Swedish Art Song: A Singer’s Handbook to Diction and Repertoire

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A doctoral essay submitted in partial fulfillment of
the requirements for the degree of
Doctor of Musical Arts

SWEDISH ART SONG:
A SINGER’S HANDBOOK TO DICTION AND REPERTOIRE

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This essay is a guide to Swedish lyric diction for American singers. An overview of the linguistic traits and basic grammar of the Swedish language prepares the reader for a detailed description of Swedish phonemes and their occurrence in the language. Differences in pronunciation conventions as they pertain to classical singing, particularly the contrast between högsvensk (high Swedish) and talad svenska (spoken Swedish), are explored. The author offers repertoire suggestions for various voice types and levels of study, with special attention to the Swedish songs of Finnish composer Jean Sibelius. Finally, translations and transcriptions into the International Phonetic Alphabet (IPA) of representative song texts are given.
Dedicated to my wonderful husband, Luis.
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

My journey to Sweden to undertake the research for this paper began in 2008, when Professor Matti Hirvonen of the Kungliga Musikhögskolan (Royal College of Music) in Stockholm graciously responded to an e-mail from an unknown American graduate student about a potential Swedish diction project. I will be forever grateful for his generosity in agreeing to advise my studies. His guidance and encouragement were instrumental in the development of my research, and I treasure his friendship.

I owe many thanks to Barbro Marklund, who put me in contact with Professor Hirvonen. Many individuals were helpful in the preparation of application materials for research grants. At the University of Miami, the assistance of Kefryn Reese and Andrea Dupuch in the Office of Academic Enhancement, as well as that of Maria Kosinski and Robin Björkman in the Directed Independent Language Study program, strengthened the quality of my applications. David Evan Thomas, Clifton Ware, and Donald Simonson wrote recommendation letters in support of my project. My year of study in Stockholm would not have been possible without funding from the Fulbright program, the South Florida chapter of the Swedish Women’s Educational Association, the Lois Roth Foundation, and the University of Miami Graduate Activity Fee Allocation Committee.

During my time in Sweden, I received assistance with my research from many generous people. Niklas Öhrström of the linguistics department at Stockholm University offered advice on some of the more technical aspects of the project. Janis Kreslins and Christina Koch of the Kungliga Biblioteket (The Royal Library) guided me to some fruitful archival resources. Gustav Bergel of the Svensk Musik archive graciously loaned me scores for review. Tara Chace recommended useful resources for the translation of
poetry from Swedish into English. Leslie De’ath, the Language and Diction Associate Editor of The Journal of Singing, offered his keen eye in revising an early draft of this essay, which appeared in that publication.

I appreciate the members of my doctoral essay committee, Professors Dean Southern (committee chair and ever-inspiring voice teacher), Alan Johnson, Karen Kennedy, and Dennis Kam for their careful review of this document and ongoing encouragement during this long process.

I am grateful to my family—my parents, Lane and Ruth, and my brother Benjamin and his family—for supporting me in all my endeavors. They also offered their valuable proof-reading skills, for which I am very appreciative.

Lastly, I would like to thank my husband Luis, who inspires me every day to be a better person.
PREFACE

I was first introduced to the Swedish songs of Jean Sibelius shortly after I began my master’s degree in vocal performance at the University of Minnesota in 2003. The lush beauty of Sibelius’s settings prompted me to begin investigating other Swedish-language art songs (called romanser). I discovered that a vast and diverse repertoire, largely neglected in performance and scholarship outside of Scandinavia, awaiting exploration. Thus began my long journey—from Minnesota to Stockholm to Miami—towards the completion of the present document, which is intended to provide American singers with much-needed resources for the study and performance of Swedish song. It is my hope that this essay will enable more singers to study and perform the Swedish art song repertoire.
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CHAPTER 1
Introduction

The art songs of Sweden are a unique expression of Swedish culture. Themes central to the Swedish sensibility—a love of nature, especially of the sea, feelings of longing and melancholy, the contrast between light and dark, the extremes of the northern climate, and lively folk traditions—are reflected and expressed in a tangible way through music. Swedish art song, however, and that of Scandinavia in general, has been largely neglected in North America, even in the American Midwest, where descendants of Swedish immigrants are concentrated.\(^1\) One reason for this neglect is the general unavailability of scores in conservatory and university libraries. Additionally, many singers may feel pressure to study standard repertoire, which fits into the requirement rubrics for auditions and competitions. But certainly the greatest technical obstacle to the performance and study of Swedish art song is the language barrier, since Swedish is not a commonly studied language. In recent years, many diction curricula have been expanded, at least briefly covering languages other than English, French, German, and Italian, but few (if any) include Swedish.

Despite the richness of the Swedish repertoire, the absence of a guide to Swedish diction renders nuanced performance beyond the reach of most American singers. Those who do attempt to study and perform these songs must glean approximate (and usually inaccurate) pronunciations from the few recordings that exist. At the 2008 National

Association of Teachers of Singing conference, many teachers lamented that it was impossible to study and perform Swedish songs because no reference sources are available. This represents a major deficiency in the discipline of vocal performance, and is a subject of study ripe for able singers and scholars to undertake. This doctoral essay aims to remedy this deficiency through an in-depth study of the Swedish art song repertoire.

This essay serves as a guide to Swedish lyric diction and art song literature. Detailed instructions for pronunciation of Swedish phonemes (particularly those that are unique to the Swedish language), along with rules for mapping their orthographic spelling to phonetic transcription, are included. A substantial portion of the essay is devoted to International Phonetic Alphabet (IPA) transcriptions and poetic translations of selected song texts. A comprehensive guide to Swedish diction will serve as an essential resource for singers and will break new ground in the discipline of vocal performance.

Timothy Cheek’s book *Singing in Czech*² resulted in an explosion of performances of music by Czech composers and a general interest in the Czech repertoire. Through the eventual publication of a guide to Swedish diction and repertoire, in addition to continued performance, advocacy, and outreach in my professional life, I envision a surge of interest in the Swedish repertoire as well. I hope this will inspire and enable other singers to study and perform art songs in Swedish, and in turn prompt studies by other performers and scholars of the Nordic repertoire in general.

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Literature Review

Three books have served as my primary linguistics sources: Håkan Rosenqvist’s concise guide to Swedish pronunciation;\(^3\) *Svenska språknämndens uttalsordbok* (Swedish language commission’s pronunciation dictionary);\(^4\) and Claes Garlén’s *Svenskans fonologi* (The phonology of the Swedish language).\(^5\)

I referred to several catalogues of Swedish vocal music in my exploration of the Swedish song repertoire. Per Olof Lundahl’s *Katalog över svensk vokalmusik* is a comprehensive listing of Swedish art songs written mostly in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.\(^6\) Organized by composer, each entry includes the song’s poet, vocal range, year of publication (when available), and publisher. The catalogue lists the works of 119 composers, and in many cases is more comprehensive than works lists in *Grove Music Online*. The catalogue also includes an index of poets.

Erik Tawaststjerna’s landmark biography of Jean Sibelius (first published in Finnish in 1965; subsequently in Swedish, German, and a three-volume English version in 1976)\(^7\) has long served as the authoritative source on Sibelius’s life and output.

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However, Andrew Barnett’s recent book\(^8\) refers to manuscripts, diaries, and correspondence only made available by the Sibelius family in the past two decades. Thus, Barnett narrates the most complete account of the composer’s life to date, and dispels myths such as the so-called “silence from Järvenpää.” Additionally, the book contains a comprehensive list of works, including fragmentary and unpublished pieces.

Alfhild Forslin’s catalogue lists all the musical settings (904 in all) of Johan Ludvig Runeberg’s poems.\(^9\) The only biography of composer Ture Rangström,\(^10\) in addition to providing important contextual information on the composer’s life, includes a comprehensive catalogue of his works and an extensive bibliography.

In choosing songs for inclusion in this project, I attempted to strike a balance between pieces that are accessible to students at American colleges and universities, and those which are the most often performed in Sweden. New critical editions of songs currently unavailable in the United States, including IPA transcriptions, is a potential future project that will promote their performance outside of Scandinavia.

Sibelius’s songs have been published in his Sämtliche Werke (Complete works) and are, therefore, widely accessible.\(^11\) Approximately half of Wilhelm Stenhammar’s song output is found in Annette Johannson’s critical edition, Thirty songs of Wilhelm

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Stenhammar, but the remainder are difficult to find in the United States. Many of Ture Rangström’s songs have been published in the United States by Recital Publications, and editions by foreign publishers may be found in many American libraries.

Most well-known works by Swedish composers are available through the publisher Gehrmans Musikförlag and can be shipped to the United States. Gehrmans recently acquired the chamber music catalog of Warner/Chappell Music Scandinavia, which included the publications of Nordiska Musikförlaget. The entire Gehrmans catalogue of art song may be downloaded in Portable Document Format. Svensk Musik, The Swedish Music Information Center, is the publishing division of the Swedish Performing Rights Society and maintains a catalogue and archive of Swedish classical music. Their holdings include works published by Edition Suecia as well as unpublished works that can be browsed online.

The anthology Songs from the north: Representative songs of Norway, Sweden, and Denmark includes twelve songs in Swedish by eight composers (Oscar Ahnfeldt, Isak Albert Berg, Karl Collan, Adolf Fredrik Lindblad, Otto Lindblad, Johan Gustav Emil Sjögren, Wilhelm Theodor Söderberg, and Johan August Söderman), in addition to many


14 Ture Rangström, Kung Eriks visor [King Erik’s songs] (Stockholm, 1951), Sex visor [Six songs] (1916).


17 Valborg Hovind Stub and Aubertine Woodward Moore, Songs from the north: Representative songs of Norway, Sweden, and Denmark (Boston: Ditson, 1935).
songs in Norwegian and Danish. The Swedish songs range from arrangements of folk tunes to settings of famous poetry (by poets such as Topelius) to settings of the composers’ own texts. Five of the eight composers of songs in Swedish included in this anthology do not have entries in *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, and therefore the brief biographies found in the preface are the only source of information available to scholars. However, a comparison of the biographical information found in *Songs from the north* of the three composers who are listed in *Grove* reveals significant inconsistencies; therefore, I consider the accuracy of this preface material to be questionable. None of these songs is part of the standard song repertoire in Sweden, although Söderman’s works, “valued for their authentic Swedish qualities,” were influential on later Romantic composers in Sweden.18 Sjögren composed some notable pieces, but his only composition in this anthology, *Seraljens lustgard* (from *Dikter*, op. 22, no. 1) is rarely heard in performance in Sweden.

