

# Love Songs

## F. An Operatic Operator

A close seduction attempt by the greatest libertine of all, Mozart's Don Juan, and how his almost-victim makes it up to her husband later.

**Mozart:** *Don Giovanni* (1787), Duet "La ci darem la mano" (Zurich 2016; Rod Gilfry, *Don Giovanni*; Liliana Nikiteanu, *Zerlina*)

**Mozart:** *Don Giovanni*, Aria "Vedrai, carino" (Royal Opera House 2002; Miah Persson, *Zerlina*; Robert Gleadow, *Masetto*)

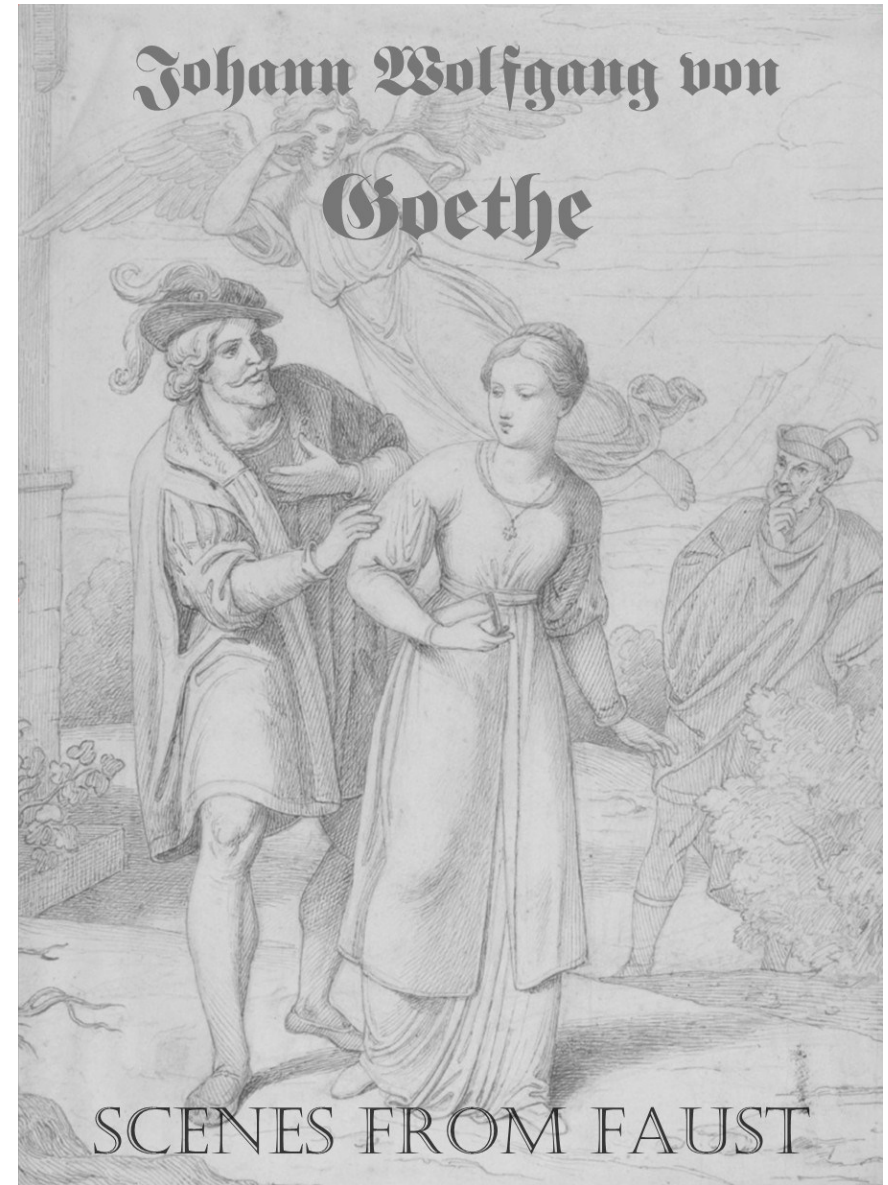
Carlos **Acosta** (1973– , Cuban-British dancer and choreographer), Georges **Bizet** (1838–75, French composer), Lorenzo **Da Ponte** (1749–1838, Italian librettist), John **Donne** (1571–1631, English poet), Fred **Ebb** (1928–2004, American lyricist), Johann Wolfgang von **Goethe** (1749–1832, German poet), Oscar **Hammerstein II** (1895–1960, American lyricist), Lorenz **Hart** (1895–1943, American lyricist), Robert **Herrick** (1591–1674, English poet), John **Kander** (1927– , American composer), Kenneth **MacMillan** (1929–92, British choreographer), Andrew **Marvell** (1621–78, English poet), Wolfgang Amadeus **Mozart** (1756–91, Austrian composer), Cole **Porter** (1891–1964, American composer), Angélin **Preljocaj** (1957– , Albanian-French choreographer), Richard **Rodgers** (1902–79, American composer), Sigmund **Romberg** (1887–1951, Hungarian-American composer), Franz **Schubert** (1797–1828, Austrian composer), Pyotr Ilyich **Tchaikovsky** (1840–93, Russian composer)

