

Dutton Epoch CDLX 7224 (2-CD set)

Cyril Scott (1879-1970)

Lotus Land: Complete Piano Music, Volume Five

Leslie De'Ath piano

Poems (1912) [W255] tracks 12-16, CD1

I. Poppies

from 'The Grave of Eros and the Book of Mournful Melodies with Dreams from the East'

A stream of sweet weariness transpires from these swaying stems:

– I stand immersed among the purple popped fields –
Into the long distance, o'er this unending sea of purple gems,
I gaze – and to a half slumbrous lassitude my soul yields.

The distant mosque is roseate with the pale illuminating haze,
Upon its whitened walls the mingling colours glow;
Vesperal sighs falter, and the entrancing flood of purple sways;
For you – beyond the far-reaching solitude my tears flow.

From out the pink loveliness, one pallid petalled poppy tall
I take, within its silken down my soul to steep;
Plucking the pale petals, wafting them, watching how they droop
and fall.

And sink within the all-embracing labyrinth – and then sleep.

Cyril Scott

II. The Garden of Soul-sympathy

from the 'Vales of Unity'

In the garden of soul-sympathy,
We wandered our united ways,
Rejoiced by shimmer of eternal roses,
And seraph-chanted roundelays.

Within that garden's holiness,
Was calm of endless eventide,
With not a dream of heavy-hearted hours,
And not a thought unsanctified.

'Twas yon the pale of solitude;
No mortal wandered here alone,
For Love was Mistress of this golden garden,
And every separateness unknown.

We dreamt and laboured joyfully,
And not a thought but lent its hue
To magnify the store of soul-knit gladness,
And visions of our raptured view.

In the garden of soul-sympathy,
We wandered our united ways,
Rejoiced by shimmer of eternal roses,
And seraph-chanted roundelays.

Cyril Scott

III. Bells

from 'The Grave of Eros and the Book of Mournful Melodies with Dreams from the East'

Through the limitless years of sad silent loneliness tolling,
With infinite sorrow, surging sounds of changeless might:
Bells across the lone lassitude, rising, swelling, endlessly rolling,
Over the wasteland-solitude lost into the cold chaotic night.

Sounds of colourless dreams, of strange visionary vagueness
telling

Immaculate music, heralding the life of sighs:
Bells across the lone lassitude, rising, rolling, endlessly swelling,
Over the wasteland-solitude, lost into the clear chaotic skies.

Yet such meaningless tones, and yet insistant cold resounding
The desolate knell of earth's relinquished griefs and joys:
Bells inviting stern repentance, luring, stealthily expounding
Rest to the pilgrim, from the world's relentless noise.

Cyril Scott

IV. The Twilight of the Year

from 'The Grave of Eros and the Book of Mournful Melodies with Dreams from the East'

Now – dreams of summer sorrow melt in amber glory;
Sad, my heart returns to stanzas steeped in woe,
To lines that banish, with the bleeding leaves, a golden story
Of evening hours, anguished eyes and tears that flow.

Now – faded fragrance falls of lilac and syringa,
Roses, and lilies and buttercups galore,
And phantom vales with velvet-violet carpets palely linger
As dim re-echoes from the song of summer's lore.

Now – deeply throbbing sighs escape the muted viol
When across the meadows wander tired herds:
We sink entwined – no longer can we read the sunless dial;
And e'en the wasted willows whisper weary words.

Cyril Scott

V. Paradise-Birds

from 'The Voice of the Ancient'

Awake is twilight time – a pale eternal
Twilight speaks imperishable words,
Within the blossomy bosom lost of groves supernal,
I hark the singing of the Paradise-birds.

Their fragrant notes with beauteous colours garnished,
Vibrate across the infinite Beyond,
Their soulful sweetness never paled nor lustre tarnished,
To every tone within my heart respond.

Among the mystic trees and sacred bowers,
Resplendent with the eternal sunset's light,
They merge their opal plumage, in unending hours,
Which slowly fade across the Infinite.

Their songs awak'ning every pent up river,
Unrolling every mighty wave of Thought,
Across the resounding lyre of the spirit quiver,
To render deathless every thrill they wrought.

Not sad, not gay, not passionless nor tender,
But a recall of deep-felt moments gone,
A something human symbols cannot ever render,
A mingling of all faded joys in one.

A strong aspiring and a blissful yearning,
Befreed from sense of separateness or dole;
A gladness born of lost delights' enrapt returning,
To lie embraced for aye within the soul.

Cyril Scott