Projects of similar scope to the one I propose have been attempted in the past. Genevieve Anderson, an amateur enthusiast of Swedish songs, self-published an anthology of Swedish songs (most of them hymns and folk songs) including IPA transcriptions and translations.19 However, her transcriptions lack nuance and the publication did not have the benefit of an editor’s critical eye. Annette Johannsson, Emeritus Professor of Voice at the University of Hawaii at Manoa, published the

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previously-mentioned critical edition of thirty songs by Stenhammar,\textsuperscript{20} including an appendix with brief descriptions of Swedish phonemes and word-by-word translations and IPA transcriptions of the texts. However, her description of each phoneme is cursory and in my opinion occasionally inaccurate. Neither author includes rules for mapping orthographic spelling to phonetic transcription, a crucial tool for singers wishing to do their own IPA transcriptions.

The website \textit{Swedish Song},\textsuperscript{21} created by pianist Jeanne-Minette Cilliers, includes an impressively large database listing of Swedish art songs and folk song, although with regard to some of the most standard repertoire (as defined by frequency of performance within Sweden) it is incomplete. In addition, the site has translations of poems by twenty-nine different poets, including audio of the texts recited by native Swedish speakers. This is a valuable service, however some of the recitations are not in a style/formality of Swedish appropriate for use in song. \textit{The Lied, Art Song, and Choral Texts Archive} (hosted by the REC Music Foundation), also contains a large number of translations of Swedish song texts.\textsuperscript{22}

Ellen Rissinger, an American pianist and vocal coach based in Dresden, operates a website called \textit{The Diction Police}, which features a weekly audio podcast about topics related to lyric diction. She has dedicated several episodes of the podcast to Norwegian and Swedish diction. The typical podcast format features an interview with a native

\textsuperscript{20}Annette Johansson, ed., \textit{Thirty songs of Wilhelm Stenhammar with international phonetic alphabet transcriptions, word-for-word translations and commentary} (Geneseo, NY: Leyerle Publications, 1999).


speaker. Rissinger’s keen ear and breadth of knowledge is evident in the episodes, which provide valuable basic information on pronunciation. Her inquisitive and cheerful tone make the podcasts informative and entertaining.\textsuperscript{23}

Although the Czech and Swedish languages are fundamentally different, many organizational aspects of this essay are modeled after Timothy Cheek’s book \textit{Singing in Czech}, a comprehensive, readable guide and reference source. Bradley Ellingboe’s similar project in Norwegian, contained within an anthology of songs by Edvard Grieg,\textsuperscript{24} is intriguing in its placement of IPA transcriptions directly into the vocal score. Another resource on Grieg was recently published: Beryl Foster’s \textit{Literally Grieg} provides readers with literal translations (from Norwegian, Danish, and German into English) of all of Grieg’s song texts.\textsuperscript{25}

\textbf{Methodology}

Last year I was fortunate to receive a Fulbright grant and a scholarship from the Swedish Women’s Educational Association South Florida chapter to attend the Kungliga Musikhögskolan (Royal College of Music) in Stockholm, where I studied with coach/pianist Matti Hirvonen, a recognized expert on the Swedish art song repertoire. I had the bibliographic resources at the Royal College, as well as those at the Statens Musikbibliotek (State Music Library) and Kungliga Biblioteket (Royal Library), at my disposal. In addition, I benefited from the rich musical environment of Stockholm, where

\begin{footnotesize}
\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{24} Bradley Ellingboe, ed., \textit{Forty-five songs of Edvard Grieg} (Geneseo, NY: Leyerle Publications, 1988).
\item \textsuperscript{25} Beryl Foster, \textit{Literally Grieg} (St. Albans: Hertfordshire, England, 2011).
\end{itemize}
\end{footnotesize}
I had the opportunity to observe Swedish singers performing this repertoire in their native tongue.

Besides the written resources on Swedish phonetics, I consulted Niklas Öhrström, a doctoral candidate in the linguistics department at Stockholms Universitet. He was able to give me a linguist’s perspective on some of the most technical aspects of my work with Swedish phonetic transcriptions. My transcription method is loosely based on that used in Svenska språknämndens uttalsordbok. I have modified several elements for readability (my transcriptions are more broad) and for best predicted outcome, based on the average American singer’s linguistic bias. As discussed below, the formal högsvensk pronunciation has been substituted where appropriate.
CHAPTER 2
Swedish Phonetics

Background

A brief background of the theory and terminology used in phonetics, which is the basis for diction studies, may be necessary. Familiarity with these concepts and terms will be useful in understanding the remainder of this paper. Phonetics is a branch of linguistics that studies the sounds of human speech. Articulatory phonetics is concerned with the articulation of speech: the position, shape, and movement of articulators (the lips, tongue, and vocal folds).

Phonetic transcription is a system to describe sounds that occur in spoken language, which can be broken down into phonemes (the smallest units of speech). The International Phonetic Alphabet, the system developed and used by the International Phonetic Association, uses a one-to-one mapping between phonemes and written symbols (the phonemic principle). The standardized nature of the IPA enables its users to transcribe the phonemes of different languages. However, the IPA is not without shortcomings, and often more than one symbol can accurately describe the same phoneme, depending on whether the transcription is broad (general) or narrow (detailed), and whether the phoneme has allophones.\(^\text{26}\) Therefore, often more than one symbol for a given sound may be used and still remain in accordance with the IPA.

Phonemes are combined to create morphemes, the smallest component of words that have semantic meaning. Morphemes are either free (may stand alone) or bound (i.e.

\(^\text{26}\) Allophones are a set of multiple sounds used to pronounce a single phoneme. The distinguishing characteristic of a set of allophones is that they can be interchanged without modifying the meaning of a word. *Handbook of the International Phonetic Association: A Guide to the Use of the International Phonetic Alphabet* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), 29.
suffix or prefix). Some examples of Swedish words and their morphemes are found in Table 1.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Word</th>
<th>prefix (bound morpheme)</th>
<th>free morpheme</th>
<th>suffix (bound morpheme)</th>
<th>suffix (bound morpheme)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>frihet (freedom)</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>fri (free)</td>
<td>-het (denotes condition)</td>
<td>--</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>obekant (unknown)</td>
<td>o- (not)</td>
<td>bekant (known)</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>okänslighet (insensitivity)</td>
<td>o- (not)</td>
<td>kännna (to feel)</td>
<td>-lig (denotes adjective)</td>
<td>-het (denotes condition)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Phonemes are categorized as either vowels (produced with an open vocal tract) or consonants (produced with a closure by articulators at some point in the vocal tract).

Vowels and consonants are combined to create syllables, which may or may not coincide with morphemes. (In the table above, bekant (known) is a morpheme, but it is made up of two syllables.) At the very minimum, a syllable consists of a nucleus, which in the Swedish language is always a vowel. The majority of a syllable’s acoustic energy is concentrated in the nucleus. The nucleus may be preceded by or followed by one or more consonants. A preceding segment is called the onset, and a succeeding segment is called a coda. However, in Swedish there are syllables and words that are made up of only a nucleus, for example the noun å (stream).  

The Principle of Complementary Quantity

Swedish belongs to the Scandinavian branch of Germanic languages, which also includes Icelandic, Norwegian, Faroese, and Danish. The language has two degrees of

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movable word stress, primary and secondary. Stress in Swedish is morphological—
usually emphasizing meaning-loaded morphemes—and therefore highly predictable with
some knowledge of Swedish grammar.28 Meaning-loaded morphemes include the roots
of nouns, adjectives, and verbs, to which other inflectional, derivational, or bound
morphemes attach. In the IPA, stress is indicated by an accent mark ['] preceding each
primary stressed syllable, and a short vertical line ['] at the foot of each secondary
stressed syllable. Unstressed one-syllable words are normally prepositions, conjunctions,
and pronouns.29

In addition to word stress, Swedish has a system of word intonation. This word
intonation gives spoken Swedish its distinctive melodic lilt, famously parodied by the
Swedish Chef character on The Muppets television program. The rising and falling pitch
is linked to word stress, but is not generally indicated in broad IPA transcription of
Swedish. Because pitch is designated by a song’s melody, a thorough understanding and
accurate execution of stressed syllables is adequate for a nuanced expression of sung
Swedish.

Swedish composer Ture Rangström (1884-1947), experimented with a recitative-
like song form he called “speech melody” in an attempt to capture the melodic quality of
his native language.30 However, of his approximately 250 songs for voice and piano
(many of them orchestrated), his lyrical songs, such as “Flickan under nymånan” (The

28 Claes Garlén, Svenskans Fonologi [The phonology of the Swedish language] (Lund: Studentlitteratur,
1988), 119.

29 Ibid., 119.

30 Axel Helmer, “Rangström, Ture.” In Grove Music Online. Oxford Music Online,
girl under the new moon) and the warhorse baritone cycle *Ur kung Eriks visor* (From King Erik’s ballads), are the most frequently performed.

Swedish adheres to the principle of “complementary quantity,” a language feature that is quite rare (present only in Swedish, Norwegian, Icelandic, and Faroese). The principle of complementary quantity requires that both vowels and consonants be assigned length distinction, i.e. long (indicated by [:]) or short (indicated by lack of a long symbol).

According to this principle, a stressed syllable (either primary or secondary) always includes *either* a long consonant or a long vowel. This means that a stressed syllable in Swedish can have two possible structures:

\[(C)V:(C)\) or \((C)VC:\]

In other words, in a stressed syllable the vowel and consonant (or consonant cluster) form a balance: when one is short, the other is long, and vice versa, but in both cases (V:C and VC:) the total duration is equal. The difference in pronunciation of the Swedish words *baken* (the bottom) and *backen* (the hillside) demonstrate this relationship, as illustrated visually below:\textsuperscript{32}

\[
\begin{array}{c}
\textit{baken} \\
\textit{backen}
\end{array}
\begin{array}{c|c|c|c|c|c}
\text{b} & \text{ä} & \text{k} & \text{e} & \text{n} \\
\text{b} & \text{a} & \text{k:} & \text{e} & \text{n}
\end{array}
\]

With the horizontal axis representing time (duration), [ä:k] and [ak:] have equal duration, regardless of which element is long.

---

\textsuperscript{31} Oskar Bandle, Gerold Ungeheuer, Hugo Steger, Herbert E. Wiegand, and Armin Burkhardt, *The Nordic Languages: An International Handbook of the History of the North Germanic Languages*, vol. 2 (Berlin: de Gruyter, 2005), 1103.

