep - but when the morning came
The lady found her lover dead and cold.
Let none believe that God in mercy gave
That stroke. The lady died not, nor grew wild,
But year by year lived on - in truth I think
Her gentleness and patience and sad smiles,
And that she did not die, but lived to tend
Her agèd father, were a kind of madness,
If madness 'tis to be unlike the world.
For but to see her were to read the tale
Woven by some subtlest bard, to make hard
hearts
Dissolve away in wisdom-working grief;
Her eyes were black and lustreless and wan:
Her eyelashes were worn away with tears,
Her lips and cheeks were like things dead - so
pale;
Her hands were thin, and through their wan-
dering veins
And weak articulations might be seen
Day's ruddy light. The tomb of thy dead self
Which one vexed ghost inhabits, night and day,
Is all, lost child, that now remains of thee!

"Inheritor of more than earth can give,
Passionless calm and silence unreprieved,
Where the dead find, oh, not sleep! but rest,
And are the uncomplaining things they seem,
Or live, a drop in the deep sea of Love;
Oh, that like thine, mine epitaph were - Peace!"
This was the only moan she ever made.

brillan sul capo languide le stelle.
E il giovine sussura: "Non è strano?
Io mai non vidi il sorgere del sole,
o Isabella. Domani a contemplarlo verremo in-
sieme."

Il giovin e la dama giacquer tra il sonno e il dolce
amor
congiunti ne la notte: al mattin
gelido e morto ella trovò l'amante.
Oh! nessun creda che, vibrando tal colpo,
fu il Signore misericorde.
Non morì la dama, né folle diventò:
anno per anno visse ancora.
Ma io penso che la queta sua pazienza, e i trepidi
sorrisi,
e il non morir... ma vivere a custodia del vecchio
padre
(se è follia dal mondo dissimigliare)
fossero follia. Era, null'altro che a vederla,
come leggere un canto da ingegnoso bardo
intessuto a piegar gelidi cuori in un dolor pensoso.
Neri gli occhi ma non fulgidi più;
consunte quasi le ciglia dalle lagrime;
le labbra e le gote parevan cose morte tanto eran
bianche;
ed esili le mani e per le erranti vene e le giunture
rossa
del giorno trasparia la luce.
La nuda tomba, che il tuo fral racchiude,
cui notte e giorno un'ombra tormentata abita,
è quanto di te resta, o cara creatura perduta!

"Ho tal retaggio, che la terra non dà:
calma e silenzio, senza peccato e senza passione.
Sia che i morti ritrovino (non mai il sonno!) ma il
riposo,
imperturbati quali appaion,
o vivano, o d'amore nel mar profondo scendano;
oh! che il mio epitaffio, che il tuo sia: Pace!"
Questo dalle sue labbra l'unico lamento.

I. Nahandove
Nahandove, ô belle Nahandove!
L'oiseau nocturne a commencé ses cris,
la pleine lune brille sur ma tête,
et la rosée naissante humecte mes
cheveux.
Voici l'heure; qui peut t'arrêter,
Nahandove, ô belle Nahandove!

Le lit de feuilles est prépare;
je l'ai parsemé de fleurs
et d'herbes odoriférantes;
il est digne de tes charmes,
Nahandove, ô belle Nahandove!

Elle vient.
J'ai reconnu la respiration précipitée
que donne une marche rapide;
j'entends le froissement de la pagne
qui l'enveloppe; c'est elle,
c'est Nahandove, la belle Nahandove.

Ô reprends haleine, ma jeune amie;
repose-toi sur mes genoux.
Que ton regard est enchanteur!
Que le mouvement de ton sein est vif
et délicieux sous la main qui le presse!
Tu souris, Nahandove, ô belle Nahand-
ove!

Tes baisers pénètrent jusqu'à l'âme;
tes caresses brûlent tous mes sens;
arrête, ou je vais mourir.
Meurt-on de volupté,
Nahandove, ô belle Nahandove!

Le plaisir passe comme un éclair.
Ta douce haleine s'affaiblit,
tes yeux humides se referment,
ta tête se penche mollement,
et tes transport s'éteignent dans la
languueur.

I. Nahandove

Nahandove, o fair Nahandove!
The night bird has begun its cries,
the full moon illumines my head,
and the early dew moistens my hair.
This is the hour; who can be keep you away,
Nahandove, o fair Nahandove!

The bed of leaves is ready;
I have strewn it with flowers
and with aromatic herbs;
it is worthy of your charms,
Nahandove, o fair Nahandove!

She comes.
I recognized the rapid breathing
of hurried walking;
I hear the rustling of the cloth
that covers her; it is she,
it is Nahandove, the fair Nahandove.

