

Texts quoted in Class 1

T. S. Eliot: *Burnt Norton* (opening)

Time present and time past
Are both perhaps present in time future,
And time future contained in time past.
If all time is eternally present
All time is unredeemable.
What might have been is an abstraction
Remaining a perpetual possibility
Only in a world of speculation.
What might have been and what has been
Point to one end, which is always present.
Footfalls echo in the memory
Down the passage which we did not take
Towards the door we never opened
Into the rose-garden. My words echo
Thus, in your mind.
 But to what purpose
Disturbing the dust on a bowl of rose-leaves
I do not know.

 Other echoes
Inhabit the garden. Shall we follow?
Quick, said the bird, find them, find them,
Round the corner. Through the first gate,
Into our first world, shall we follow
The deception of the thrush? Into our first world.
There they were, dignified, invisible,
Moving without pressure, over the dead leaves,
In the autumn heat, through the vibrant air,
And the bird called, in response to
The unheard music hidden in the shrubbery,
And the unseen eyebeam crossed, for the roses
Had the look of flowers that are looked at.
There they were as our guests, accepted and accepting.
So we moved, and they, in a formal pattern,
Along the empty alley, into the box circle,
To look down into the drained pool.
Dry the pool, dry concrete, brown edged,

And the pool was filled with water out of sunlight,
And the lotos rose, quietly, quietly,
The surface glittered out of heart of light,
And they were behind us, reflected in the pool.
Then a cloud passed, and the pool was empty.
Go, said the bird, for the leaves were full of children,
Hidden excitedly, containing laughter.
Go, go, go, said the bird: human kind
Cannot bear very much reality.
Time past and time future
What might have been and what has been
Point to one end, which is always present.

W. H. Auden: The Composer

All the others translate: the painter sketches
A visible world to love or reject;
Rummaging into his living, the poet fetches
The images out that hurt and connect.

From Life to Art by painstaking adaption
Relying on us to cover the rift;
Only your notes are pure contraption,
Only your song is an absolute gift.

Pour out your presence, O delight, cascading
The falls of the knee and the weirs of the spine,
Our climate of silence and doubt invading;

You, alone, alone, O imaginary song,
Are unable to say an existence is wrong,
And pour out your forgiveness like a wine.

Charles Baudelaire: *L'invitation au voyage*

*Mon enfant, ma soeur,
Songe à la douceur
D'aller là-bas vivre ensemble!
Aimer à loisir,
Aimer et mourir
Au pays qui te ressemble!
Les soleils mouillés
De ces ciels brouillés
Pour mon esprit ont les charmes
Si mystérieux
De tes traîtres yeux,
Brillant à travers leurs larmes.
Là, tout n'est qu'ordre et beauté,
Luxe, calme et volupté.*

My child, my sister,
Think of the rapture
Of living together there!
Of loving at will,
Of loving till death,
In the land that is like you!
The misty sunlight
Of those cloudy skies
Has for my spirit the charms,
So mysterious,
Of your treacherous eyes,
Shining brightly through their tears.
There all is order and beauty,
Luxury, peace, and pleasure.

tr. William Aggeler

Traditional: Sumer is Icumen In

Sing, cuccu, nu. Sing, cuccu.
Sing, cuccu. Sing, cuccu, nu.

Sumer is i-cumin in—
Lhude sing, cuccu!
Groweth sed and bloweth med
And springth the wude nu.
Sing, cuccu!

Awe bleteth after lomb,
Lhouth after calve cu,
Bulluc sterteth, bucke verteth—
Murie sing, cuccu!

Cuccu, cuccu,
Wel singes thu, cuccu.
Ne swik thu naver nu!

William Blake: The Sick Rose

O Rose thou art sick.
The invisible worm,
That flies in the night
In the howling storm:

Has found out thy bed
Of crimson joy:
And his dark secret love
Does thy life destroy.

Mary Stewart Hammond: *Seeing Mozart's Piano Quartet
in E-Flat Major in the Old Whaling Church, Edgartown*

They wait, five women in black,
before a wall painted such a flat, soft gray
it reads as silence, or sky.
The pianist's hands curve over the keyboard.
The page turner leans toward the pianist's score.
The violinist, the violist, the cellist
bring their bows near the strings. Fluted pilasters
rise into an arch ceiling high, framing them.
The church, classic Greek Revival
straight from the style books, and *retarditaire* at that,
is 57 years younger than the music you are about
not to hear, but with its pillars, its two
center aisles dividing the nave into three parts,
in its classicism and its purity, it is useful
for showing the architecture of this sonata.
The thing about music, it takes place in time,
and can't be seen. Nor can it be heard in a poem.

A colorless, unfinished, 8 o'clock sky pauses
in triple hung windows flanking the pilasters.
Scrub oak darken the lower panes.
The pianist nods. We know by the musicians'
movements that Mozart's allegro begins its lift
up off the pages on the music stands, but on this page
there are only the visuals. The music is silent
as a black and white picture show
before the arrival of sound. The pianist misses
some notes. The violist looks at the violinist,
her hair a stubble three months after chemo.
Strings shine on the black necks of the instruments.
The musicians' fingers climb up and down like spiders,
thumbs hugging the backsides of the necks.
They glide their bows, or make them tiptoe,
forearms rigid, across the strings.

The second theme's leading motif, almost lost
under the angelic, repeats and repeats
like supplications. It is one of Mozart's miracles,
this longing under joy, the flirtations with death

balancing lyricism, but you have only my word for it.
The ensemble coaxes the allegretto
and transubstantiation from wooden boxes. In a year
the violist will be dead. The music breathes
in the musicians' bodies. You can see it
in their shoulders, their spines, their wrists, their fingers,
and the white grid of the windows' muntins cages the black sky.
Even where the bottom sashes open to the summer air,
the night is held back until the musicians stop,
hold their poses, wait, five seconds, twelve,
for the last notes to find home and fling up their arms
pumped with arrival. They rise, bowing
before the sky of the soft gray wall,
leaving us in our humanness under the electric lights.