\textsuperscript{32} The concept of this visual illustration comes from Garlén, 124.
In German, the words *bieten* (to pray) and *Betten* (beds) illustrate the non-complementary nature of the language; [eːt] has a longer duration than [et], causing the entire word *bieten* to be longer:

\[
\begin{array}{c}
\text{bieten} \\
\text{Betten}
\end{array}
\]

The complementary quantity feature has important ramifications for sung Swedish. When singing a VC: sequence, the vowel must be truncated early to allow for the longer consonant. The distinction may be subtle, but is a major factor in accomplishing an authentic Swedish sound. A lengthened consonant in Swedish may be compared to a double consonant in Italian. In practice, [kːk] in the Italian word *Bacco* (Bacchus) is essentially identical to [kː] in Swedish *backen*; the difference in transcription conventions reflects the underlying linguistic structure of each language.

**Basics of Swedish Grammar**

As seen above, stress is related to length of vowels and consonants in Swedish. Identifying stressed syllables is important in the process of transcribing Swedish text into the IPA. A very basic knowledge of Swedish grammar will aid in identifying meaning-loaded morphemes, and therefore stress.

Swedish nouns are divided into two main groups, called “*en*-words” and “*ett*-words,” referring to the articles which precede them (similar to the difference between *a* and *an* in English). In a Swedish-English dictionary entry, a noun is generally followed by “-en” or “-ett,” indicating to which group it belongs. These articles also function to
denote the definite version of the noun by attaching to the end as an unstressed syllable, as seen in Table 2.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Indefinite form</th>
<th>Definite form</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><em>en flicka</em> [ɛnːˈflikːa] (a girl)</td>
<td><em>flickan</em> [ˈflikːan] (the girl)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>en dag</em> [ɛnː dɔːɡ] (a day)</td>
<td><em>dagen</em> [dɔːɭɪ] (the day)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>ett minne</em> [ɛtːˈmɪnːə] (a memory)</td>
<td><em>minnet</em> [ˈmɪnːɛt] (the memory)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Tables 3 and 4 should serve as a reference for the IPA transcription of pronouns, since many one-syllable pronouns are exceptions to the rules of orthographic-phonetic mapping in Swedish (including long elements even though unstressed). Recognizing pronouns is also helpful in understanding the overall grammatical structure of a phrase or sentence. Pronoun forms marked with an asterisk (*) refer to *talad svenska* (an informal style of the language), which will be discussed below in greater detail. *Min/mitt/mina,* *din/ditt/dina,* *vår/vårt/våra,* and *er/ert/era* possessive pronouns agree with *en*-words, *ett*-words, and plurals, respectively.
### Table 3: Swedish pronouns (subject/object)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subject form (nominative)</th>
<th>Object form (accusative)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><em>jag</em> [jœːɡ] [joː]*</td>
<td>I</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>mig</em> [miːɡ] [meːj]*</td>
<td>me</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>du</em> [duː] (singular)</td>
<td><em>dig</em> [diːɡ] [deːj]*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>han</em> [hanː]</td>
<td><em>honom</em> [hɔnɔːm]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>hon</em> [hunː]</td>
<td><em>henne</em> [hɛnne]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>den</em> [denː] (en-form)</td>
<td><em>den</em> [denː] (en-form)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>det</em> [deːt] [deː]*</td>
<td><em>det</em> [deːt] [deː]*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>vi</em> [viː]</td>
<td><em>oss</em> [ɔːs]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>ni</em> [niː] (plural)</td>
<td><em>er</em> [ɛr]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>de</em> [deː] [dœːmː]*</td>
<td><em>dem</em> [dœːmː] [dœːmː]*</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Table 4: Swedish pronouns (possessive)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Possessive form (genitive)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><em>min/mitt/mina</em> [miːn]/[miːt]/[miːna]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>din/ditt/dina</em> [din]/[dit]/[diːna]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>sin/sitt/sina</em> [sin]/[sit]/[siːna]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>hans</em> [hans]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>hennes</em> [hɛnnes]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>dess</em> [desː]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>vår/vårt/våra</em> [voːr]/[voːrt]/[voːra]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>er/ert/era</em> [ɛr]/[ɛrt]/[ɛːra]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>deras</em> ['deːras]</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Swedish Sounds

Below, I describe each Swedish sound, its occurrence in the language, and examples. Because of the readership’s assumed familiarity with German diction, references will sometimes be made to ways in which Swedish pronunciation differs from German. Because Swedish is a Germanic language, it appears somewhat similar to German. However, care should be taken not to erroneously apply German pronunciation rules to Swedish.

I have listed the most general rules for phoneme occurrence in Swedish; however, as in all languages, exceptions occur. Significant exceptions are noted.

Vowels

As previously mentioned, the system of transcription used in this essay is roughly based on that used by Svenska Språknämnden (The Swedish Language Commission). Swedish has a large vowel inventory compared to other Germanic languages, consisting of approximately ten short-long vowel pairs, in addition to the long, open-mid front vowel [e:]. Although the members of each pair differ (sometimes marginally) in quality, the quantity (or length) is the most relevant difference in Swedish. Sources on Swedish linguistics are not completely in agreement about the exact number of vowels, manner of vowel production, and IPA symbols. Assuming a readership of primarily North American singers, I have made decisions about which symbols to use with the goals of

---

ease of use and authentic outcome in mind. The vowels used in this transcription method are summarized in Figure 1.

![Figure 1: Swedish vowels](image)

Vowels [y:], [y], [ø:], [œ], [œː], [uː] and [u] are outrounded, requiring not only a round but also a protruded lip position, exposing the teeth. This rounded lip position may seem exaggerated to non-native speakers, but it is crucial for accomplishing a true Swedish sound. Vowels [uː] and [ø] are inrounded, with the corners of the mouth pursed laterally and the teeth covered. Depending on context, the inrounded lip position may be modified by relaxing the lips for optimal resonance. The [œː] sound is slightly rounded, with the lips protruding outward; this rounding distinguishes the sound from
German [æː]. Vowels [ɔː] and [ɔ] are rounded as in English, and [iː], [i], [ɛː], [ɛ], [ɛː], [æː], [æ], and [a] are unrounded. In spoken Swedish, [ɛː] has a laterally spread mouth position; again, in singing this lateral position may be relaxed but the vowel maintains a very closed position as in German.

Several of the IPA symbols above may be unfamiliar to the average singer. Vowels [œː] and [œ], which occur only before the letter r, are similar to [œ] but more open, as indicated by their position on the vowel chart. The close central inrounded vowel [ʉː] may be accomplished by pursing the lips (“inround” the lips taut over the teeth) and saying “ew” through that mouth position. For singing, a more relaxed lip position may be necessary to avoid excess tension, producing a sound closer to [yː]. The short counterpart to [ʉː] is [o], the close-mid central inrounded vowel. (This symbol should not be confused with theta [θ], the voiceless dental fricative.) The short, close-mid central vowel [o] lies very close to the schwa [ə] on the vowel chart, and can be produced by pronouncing a schwa through a slightly inrounded mouth position.

Below are descriptions of each Swedish vowel sound plus examples from Swedish poetry.

\[ \text{[ɒː]} \]

**Description:** long, open back vowel; lips are slightly rounded.

**Hint:** say “awe” with rounded lips.

---

Example:  
*dagen* [dɑːɡən] (the day)  
*jag* [jɒɡ] (I)  

\[ a \]

**Description:**  
Short, open front vowel; bright and Italianate.

**Example:**  
*nattviol* [natˈviːl] (orchid)  
*flickan* ['fliːkan] (the girl)

\[ eː \]

**Description:**  
Long, close-mid front vowel with shadings of [iː]; lips are taut in a smile.

**Example:**  
*veta* ['veːta] (to know)  
*det* [deːt] (it)

\[ eː \]

**Description:**  
Long, open-mid front vowel.

**Example:**  
*ätit* ['eːtɪt] (eaten)

\[ e \]

**Description:**  
Short, open-mid front vowel.

**Examples:**  
*hennes* [hɛnːes] (her)  
*flämtar* [ˈflemːtar] (flickers)  
*möte* [ˈmɒːte] (meeting)

\[ iː \]

**Description:**  
Long, close front vowel.

**Example:**  
*stiger* [ˈstiːɡər] (rises)
Description: Short, close front vowel.
Examples:  
vinden ['vinːdɛn] (the wind)
fiolen [fiuːlɛn] (the violin)

[uː]
Description: Long, close back vowel pronounced with protruding, rounded lips, as if blowing out a candle.
Example:  
solen ['suːlɛn] (the sun)

[u]
Description: Short, close back vowel pronounced with protruding, rounded lips.
Examples:  
plommon ['plumːɔn] (plum)
flåtor ['fleːtur] (braids)

[oː]
Description: Long, close back vowel pronounced with rounded lips.
Example:  
sovar ['soːvar] (sleeps)
våren ['voːrɛn] (the spring)

[ɔ]
Description: Short, open back vowel pronounced with rounded lips.
Example:  
broms ['brɔms] (horsefly)
gånger ['ɡɔŋɛr] (times)
[ʊː]

**Description:** Long, close central vowel pronounced with inrounded lips.

**Hint:** say “ew.”

**Example:** *mjuk* ['mjʊːk] (soft)

**Exception:** Rarely, short [ʊ] occurs when *u* is followed by a single consonant in an unaccented syllable, for example *utav* ['ʊtəv] (out of).

[θ]

**Description:** Short, close-mid central vowel pronounced with slightly inrounded lips.

**Example:** *ung* [ɵŋː] (young)

[yː]

**Description:** Long, close front mixed vowel pronounced with very rounded lips.

**Example:** *stryka* ['stryːka] (to stroke)

[y]

**Description:** Short, closed front mixed vowel pronounced with very rounded lips.

**Example:** *lyfta* ['lyfta] (to lift)

*labyrint* [labyrɪnt] (labyrinth)

[ɛː]

**Description:** Long, near-open front vowel.

**Example:** *är* ['æːr] (is)
Description: Short, near-open front vowel.
Example: \( \textit{hjärta} \ [\text{jaɛrtə}] \) (heart)

\[ \text{[æ]} \]

Description: Long, close-mid front vowel pronounced with rounded lips.
Example: \( \textit{sköna} \ [\text{ʃøːna}] \) (beautiful)

\[ \text{[øː]} \]

Description: Short, open-mid front vowel pronounced with rounded lips.
Example: \( \textit{högsta} \ [\text{høːgsta}] \) (highest)

\[ \text{[œ]} \]

Additional Notes on Swedish Vowels

A few caveats with Swedish vowels: students of German diction should avoid neutralizing unstressed vowels to the schwa. Likewise, vowels [i], [y], and [u] should not be opened to [ɪ], [ʏ], and [ʊ], respectively. These short versions of [iː], [yː], and [uː] in Swedish maintain almost identical quality to their long counterparts, even when short and unstressed.