For more detail and lots of color, see the class website:

<http://www.brunyate.com/LoveSongs/>

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## 4. Heat of the Moment

October 12, 2026

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IN GOETHE'S PLAY, THE VIRGIN GRETCHEN FALLS FOR THE CHARM of the newly-rejuvenated Faust. Goethe's poem, "Gretchen at the Spinning-Wheel," is the classic description of moral sense and peace of mind overwhelmed by the awakening of desire. Schubert's famous setting opens our second hour.

The rest of the class consists of expressions of physical desire in opera, poetry, ballet, and the Broadway musical. It is bookended by two figures whose names have become synonymous with sexual license—Carmen and Don Juan—though not all the liaisons are illicit, and in at least one, sex is used for healing rather than seduction. *rb.*

## A. Four Carmens

Bizet's Carmen has a well-deserved reputation as a sexual temptress, the iconic *femme fatale*. But an even more important aspect of her personality is her insistence on the freedom to control her own fate.

**Kander and Ebb:** *Steel Pier* (1997), "Everybody's Girl" (Debra Monk)

**Bizet/Hammerstein:** *Carmen Jones*, Habanera (Dorothy Dandridge in the 1954 movie, sung by Marilyn Horne)

**Bizet:** *Carmen* (1875), Seguidilla (Julia Migenes-Johnson and Plácido Domingo in the 1984 film by Franco Rosi)

**Acosta:** *Carmen* (2015), opening Marianela Nuñez, Royal Ballet)

## B. Sex in the Seventeenth

Three English poets of the 17th Century who were by no means reticent about their physical desires.

**Donne:** *To his Mistress Going to Bed*, (read by Iain McGilchrist)

**Herrick:** *Delight in Disorder* (read by Alan Rickman)

**Marvell:** *To his Coy Mistress* (read by Sir Patrick Stewart)

## C. Temptation on Tiptoe

Given the intrinsic intimacy of any ballet *pas-de-deux*, what can be done to express sexual passion specifically, or depict the erotic control of one figure over the other?

**Tchaikowsky:** *Swan Lake*, Black Swan *pas-de-deux*, adagio and coda (Royal Ballet 2015; choreography by Liam Scarlett after Petipa and Ivanov; Marianela Nuñez, Vadim Muntagirov)

**MacMillan:** *Mayerling* (1978), bedroom *pas-de-deux* (Royal Ballet 2026; Steven McRae, *Crown Prince Rudolf*; Sarah Lamb, *Baroness Mary Vetsera*; music by Liszt)

**Preljocaj:** *Le Parc* (1994), final *pas-de-deux* (Paris Opera Ballet, 2021; Alice Renavand, Mathieu Ganio; music by Mozart)

## D. Goethe's Gretchen

Only one work in this section, but it is iconic in its depiction of the half-unwilling arousal of desire from the woman's point of view.

**Schubert:** *Gretchen am Spinnrade* ("Gretchen at the Spinning-Wheel"; Anna Lucia Richter with Ammiel Bushakevitz)

## E. Bedroom on Broadway

A variety of classic Broadway numbers from the first half of the 20th Century, all depicting sexual freedom and desire in an upbeat way.

**Romberg:** *It* (1927), Ann Miller in *Deep in my Heart*, 1954

**Rodgers and Hart:** *Pal Joey* (1940), "Bewitched, bothered, and bewildered" (Lady Gaga with Tony Bennett)

**Porter:** *Kiss Me, Kate* (1948), "In my fashion" (Welsh National Opera, 2016; Amelia Adams-Pierce, Lois)