O take breath, my young love,
rest on my lap.
How enchanting is your glance!
How lively and delicious is the movement
of your breast under the hand that presses it!
You smile, Nahandove, fair Nahandove!

Your kisses penetrate to the soul;
your caresses set all my senses on fire!
Stop, or I shall die.
Can one die of voluptuous pleasure,
Nahandove, o fair Nahandove?

The pleasure passes in an instant.
Your sweet panting grows gentler,
your moist eyes close again,
your head droops wearily,
and your rapture yields to languor;
Never were you so beautiful,
Nahandove, o fair Nahandove!

Jamais tu ne fus si belle,
Nahandove, ô belle Nahandove!

...Tu pars, et je vais languir
dans les regrets et les desirs.
Je languirai jusq'au soir.
Tu reviendras ce soir,
Nahandove, ô belle Nahandove!

II. Mefiez-vous des blancs
Aoua! Aoua!
Méfiez-vous des blancs,
habitans du rivage.
Du temps de nos pères,
des blancs descendirent dans cette île.
On leur dit: Voilà des terres,
que vos femmes les cultivent;
soyez justes, soyez bons,
et devenez nos frères.

Les blancs promirent, et cependant
ils faisoient des retranchemens.
Un fort menaçant s'éleva;
le tonnerre fut renfermé
dans des bouches d'airain;
leurs prêtres voulurent nous donner un
Dieu
que nous ne connoissons pas;
ils parlèrent enfin d'obéissance
et d'esclavage.
Plutôt la mort!
Le carnage fut long et terrible;
mais malgré la foudre qu'ils vomissoient
et qui écrasait des armées entières,
ils furent tous exterminés.
Aoua! Aoua!
Méfiez-vous des blancs!

Nous avons vu de nouveaux tyrans,
plus forts et plus nombreux,
planter leur pavillon sur le rivage.
Le ciel a combattu pour nous.

...You leave me, and I shall languish
amid regrets and desires.
I shall languish until evening.
You'll come back this evening,
Nahandove, o fair Nahandove!

II. Beware of the white men

Aoua! Aoua!
Beware of the white men,
dwellers on the shore.
In our fathers' time
white men descended upon this island.
One of them said: Here is land,
let your wives cultivate it;
be just, be good,
and become our brothers.

The white men promised, and meanwhile
they were building entrenchments.
A menacing fort arose;
thunder was enclosed
in bronze mouths.
Their priests wanted to give us a god
we do not know;
finally they spoke of obedience
and slavery.
Rather death!
The carnage was long and terrible,
yet for all the lightning bolts they spat forth,
which destroyed entire armies,
they were utterly exterminated.
Aoua! Aoua!
Beware of the white men!

We have seen new tyrants,
stronger, and more numerous,
plant their banners on the shore.
Heaven fought for us.
It dropped rains upon them,
and tempests and poisonous winds.

Il a fait tomber sur eux les pluies,
les tempêtes et les vents empoisonnés.
Ils ne sont plus, et nous vivons,
et nous vivons libres.
Aoua! Aoua!
Méfiez-vous des blancs,
habitans du rivage.

III. Il est doux de se coucher

Il est doux de se coucher, durant la
chaleur,
sous un arbre touffu, et d'attendre
que le vent du soir amène la fraîcheur.

Femmes, approchez.
Tandis que je me repose ici
sous un arbre touffu, occupez mon oreil-
le
par vos accents prolongés.
répétez la chanson de la jeune fille,
lorsque ses doigts tressent la natte,
ou lorsqu'assise auprès du riz,
elle chasse les oiseaux avides.

La chant plaît à mon âme.
La danse est pour moi presque aussi
douce
qu'un baiser. Que vos pas soient lents;
qu'ils imitent les attitudes du plaisir
et l'abandon de la volupté.

Le vent du soir se lève;
le lune commence à briller au travers
les arbres de la montagne.
Allez, et préparez le repas.

They are no more, and we live on,
and we live free.

Aoua! Aoua!
Beware of the white men,
dwellers on the shore

III. It is good to lie down

It is good to lie down in the heat of the day,
under a leafy tree, and to wait
until the evening wind brings freshness.

Women, approach.
While I rest here
under a leafy tree, delight my ear
with your soothing voices.
Repeat the song of the young girl
while she braids her hair
or, while sitting by the rice patch,
chases the greedy birds away.

The singing is pleasing to my spirit.
Dancing for me is almost as sweet
as a kiss. Step slowly;
imitate the poses of pleasure
and the surrender to voluptuous bliss.

The evening wind awakens;
the moon begins to shine through
the trees on the mountain.
Go, and prepare the meal.

~Translated by Steven Ledbetter

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