Consonants

Single consonants \( p, b, m, f, v, k, g, \) and \( h \), as well as phoneme [ŋ], are pronounced as in English. Single letters \( t, d, n, s, \) and \( l \) are articulated slightly more forward than in English, becoming dental. A single \( r \) is tapped \([r] \) and a double \( r \) is trilled \([r] \) (even a single \( r \) may be trilled in singing for dramatic effect). The approximant [j] is often
modified to the fricative [j] in spoken Swedish, but this should be avoided in singing. The glottal [ʔ] may be used for articulation (as in *har jag önskat* [hɔr ɹjɔ: ʔœnskát] I have wished) or emphasis of words with initial vowels at the singer’s discretion, but it is not used as extensively as in German.

The set of five retroflex consonants ([d̠] [t̠] [l̠] [n̠] [s̠]) are surely unfamiliar to most American singers. Also called “heavy” consonants, they are phonetic forms of *rd*, *rt*, *rl*, *rn*, and *rs*, respectively. They are pronounced with the tip of the tongue curled up and back onto the proper place of articulation, as indicated by each phoneme’s description:

-[d̠] voiced retroflex alveolar plosive  
-[t̠] voiceless retroflex alveolar plosive  
-[l̠] voiced retroflex dental lateral approximant  
-[n̠] voiced retroflex alveolar nasal  
-[s̠] voiceless retroflex dental fricative

To learn to articulate the retroflex consonants, practice pronouncing the non-retroflex equivalent of each before the shadow vowel [ə] (for example [də də də də]), and continue repeating while slowly curling the tongue back until the body of the tongue is concave and the retroflex equivalent (in this case, [d̠]) is reached. As will be discussed further below, the retroflex consonants are often replaced in singing with [rd], [rt], [rl], [rn], and [rs], respectively, depending on the level of formality and technical demands of the specific song. It should be noted that the retroflex consonants act sometimes as double consonants and sometimes as single consonants on preceding vowels in stressed syllables.
Two final Swedish sounds present the most difficulty for foreign singers. Like the retroflex consonants, they are often replaced in sung Swedish, so singers who experience great difficulty in their pronunciation need not worry.

The voiceless dorso-palatal/velar fricative [ʃ] is referred to as *sju-ljudet* (the seven-sound) because it is the initial sound in the word for the number “seven;” its definition with regard to pronunciation is a source of contention even among linguists. *The Handbook of the International Phonetic Association* describes it as simultaneous [ʃ] and [x], which for students of German diction should be fairly easy to execute with some practice.  

Referred to as *tjugo-ljudet* (the twenty-sound) because it is the initial sound in the word for the number “twenty,” [ɕ] is the voiceless alveolo-palatal fricative. The sound is similar to [ç] in German but is pronounced with the tongue slightly more forward and a greater force of expelled air.

Below is a listing of the consonants of Swedish and examples:

[p]

**Description:** Unvoiced bilabial plosive.

**Examples:** släppa [ˈslɛpːa] (to leave)

päron [ˈpæːːrɔn] (pear)

[b]

**Description:** Voiced bilabial plosive.

---

**Examples:**  
*blonda* [ˈblɔnːda] (blonde)  
*duːbɛlt* [dɔbɛlt] (double)

\[
\text{[t]}
\]

**Description:** Unvoiced dental plosive.

**Examples:**  
*vatten* [ˈvætːɛn] (water)  
*tungt* [ˈtʊŋt] (heavily)

\[
\text{[d]}
\]

**Description:** Voiced dental plosive.

**Examples:**  
*föddes* [ˈfɔɛdɛs] (is born)  
*dunkel* [ˈdɔŋːkɛl] (dark)

\[
\text{[k]}
\]

**Description:** Unvoiced velar plosive.

**Examples:**  
*kom* [kɔmː] (came)  
*dricka* [ˈdrɪkːa] (to drink)

\[
\text{[g]}
\]

**Description:** Voiced velar plosive.

**Examples:**  
*gungar* [ˈɡʊŋːar] (swings)  
*āger* [ˈɛːɡɛr] (possesses)  
*rygg* [ˈrjːɡː] (back)

\[
\text{[j]}
\]

**Description:** Palatal glide.
**Examples:**  
- *gifter* [ˈɡɪftɛr] (marries)  
- *sorg* [ˈsɔːrɛ] (sorrow)  
- *djup* [ˈjʉːp] (deep)  
- *hjärta* [ˈjærːtə] (heart)  
- *ljuv* [ˈjuːs] (sweet)

[**m**]

**Description:** Voiced bilabial nasal.

**Examples:**  
- *mild* [ˈmilːd] (mild)
  - *blomma* [ˈblumːa] (to bloom)

[**n**]

**Description:** Voiced dental nasal.

**Examples:**  
- *minnet* [ˈminːɛt] (the memory)  
- *natten* [ˈnatɛn] (the night)

[**ŋː**]

**Description:** Long voiced velar nasal.

**Examples:**  
- *sjunka* [ˈsœŋːka] (to sink)  
- *längtan* [ˈlœŋːtan] (longing)  
- *regn* [ˈreŋːn] (rain)

[**f**]

**Description:** Unvoiced labiodental fricative.
Examples:  *finns* [finːs] (there is)

*ljuvt* [juːft] (delightful)

[v]

**Description:** Voiced labiodental fricative.

**Examples:** *varpa* ['varpa] (to spin)

[h]

**Description:** Glottal fricative.

**Examples:** *hastig* ['hastɪɡ] (quick)

[ʔ]

**Description:** Glottal plosive.

**Occurrence:** Initial vowels can be preceded by a glottal at the discretion of the singer, particularly to make entire phrases comprehensible. The Swedish glottal is less strident than that in German, and may be altogether replaced by a hiatus (small pause).

**Examples:** *en blick så blyg och öm* [en blikː sɑː blyːɡ oːm] (a glance so shy and tender)

[s]

**Description:** Unvoiced dental fricative.

**Examples:** *skogens* ['skʊːɡɛns] (the forest’s)

*rosor* ['ruːsʊr] (roses)
[f]

**Description:** Alveolar tap.

**Examples:** *tro [truː] (belief)*

[rː]

**Description:** Alveolar trill.

**Examples:** *dörren ['dœrən] (the door)*

[d] [t] [l] [ŋ] [ʂ]

**Description:** These retroflex or “heavy” consonants are pronounced with the tip of the tongue curled up and back onto the hard palate.

**In Singing:** Retroflex consonants are not used in singing because they do not occur in *högsvensk*. In singing, use [rd], [ɾt], [rl], [ɾn], and [ɾs] (or their lengthened equivalents), respectively. The following examples show the IPA first in spoken Swedish, then in sung Swedish.

**Examples:** *bord ['bʊrd] [ˈbʊːrd] (table)*

*farlig ['fɔːrlɪɡ] [ˈfɔːːrlɪɡ] (dangerous)*

*modern ['mʊːdɛn] [ˈmʊːdɛrn] (the mother)*

*hjärta ['jɛːtə] [ˈjærːta] (heart)*

*kors [kɔːs] [ˈkɔːrs] (cross)*

[fɻ]

**Description:** Simultaneous [f] and [x].
In Singing: Substitute the seven-sound with \([f]\) to avoid excessive air loss. The following examples show the IPA first in spoken Swedish, then in sung Swedish.

Examples:  
sjö \([fjɔː]\) \([fɔː]\) (lake)  
stjärna \([fjaŋa]\) \([færna]\) (star)  
\([ɕ]\)  

Description: Voiceless alveolo-palatal fricative.

In Singing: Substitute the twenty-sound with \([ʃ]\) to avoid excessive air loss. The following examples show the IPA first in spoken Swedish, then in sung Swedish.

Examples:  
kära \([ɕɛːra]\) \([ʃɛːra]\) (dear)  
tjugo \([ɕʉːɡu]\) \([ʃʉːɡu]\) (twenty)  

Formality: Högsvensk vs. Talad Svenska

In general, sung Swedish is closer to högsvenska, or “high Swedish,” a more formal and older way of speaking, compared with talad svenska, or modern spoken Swedish. Högsvenska is similar to Finland Swedish (the dialect of Swedish spoken by the inhabitants of the western coast of Finland) and may sound somewhat archaic to the modern Swede’s ear. However, it is the pronunciation considered by most Swedish singers to be appropriate for sung Swedish, especially nineteenth century repertoire.

On a continuum of pronunciation formality, on which högsvenska lies at one end and talad svenska on the other, sung Swedish usually lies somewhere in between, tending
toward högsvenska. The main differences between högsvenska and talad svenska are summarized in Table 5.

**Table 5: Differences between högsvenska and talad svenska**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Talad svenska</th>
<th>Högsvenska</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Use of the voiceless dorso-palatal/velar fricative [ʃ] (sju-ljudet) and the voiceless alveolo-palatal fricative [ç] (tjugo-ljudet)</td>
<td>Sju-ljudet and tjugo-ljudet replaced by [ʃ]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pronunciation of pronouns jag [joː], mig [miː], dig [diː], sig [siː], det [deː], de [deː], dem [deːm], vårt [voːrt], and ert [eːrt]</td>
<td>Pronunciation of pronouns jag [joːɡ], mig [miːɡ], dig [diːɡ], sig [siːɡ], det [deːt], de [deː], dem [deːm], vårt [voːrt], and ert [eːrt]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Truncation of preposition med [meː] (with) and conjunction och [oː] (and)</td>
<td>Full pronunciation of med [meːd] and och [oːkː]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use of retroflex consonants [ɖ] [ɾ] [ɭ] [ɾ] and [ʂ]</td>
<td>Retroflex consonants replaced by [rd] [rt] [rl] [rn] [rs]</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Among live performances and recordings of some of the most renowned Swedish singers, significant differences exist regarding pronunciation. Factors that may affect pronunciation decisions include the date of composition of the song, the date of composition of the poem, song style, technical considerations, the wishes of the composer (if known), and tradition. It is important to remain consistent within one song or cycle. Högsvenska is most appropriate for nineteenth-century repertoire, and for settings of Swedish texts by the national poet of Finland, Johan Ludvig Runeberg (1804-1877). Runeberg’s countryman Jean Sibelius (1865-1957) set many of his texts. “Aspåkers-polska” by Wilhelm Peterson-Berger (1867-1942) is traditionally sung in talad svenska, fitting for the farm-girl narrator and light-hearted, playful style. Most Swedish singers use a mix of högsvenska and talad svenska, at the very least replacing [ʃ] and [ç] with [ʃ]. Likewise, many singers choose to sing without retroflex consonants, except when technical considerations demand it. For example, in the quick and upbeat
song “Äppelträd och päronträd” (Apple trees and pear trees) by Bo Linde (1933-1970),
the line *i små svarta flätor stå* (wearing little black braids) goes by so quickly it is nearly
impossible to enunciate *svarta* as [svaːɾta] instead of [svaːːa]. Composer Gunnar de
Frumerie (1908-1987), a former faculty member at Sweden’s Kungliga Musikhögskolan
(Royal College of Music), was vocal about his wish that his songs be sung in strict
högsvenska. Ultimately a singer must make an informed decision about the level of
pronunciation formality. Listening to recordings of native Swedes singing the repertoire
(when available) is helpful.

**Phonetic Transcription of Swedish: A Guide**

Tables 6 and 7 list the most general rules for phoneme occurrence in Swedish;
however, as in all languages, exceptions occur. Significant exceptions are noted below.
Although Swedish and German may appear somewhat similar, care should be taken to
avoid applying German pronunciation rules to Swedish erroneously.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 6: Swedish vowels</th>
<th>Occurrence in a stressed syllable or word</th>
<th>Example</th>
<th>Occurrence in an unstressed syllable</th>
<th>Example</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>[ɔː]</td>
<td><em>a</em> final or followed by a single consonant</td>
<td><em>dagen</em> ['dɔːɡɛn] (the day)</td>
<td><em>a</em>; occurs as an exception in some one-syllable words; short [ɔ] occurs rarely as an exception</td>
<td><em>jag</em> ['jɔɡ] (I)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[a]</td>
<td><em>a</em> followed by more than one consonant</td>
<td><em>stranden</em> ['strɔnːdɛn] (the shore)</td>
<td><em>a</em></td>
<td><em>speglades</em> ['speɡlاديːdɛs] (is reflected)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[eː]</td>
<td><em>e</em> final or followed by a single consonant</td>
<td><em>eviga</em> ['ɛvɪɡa] (eternal)</td>
<td><em>ɛ</em>; occurs as an exception in one syllable words; short [ɛ] occurs rarely as an exception</td>
<td><em>med</em> ['mɛd] (with)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><em>emellan</em> ['ɛmɛlːan] (among)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[ɛː]</td>
<td><em>ɛ</em> final or followed by a single consonant other than <em>r</em></td>
<td><em>såg</em> ['sɛːɡ] (to say)</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vowel</td>
<td>Description</td>
<td>Example</td>
<td>Other Notes</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------</td>
<td>------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>----------------------</td>
<td>-------------</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[e]</td>
<td><em>e</em> followed by more than one consonant; <em>å</em> followed by more than one consonant, except when the first is <em>r</em></td>
<td>mellan [mɛlːan] (between) långtan [lɛŋtɒn] (longing)</td>
<td>himmelen [himːɛlɛn] (the heaven)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[ɪ:]</td>
<td><em>i</em> final or followed by a single consonant</td>
<td>strider [strɪdər] (struggles)</td>
<td>mig [miːɡ] (me)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[ɪ]</td>
<td><em>i</em> followed by more than one consonant</td>
<td>vingar [vɪŋɡar] (wings)</td>
<td>fattig [fɑtːɪɡ] (poor)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[ʊ]</td>
<td><em>o</em> final or followed by a single consonant</td>
<td>skogar [skʊɡar] (forests)</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[ʊ:]</td>
<td><em>o</em> followed by more than one consonant</td>
<td>blomma [blʊmːa] (flower)</td>
<td>yeckor [vɛkʊr] (weeks)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[ʊː]</td>
<td><em>å</em> final or followed by a single consonant</td>
<td>vågen [vɔːɡen] (the wave)</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[ɔː]</td>
<td><em>å</em> followed by more than one consonant</td>
<td>mäste [mɒste] (must)</td>
<td>original [ɔɹɪˈɡɪnəl] (original) ånya [ɔˈnɪːya] (anew)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[øː]</td>
<td><em>u</em> final or followed by a single consonant</td>
<td>ljus [ˈljuːs] (light)</td>
<td>du [dʊ] (you)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[ʊ]</td>
<td><em>u</em> followed by more than one consonant</td>
<td>sjunga [ˈʃʊŋɡa] (to sing)</td>
<td>misskunslös [ˌmɪskʊnslaːs] (merciless)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[yː]</td>
<td><em>y</em> final or followed by a single consonant</td>
<td>blyg [ˈblyʊɡ] (shy)</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[y]</td>
<td><em>y</em> followed by more than one consonant</td>
<td>tyst [ˈtyst] (silent)</td>
<td>labyrinth [ˈlæbərɪnt] (labyrinth)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[æː]</td>
<td><em>a</em> followed by final <em>r</em></td>
<td>nåra [ˈnærə] (near)</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[æ]</td>
<td><em>a</em> followed by <em>r</em> plus one or more consonants</td>
<td>hjärta [ˈjɛrta] or [ˈjætə] (heart)</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[œː]</td>
<td><em>ö</em> final or followed by a single consonant other than <em>r</em></td>
<td>över [ˈøːvɛr] (over)</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[œ]</td>
<td><em>ö</em> followed by more than one consonant, except when the first is <em>r</em></td>
<td>strömmen [ˈstrœmːɛn] (the stream)</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[œː]</td>
<td><em>ö</em> followed by final <em>r</em></td>
<td>hör [ˈhœːr] (hear)</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[œ]</td>
<td><em>ö</em> followed by <em>r</em> plus one or more consonants</td>
<td>dörren [ˈdœrɛn] (the door)</td>
<td>förtvina [fœrtˈviːna] or [fœːrtˈviːna] (to wither)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Table 7: Swedish consonants**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Phoneme</th>
<th>Occurrence</th>
<th>Example</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>[b]</td>
<td>b</td>
<td><em>blänker</em> [ˈbleːŋkə], (shines) <em>dubbel</em> [ˈdubːɛl], (double)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[d]</td>
<td>d</td>
<td><em>stranden</em> [ˈstrændən], (the shore) <em>föddes</em> [ˈfɔːdːɛs], (was born)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[f]</td>
<td>f</td>
<td><em>fält</em> [ˈfelt], (field)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>v when clustered with an unvoiced consonant</td>
<td><em>ljūvt</em> [ˈljœvt], (delightful)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[g]</td>
<td>g before a, o, u, å or a consonant</td>
<td><em>gul</em> [ˈguːl], (yellow) <em>frågor</em> [ˈfroːɡər], (asks)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>final g, except when preceded by r</td>
<td><em>modig</em> [ˈmuːdɪɡ], (brave) <em>råg</em> [ˈɾoːɡ], (rye) <em>rygg</em> [ˈɾyɡː], (back)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[h]</td>
<td>h</td>
<td><em>har</em> [ˈhɔːr], (has)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[j]</td>
<td>g before e, i, o, ä, or ö</td>
<td><em>ge</em> [jeː], (give) <em>göm</em> [jo Savannah], (hide)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>g in final –rg</td>
<td><em>sorg</em> [ˈsɔːrɡ], (sorrow)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>j</td>
<td><em>jätte</em> [ˈjɛtte], (very)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>dj, gj, hj, lj</td>
<td><em>ljús</em> [ˈljus], (light)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Phoneme</td>
<td>Example</td>
<td>Translation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------</td>
<td>---------</td>
<td>-------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[k]</td>
<td>k (except before i, ä, and ö)</td>
<td>krona [krona] (crown)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[k:]</td>
<td>ck</td>
<td>suckar [sɔːkər] (sighs)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>ch</td>
<td>och [ɔː] (and)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| [m] | m | med [med] (with)  
himmelen [himːelen] (the heaven) |
| [l] | l | blott [blɔːt] (only)  
kvällen [kvɛlːen] (the evening) |
| [n] | n | vinden [ˈvɪndɛn] (the wind)  
känna [ˈkänːna] (to feel) |
| [ŋ] | ng | vingar [ˈvɪŋːər] (wings) |
| | gn (except as onset) | regnar [ˈrɛŋːər] (rains) |
| | nk pronounced [ŋk] | dunkel [ˈdʊŋːəl] (dusky) |
| [p] | p | päronträd [pærəˈrɔntrɛːd] (pear trees)  
läppar [ˈleːpər] (lips) |
| [r] and [ɾ] | r | rosor [ruːsɔːr] (roses)  
större [ˈstɔːrəː] (greater) |
<p>| [s] | s | minns [ˈmɪnːs] (remember) |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Symbol</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Examples</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>[t]</td>
<td>t</td>
<td>stråle</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>[ˈstrœːle] (ray)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>vatten</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>[ˈvatːen] (water)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[v]</td>
<td>v, except when clustered with an unvoiced consonant</td>
<td>våren</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>[ˈvoːrɛn] (the spring)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[ʔ]</td>
<td>before initial vowels, at the singer’s discretion</td>
<td>blyg och öm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>[ˈblyɡ ˈɔːk ˈœmː] (shy and tender)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[d]</td>
<td>rd</td>
<td>ord</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>[ʊrd] or [ʊrːd] (word)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[l]</td>
<td>rt</td>
<td>svart</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>[ˈsvaːrt] or [ˈsvaːrt] (black)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[l]</td>
<td>rl</td>
<td>farlig</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>[ˈfɔːrːlɪɡ] or [ˈfɔːrːlɪɡ] (dangerous)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[ŋ]</td>
<td>rn</td>
<td>garn</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>[ˈɡoːn] or [ˈɡoːːn] (yarn)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[s]</td>
<td>rs</td>
<td>kors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>[ˈkoːsː] or [ˈkɔːrs] (cross)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[ʃ]</td>
<td>sj, sk, skj, stj</td>
<td>sjö</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>[ˈʃœː] or [ˈʃœː] (lake)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>stjärna</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>[ˈʃœːrːnə] or [ˈʃœːrːnə] (star)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[ɕ]</td>
<td>k before i, ä, and ö</td>
<td>kära</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>[ˈkœːra] or [ˈkœːra] (dear)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>kinder</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>[ˈkɪnder] or [ˈkɪnder] (cheeks)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[t]</td>
<td>tjugo</td>
<td>tjugo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>[tjuːɡu] (twenty)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Notes and Exceptions

“Final” in Tables 5 and 6 refers to word-final or syllable-final position. For example, *skyar* (clouds), divided into syllables *sky*-ar, is transcribed [*fyːr*] ([fyːr] in *talad svenska*). In a consonant cluster closing a stressed syllable, the first consonant is long. For example, *tystnad* (silence) is pronounced [*tysːnad*].

The letter “o” is sometimes pronounced as the letter “å” ([ɔː] and [ɔ] rather than [uː] and [u]). The only way to determine this is to look a word up in a dictionary with phonetic transcriptions. Compare *blomma* [blumːa] (to bloom) and *blomster* [blɔmːstɛr] (flower).

Many one-syllable words are unaccented but still include long elements, such as some pronouns (see chart above) and prepositions. Meaning-loaded one-syllable words, including nouns and verbs, are generally stressed in the context of a phrase or sentence, and are therefore transcribed using the rules of complementary quantity.

The elements of compound words do not change phonetically when joined, except when creating *r* plus *d, t, l, n, or s* combinations in *talad svenska*. The occurrence rules for retroflex consonants cross nearly all morpheme and word boundaries, and the effect is also cumulative (for example an *r* preceding *st* makes both the *s* and *t* retroflex), as seen in Table 8:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Orthographic spelling</th>
<th><em>Talad svenska</em> transcription</th>
<th><em>Högsvenska</em> transcription</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>åker dit (goes there)</td>
<td>[ɔkeːdːit]</td>
<td>[ɔker dːit]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>förtärer (consumes)</td>
<td>[fɔrːtɛːːːr]</td>
<td>[fɔrːtɛːːːr]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>första (first)</td>
<td>[fɔːːsta]</td>
<td>[fɔːːsta]</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Recall that the retroflex consonants may act as either double or single consonants on preceding vowels in stressed syllables. For example, svart (black) is pronounced [svaґt]; in contrast, sorlet (the murmur) is pronounced [suґl].

Världen (world) and its indefinite form en värld is an oddity in that the l is silent. Depending on whether one is using högsvenska or talad svenska, it is transcribed [væreґden] or [væreґdeŋ].

When transcribing Swedish, especially nineteenth-century poetry, one may come across some archaic spellings. Words beginning with hv, such as hvad, hvar, hvilken (what, where, and why), are equivalent to modern Swedish words vad, var, and vilken. Pronunciation is not affected by the initial h. In some older forms e is used instead of ä, as in hjerta versus hjärta (heart). Again, the pronunciation is identical; the only difference is orthographic.

**Three steps to transcribe Swedish into the IPA**

*Step 1: Determine Phonetic Stress*

Determine which syllables are stressed in the text being transcribed. Most reliable Swedish-English dictionaries include stress indications in each word entry. (Note: the letters “å,” “ä,” and “ö” appear at the end of the Swedish alphabet, and are therefore listed at the end of any Swedish dictionary.) *Norstedts stora svensk-engelska ordbok*[^36] is the most comprehensive published bilingual dictionary, including even poetic words unlikely to be found in pocket dictionaries. *Norstedts* dictionaries are also

available online (www.ord.se) on the tab marked “Engelska Gratis” (free Swedish-English and English-Swedish translations).\textsuperscript{37} The “Engelska Plus,” a more comprehensive version, now requires a monthly paid subscription. Unfortunately, neither online version includes written accent marks, but accent can be determined by listening to a recording of each word (a caveat: the recordings use talad svenska). Another reliable resource is the online \textit{People’s Dictionary}.\textsuperscript{38} Although not as comprehensive as \textit{Norstedts} (often inadequate for poetic translation work), \textit{People’s Dictionary} does include an accent mark preceding the nucleus (vowel) of each primary stressed syllable. It does not indicate secondary stress. As mentioned earlier, with some basic familiarity of Swedish grammar one can learn to identify meaning-loaded morphemes and therefore predict stress. Meaning-loaded one-syllable words, including nouns and verbs, are generally stressed in the context of a phrase or sentence; this assumed stress is indicated throughout this paper.

When other methods fail, word stress can be guessed with some degree of accuracy. Especially in folk music arrangements and settings of strophic/rhyming texts, word accent often coincides with musical accent, but it is advisable to confirm conclusions with another source.

\textit{Step 2: Apply the “Complementary Quantity” principle}

In each stressed syllable, determine which element is long. As seen above, a vowel followed by a single consonant is long. A vowel followed by multiple consonants (even those that map to a single phoneme, such as such as [ŋ:]), and sometimes the


retroflex consonants) is short. In the case of multiple consonants, the first consonant in
the cluster is long.

Double consonants in Swedish are transcribed as long. The pronunciation of
these long consonants is identical to that of double consonants in Italian. Compare:

Swedish: himmelen [himːɛlɛn] (the heaven)

Italian: fiamma [fjamːma] (flame)

However, the transcription of double vowels in Swedish as long (rather than double, as is
standard in Italian IPA for singers) most clearly reflects the complementary quantity
feature, and maintains standard transcription conventions of Swedish linguistics.

Step 3: Apply the Vowel/Consonant Occurrence Rules Above

Apply the mapping rules above, always keeping in mind which element in each
word is long. Review the table of pronouns and note that many do not follow the rule of
complementary quantity.
CHAPTER 3
Repertoire

The Swedish Style

In a recent performance at Stockholm’s Konserthus, soprano Ida Falk Winland sang a recital of which the first half was all Swedish art song. After concluding this portion of the program, she announced, “now we leave everything that is dark and Swedish behind us,” eliciting hearty laughter from the audience. Although there exist some “upbeat” Swedish songs, for example Linde’s Äppleträd och päronträd and Sibelius’s Tennis vid Trianon, programming an entire recital of Swedish songs presents a challenge since so many of the texts, as well as their music settings, are melancholic or heavy.

Defining a national or regional style is always problematic; Swedish classical music is no exception as it encompasses a vast range of styles, genres, and subject matter, even within the output of a single composer. When examining the most well-known Swedish songs, however, certain traits and themes are predominant. As mentioned above, melancholy, loneliness, stillness, life of the “folk,” nature (especially the sea), and the contrast between light and dark (so starkly defined by the extreme seasons of the northern climate) are all common themes in Swedish song.

Most of the standard Swedish song repertoire is from the Romantic or late Romantic period, and even songs from the twentieth century often exhibit neo-Romantic traits. Musical settings range from lush, dense rhapsody (as in Sibelius) to spare, simple settings (typical of Alfvén), to dance-like folk melodies (Peterson-Berger). All of these elements contribute to what is often referred to as the “Nordic color,” yet so difficult to
define concretely. A comprehensive theoretical analysis of the Swedish song repertoire has not been undertaken; perhaps the manifestation of Swedish style may be revealed in trends in harmonic language. Again, generalizations are difficult; the jazz-inspired chords of a Bo Linde song or the Impressionistic settings of Gösta Nystroem (1890-1966) are examples of the diversity of Swedish classical song.

**Repertoire Suggestions**

Frumerie’s “Som en våg” (As a wave) is a standard song for undergraduate singers in Sweden and an appropriate choice for a first foray into the Swedish repertoire. The cycle to which it belongs, *Hjärtats sånger* (Songs of the heart), op. 27, is a setting of poetry by Pär Lagerkvist (1891-1974), who in 1951 won the Nobel Prize in literature “for the artistic vigour and true independence of mind with which he endeavors in his poetry to find answers to the eternal questions confronting mankind.”³⁹ Of the six songs, “Som en våg” is the simplest, and “När du sluter mina ögon” (When you close my eyes) is similarly appropriate for young singers.

Unlike German lieder, Swedish songs are not generally transposed into many different keys, and it is common for both low and high voices to sing a song in the same key. (Oddly, Gehrmans Musikförlag publishes both medium and high editions of the *Hjärtats sånger*, but the two versions are identical) The plethora of settings of lieder for low, medium, and high voices is likely due to the historical marketability of German song; Scandinavian song has not been so widely circulated. Regardless of the reason,

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current tradition is that Swedish sopranos and mezzo-sopranos share a large amount of repertoire, and likewise with tenors and baritones. Some of the “greatest hits” of Swedish song are sung by all voice types.

Many songs by Gösta Nystroem (1890-1966) are traditionally sung by sopranos. His impressionistic cycle *Själ och landskap: Nya sånger vid havet* (Soul and landscape: New songs by the sea), settings of poems by Ebba Lindqvist (1908-1995), have been recorded by Ida Falk Winland and Miah Persson in the last decade. These songs take the voice higher than many other Swedish *romanser*. Nystroem’s *Sinfonia del mare* (Symphony no. 3) includes a beautiful lyric vocal solo; a version published for voice and piano is performed in recital by sopranos and mezzo-sopranos alike.

The three-song cycle *De vilda svanarna* (The wild swans) by Sigurd von Koch (1879-1919) is musically challenging, and requires a substantial mezzo-soprano voice. The three songs have been beautifully recorded by Anne Sofie von Otter. Hugo Alfvén (1872-1960) wrote “Skogen sover” (The forest sleeps), a standard in the Swedish tenor repertoire. Although a crowd-pleaser, the vocal line is deceptively easy and requires great technical facility to navigate the *passaggio* seamlessly. It is said to have been a favorite encore piece of the famous Swedish tenor Jussi Björling. The excellent cycle for baritone, Rangström’s *Ur kung Eriks visor*, has already been mentioned.

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Songs of Sibelius

Some of the most commonly-performed Swedish songs, especially outside Scandinavia, are those of Jean Sibelius (1865-1957), who was a native speaker of Swedish. Throughout his career, Sibelius composed over one hundred songs. While some are in Finnish and German (and even one in English), most of his songs are in Swedish. Although he is best known for his orchestral works, Sibelius’s first published composition was a song, the “Serenade” published in the 1888 anthology Det sjungande Finland (The singing Finland). The text is by Runeberg, a poet whose texts Sibelius would set more often than any other and who “became for Sibelius what Goethe had become for Schubert.”42 The seven Runeberg songs of op. 13 represented Sibelius’s first published work as the sole composer (1892).

An overarching theme in the art songs of Sibelius is the “nexus of the Natural and Human worlds,”43 according to Robert Keane. Biographers consistently note the composer’s deep love of nature and his frequent retreats to Ainola, his country home on Lake Tuusula. According to Keane, the 19th-century Romantic appreciation of nature was intensified in the Nordic countries, where “the savage cruelties of winter and the brilliant, dazzling madness of summer are so strong as to be potently physical.”44 Many of Sibelius’s most famous songs deal with themes of nature and reflections of human emotion and experience in the natural world.

42 Gustav Djupsjöbacka, “Sibelius and His Poets,” in Sibelius in the Old and New World: Aspects of His Music, Its Interpretation, and Reception, ed. Timothy L. Jackson et al., 15-26 (Frankfurt: Lang, 2005), 19; Sibelius’s first musical connection with the poet was his use of the theme from Vårt Land in the Piano Quartet in D Minor (1884).


44 Ibid., 25.
Sibelius’s most well-known songs, from opp. 36 and 37, were performed throughout Europe by soprano Ida Ekman, for whose voice many of Sibelius’s songs were specifically composed; recordings made of Ekman from just after the turn of the century are extant. The songs of op. 36, first published by Helsingfors Nya Musikhandel with German translations are consistently dark (except the perky, onomatopoeic “Bollspelet”), and include:

“Svarta rosor” (Black roses), text by Josephson  
“Men min fägel märks dock icke” (But my bird is long in homing), text by Runeberg  
“Bollspelet vid Trianon” (Tennis at Trianon), text by Fröding  
“Säv, såv, susa” (Reed, reed, rustle), text by Fröding  
“Marssnön” (March snow), text by Wecksell  
“Demanten på marssnön” (The Diamond on the March snow), text by Wecksell

The most often performed piece of op. 37 is the Runeberg setting “Flickan kom ifrån sin älsklings möte.” The set also includes:

“Den första kyssen” (The first kiss), text by Runeberg  
“Lasse liten” (Little Lasse), text by Topelius  
“Soluppgång” (Sunrise), text by Hedberg  
“Var det en dröm?” (Was it a dream?), text by Wecksell

Sibelius did not conceive of opp. 36 and 37 as song cycles, and in fact did not compose any true cycles in the tradition of Schubert or Schumann.45 The songs vary greatly in style, ranging from simple “Nordic” settings to dramatic settings reminiscent of Tchaikovsky. Each song may be explored and evaluated as an individual work, and programmed as such in performance.

A typical trait of Sibelius’s songs is the lack of postlude. This contrasts with the tradition of German lieder, in which the postlude serves an important dramatic purpose.

45 Djupsjöbacka, “Sibelius and his Poets,” 23.
The tendency of Sibelius to omit postludes may be connected to his concept of the text/music relationship. He was inspired by literature since childhood, saying, “outside music, literature interested me most.” However, on the subject of text and music: “I am not a literary composer. In my opinion, music starts where the words end. My songs may be performed without words. They are not as dependent on the poem as the songs of other composers.” This comment does reinforce the tendency for Sibelius’s songs to have one single continuous emotional and dramatic effect; he is not one for miniature gesture within a given song.

In the 1820s, Runeberg was highly influenced by Serbian popular poetry, which was very much in vogue in the literary world at the time. Runeberg incorporated elements of the narrative structure, style, and rhythmic devices of the Serbian poetry into his own work, particularly structured dialogue outlining a “concentrated drama” and the frequent use of a young girl as protagonist. The first poem in his collection *Idyll och epigram* (Idylls and epigrams), “Flickan kom ifrån sin älsklings möte,” was set by Sibelius more than a half century later (see translation in Chapter 4). The poem recounts a story of lost innocence. Three distinct characters speak: the narrator, the girl, and her mother.

Sibelius’s setting of this text is one of his most performed songs, although the passionate music is in stark contrast to the simple folk idiom of the poem. The song is set entirely syllabically, giving a sense of singer-as-storyteller. Sibelius begins in D flat.

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46 Ibid., 16.

47 Tore Wretö, *J. L. Runeberg*, trans. by Zelek S. Herman (Boston: Twayne Publishers, 1980), 92-4. Wilhelm Stenhammar (1871-1927), a Swedish composer in the late Romantic tradition of Scandinavia, had published a setting of the same text in 1893, eight years before Sibelius’s version. Whether Sibelius was aware of Stenhammar’s setting is unknown.
major, recalling the Piano Concerto No. 1 by Tchaikovsky (who was immensely influential on Sibelius). He sets the first two stanzas identically because of their parallel subject matter: the girl concealing her tryst from her mother. At first the listener might assume the song is a sentimental account of young love, but on the downbeat of the third stanza, Sibelius signals musically that the story is more complicated: the girl does not return home with reddened lips or hands, but with white cheeks. A key change to C sharp minor after the double bar (enharmonically the minor mode of D flat major) and heavy, static chords in the accompaniment lend a sense of drama and anxiety. The vocal line continues to follow a similar melodic shape as the incipit lines of the first two stanzas, but diverges with the mother’s interrogation, “What has made your cheeks so pale?” At this same point, the piano breaks into a turbulent accompaniment, reflecting the anxiety of the mother and devastation of the girl.

In the fourth stanza, the song returns to D flat major when the girl recalls the early meetings with her lover. The vocal melody here echoes the melodic line in the right hand of the piano from the beginning of the song, recalling the hopeful sentimentality at the beginning of the story. This may also mirror the “call-and-response” device of the Kalevalic recitation that was so influential on Sibelius, in which the piano and voice are representing two equal partners in story telling.

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48 The Kalevala is a collection of epic poetry from the Kalevala region of Finland. First compiled in 1835 by Elias Lönnrot, the poetry was previously transmitted orally. The text is in trochaic tetrameter, often sung by two alternating singers. This meter, manifested musically as an implied or explicit 5/4 meter, was used by Sibelius in many of his compositions. The Kalevala, an important literary symbol of the Finnish nationalist movement, also inspired Sibelius’s works Kullervo, Pohjola’s Daughter, Tapiola, and the Lemminkäinen Suite. James Hepokoski and Fabian Dahlström, “Sibelius, Jean,” in Grove Music Online. Oxford Music Online, http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com/subscriber/article/grove/music/43725 (accessed September 24, 2009).
On the line “Finally she came home with pale cheeks,” C sharp minor returns as the horrifying reality of the lover’s betrayal is revealed. Sibelius stretches the singer to the edge of vocal comfort: he ends the song on a low c-sharp, which must carry over dense *forte* chords in the piano. While this seems anti-climactic (one might expect a shrieking soprano high note to portray the girl’s anguish), the lack of postlude is typical of Sibelius. It is quite effective in creating a “stunned” impression in the listener when the betrayal of the lover is revealed.
CHAPTER 4
TRANSLATIONS AND TRANSCRIPTIONS

Unless otherwise noted, all translations are my own.

Composer: Hugo Alfvén (1872-1960)

Swedish composer, conductor, and violinist Hugo Alfvén began his musical career as a violinist in the opera orchestra of Stockholm. For more than five decades (1904-1957), he conducted the Siljan Choir in the region of Dalarna.49

As a composer, he often drew on folk songs and themes, and his use of harmony was influenced by his studies in painting. He wrote three “Swedish Rhapsodies” for orchestra, of which the first, “Midsommarvaka” (Midsummer vigil) is well-known outside of Scandinavia. His song “Skogen sover” is known to have been a favorite recital encore piece of Swedish tenor Jussi Björling.

“Skogen sover” (The forest sleeps)
from Sju dikter av Ernest Thiel (Seven poems by Ernest Thiel), op. 28
Text: Ernest Thiel (1859-1947)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Skogen sover.</th>
<th>The forest sleeps.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Strimman på fästet flämtar matt.</td>
<td>A streak of light flickers in the firmament.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dagen vakar i juninatt.</td>
<td>The day keeps vigil in the June night.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tystnat har nyss hennes muntra skratt,</td>
<td>Her merry laughter has just fallen silent,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>redan hon sover.</td>
<td>already she is asleep.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vid hennes sida jag stum mig statt.</td>
<td>I silently lie by her side.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kärleken vakar över sin skatt,</td>
<td>Love keeps vigil over its treasure,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>kärleken vakar i juninatt.</td>
<td>love keeps vigil in the June night.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Skogen sover.
[ˈskʊːɡn sˈøːvɛɾ]

Strimman på fästet flämtar matt.
[ˈstrɪmːan poː ˈfɛstɛt ˈflemtːɐt ˈmatː]
Dagen vakar i juninatt.
[ˈdœːɡən ˈvɔːkar i ˈjʉniːnatː]

Tystnat har nyss hennes muntra skratt,
[tysːtnat hɔr ˈnysː ˈhɛːnsː ˈmɵntra ˈskrattː]

redan hon sover.
[ˈrɛːdɔn hʊn ˈsoːver]

Vid hennes sida jag stum mig statt.
[vid ˈhɛːnsː ˈsida ˈjɒːg ˈstɔm ˈmɪɡ ˈstɔːtː]

Kärleken vakar över sin skatt,
[ˈjɛːrleːken ˈvɔːkar ˈɔːver sin ˈskatː]

kärleken vakar i juninatt.
[ˈjɛːrleːken ˈvɔːkar i ˈjʉniːnatː]

Composer: Gunnar de Frumerie (1908-1987)

Gunnar de Frumerie received his first piano instruction from his mother, and from 1928-1931 studied piano and composition in Paris and Vienna. In 1945 he was appointed piano teacher at the Musikhögskolan in Stockholm, becoming professor in 1962. The song cycle Hjärtats sånger (1942, revised 1976) exhibits the dualism of Frumerie’s compositional style. The simplicity and sparseness of “När du sluter mina ögon” and “Som en våg” contrast with the complexity of “Saliga väntan” and “Du är min Afrodite.”

Hjärtats sånger (Songs of the heart), op. 27, I-VI
Texts: Pär Lagerkvist (1891-1974)

I. “När du sluter mina ögon” (When you close my eyes)

När du sluter mina ögon
med din goda hand
blir det bara ljus omkring mig
som i soligt land.

When you close my eyes
with your kind hand
only light surrounds me
as in a sunny land.

_________________________________

Du i skymning vill mig sänka,
men allt blir till ljus!
Du kan intet annat skänka mig
ärn ljus, blott ljus.

När du sluter mina ögon
[naer du: 'sluter 'mina 'ogon]

med din goda hand
[me:d din 'guda 'hand]

blir det bara ljus omkring mig
['blir det 'bara 'jus om'kri:j: mig]

som i soligt land.
[som: i 'soligt 'land]

Du i skymning vill mig sänka,
[du i 'symning vil: mig 'sen:ka]

men allt blir till ljus!
[men: 'alt blir til: 'jus]

Du kan intet annat skänka mig
[du: 'kan: 'intet 'anat 'fen:ka mig]

ärn ljus, blott ljus.
[en 'jus blot: 'jus]

II. “Ur djupet av min själ” (From the depths of my soul)

Ur djupet av min själ
där det är vår hos mig,
där blomsterängar stå,
en blomst jag giver dig,
en lilja het som blod
men ren och vit som snö.
Den leva kan hos dig
och den hos dig kan dö.
När bladen bredas ut
och deras doft dig når,
då vet du att min själ
som ljusa ängder står.
Den vissnar i din hand,
på ljus och älskad bår.
Ett minne blott hos dig
utav ett hjärtas vår.

From the depths of my soul
where it is spring,
where there are blooming meadows,
I give you a flower,
a lily hot as blood
but clean and white as snow.
It can live with you
and it can die with you.
When the petals spread out
and their fragrance reaches you,
then you know that my soul
is like light meadows.
It withers in your hand,
on the sweet sepulcher.
Merely a memory of you
out of a heart’s spring.
Ur djupet av min själ
[djur 'dy:pet av min: fe:l]

där det är vår hos mig,
[dær de:it ær 'vor hus miɡ]

där blomsterängar stå,
[dær 'blomster 'ɛŋɡar 'sto:]

en blomst jag giver dig,
[en: 'blomst jɔɡ 'jɪver diɡ]

en lilja het som blod
[en: 'lɪlja 'hɛt som: 'blʊd]

men ren och vit som snö.
[men: 'rɛn œk: 'vɪt som: 'snɔ]

Den leva kan hos dig
[den: 'leva 'kan: hus 'diɡ]

och den hos dig kan dö.
[œk: den: hus 'diɡ kan: 'dɔ]

När bladen bredas ut
[nær 'blæden 'breːdas ut]

och deras doft dig när,
[œk: 'deɪras 'dɔft diɡ 'nær]

då vet du att min själ
[do: 'veːt du: at: min: fe:l]

som ljusa ängder står.
[soːm: 'ljuːsa 'ɛŋɡer 'stoːr]

Den visnar i din hand,
[den: 'visnar i din: 'hænd]

på ljuv och älskad bår.
[poː 'ljuːv œk: 'ɛlskaːd 'bɔːr]

Ett minne blott hos dig
[et: 'mine blɔt: hus 'diɡ]

utav ett hjärta sår.
[œtʰøːv et: 'jaːrta 'sɔːr]
III. “Saliga väntan” (Blessed expectation)

Saliga väntan på dig som skall komma när i din själ den kärlek kan blomma som med sin eld förtärer mig.
Saliga väntan på dig, på dig.

Blessed expectation of you who will come when in your soul love can bloom as when your fire consumes me. Blessed expectation of you, of you.

Himmelens vidgas, på jorden är stilla.
Djupt i min själ är det stilla, stilla.
Bara den eld som förtärer mig stiger ur djupen att söka dig.

Heaven opens, the earth is still. Deep in my soul it is still, still. Only that fire which consumes me rises from the deep to search for you.

Och du skall komma, du heta bränder.
Bliva till blommor i mina händer,
till en ovansklig vår hos mig då du skall visa:
- Jag älskar dig.

And you will come, you hot flames. To become flowers in my hands, to simple spring with me then you will whisper: - I love you.

Saliga väntan på dig som skall komma
[nœːlːa ˈventːan poː diːg ːskːalː ˈkomːa]

när i din själ den kärlek kan blomma
[nœːr i diːn ˈfeːlː denː ˈʃærːlek kanː ˈblumːa]

som med sin eld förtärer mig.
[ʃœːmː ːmeːdː sinː ˈɛlːd fœːrtɛːɾeːr miːɡ]

Saliga väntan på dig, på dig.
[ˈsolːiga ˈventːan poː ˈdiːg poː ˈdiːɡ]

Himmelen vidgas, på jorden är stilla.
[himːelːn ˈvidɡas poː ˈjuːːrden æːr ˈstilːa]

Djupt i min själ är det stilla, stilla.
[juːpt i miːn ˈfeːlː æːr detː ˈstilːa ˈstilːa]

Bara den eld som förtärer mig
[ˈbɔːɾa danː ˈɛlːd ːsomː fœːrtɛːɾeːr miːɡ]

stiger ur djupen att söka dig.
[ˈstiːɡer ur ˈjuːpːen atː ˈsɔːːka diːɡ]

Och du skall komma, du heta bränder.
[ɔkː duː skːalː ˈkɔːma duː ˈheːta ˈbreːndər]

Bliva till blommor i mina händer,
[ˈbliːva tilː ˈblumːor i miːna ˈhendər]
till en ovansklig vår hos mig
[till: en ‘u,vansklig ‘vor hius mi:g]

då du skall viska:
[do: du: skal: ‘viska]

Jag älskar dig.
[jog ‘elskar dig]

IV. “Det blir vackert där du går” (It becomes beautiful where you walk)

Det blir vackert där du går
marken, stigen,
stranden som du följer,
allt tycks ljusna, glädjas,
allt som ser dig.
Kan väl jorden glädjas
för att någon stiger på den,
trampar på den,
en som den älskar?
Fråga inte mig.
Jag ser blott skenet,
hur det dröjer kring dig,
svävar över marken,
som om jorden log.
Stig på den,
som gläds att se dig lycklig.
Blott inte hårt,
Som om du visste
att du var älskad.

It becomes beautiful where you walk,
the earth, the path,
the shore you follow,
all seems to lighten, become joyful,
everything that sees you.
Can the earth delight
that someone walks upon it,
treads upon it,
one who loves it?
Do not ask me.
I only see the light,
how it lingers round you,
floats over the ground,
as if the earth smiled.
Walk on it,
which takes joy in seeing you happy.
Only not heavily,
as if you knew
that you were loved.

Det blir vackert där du går
[det blir ‘vak:ert dær du: ‘gor]

marken, stigen,
[marken ‘sti-gen]

stranden som du följer,
[‘stranden som: du: ‘foelj:er]

allt tycks ljusna, glädjas,
[‘alt tyks ‘jusna ‘gle:di:jas]

allt som ser dig.
[‘alt som: ‘ser dig]
Kan väl jorden glädjas
[kan: vel: ‘jurden ’gledjjas]

för att någon stiger på den,
[fær at: ‘nɔgon ‘stiger po: den:]

trampar på den,
[tramp:par po: den:]

en som den älskar?
[en: som: den: ‘elskar]

Fråga inte mig.
[froɡa inte miɡ]

Jag ser blott skenet,
[j빙 se:r blot: ‘fenet]

hur det dröjer kring dig.
[hur de:tr ‘droj:j kring dig]

svävar över marken,
[svevar ‘ove:ry mɑrken]

som om jorden log.
[sɔm: ɔm: ‘jurden ‘luɡ]

Stig på den,
[stig po: den:]

som gläds att se dig lycklig.
[sɔm: ‘gled:s at: se: dig ‘lyklig]

Blott inte hårt,
[blɔt: inte ‘hɔrt]

Som om du visste
[ɔm: du: ‘visste]

att du var älskad.
[att: du: ær ‘elskad]

V. “Du är min Afrodite” (You are my Aphrodite)

Du är min Afrodite,
[du ær mi:n ‘afrodi:t]

You are my Aphrodite,

den ur havet födda,
[den ur ‘havet fɔ’dɑ:]
she who is born from the sea,
så ljus som vågens driva
av skum i solen lyftad.

Och mitt djupa, dunkla hav,
mitt liv, min skumma grav,
mitt hjärtas oro, tunga ro,
allt som i solen ej fått bo.

Du är min Afrodite,
den ur djupet födda.

---

so light like the wave’s crest
of foam, lifted in the sun.

And my deep, murky seas,
my life, my foamy grave,
my heart’s anxiety, heavy stillness,
all that could not live in the sun.

You are my Aphrodite,
she who is born from the sea.

---

Du är min Afrodite,
[du: æ:r min: afrOdite]

den ur havet födda,
[den: ur ‘havet ‘foedә]

så ljus som vågens driva
[so: ’jus som: ’voğens ’driva]

av skum i solen lyftad.
[av ’skum: i ’sulen lyftad]

Och mitt djupa, dunkla hav,
[ɔ:k mit: ’ju:pa ’dəplka ’hav]

mitt liv, min skumma grav,
[mit: ’li:v min: ’skɔma grav]

mitt hjärtas oro, tunga ro,
[mit: ’jærtas ’ru: ’tɔŋa ru:]

allt som i solen ej fått bo.
[’alt som: i ’sulen ej: ’fot: ’bu:]

---

Du är min Afrodite,
[du: æ:r min: afrOdite]

den ur djupet födda.
[den: ur ’ju:pet ’foedә]

VI. “Som en våg” (As a wave)

Som en våg, sköljd upp mot stranden,
vilar du hos mig.
När jag sneker dig med handen
skälver havet ini dig.
Djupa hav,

As a wave washed up on the shore,
you rest beside me.
When I caress you with my hand
the sea trembles within you.
Deep sea,
som födde dig.
Kom intill mig, nära till mig,
djup som blivit du.
Detta som inom dig skälver
är ditt hjärta ju,
är ett mänskohjärta ju.

Som en våg, sköljd upp mot stranden,
which gave birth to you.
Come beside me, closer to me,
depth that has become you.
That which trembles within you
is surely your heart,
is surely a human heart.

Som en våg, sköljd upp mot stranden,

vilar du hos mig.

När jag smeker dig med handen

skälver havet ini dig.

Djupa hav,

Kom intill mig, nära till mig,

djup som blivit du.

Detta som inom dig skälver

är ditt hjärta ju,

är ett mänskohjärta ju.

Composer: Sigurd von Koch (1879-1919)

Sigurd Von Koch studied piano and composition in Stockholm, Berlin, and
Dresden. He is considered a Nordic late Romantic, with some influence from French
Impressionism. His songs are among his most well-known works. The compositions of his son, Erland von Koch (1910-2009), were heavily inspired by Dalecarlian folk music.\(^{51}\)

**De vilda svanarna** (The wild swans)

“Vårnattsregnet” (Spring night’s rain)

Text: Anonymous Swedish translation of a German text by Hans Bethge (1876-1946), based on a Chinese text by Tu Fu (712-770)

---

Det ljuva milda vårnattsregnet vet
när moderjord dess svalka trängtar.
Det nalkas och då spira blommor i dess spår.

När natten faller på det kommer sakta
det bäres fram på vårens ljumma vindar
bestänker allting mildt med pärlors dugg.

De mörka molnen lågo under kvällen
över den väg som mig till hemmet förde.
Den ensamma lyktan speglades i sjön.

I morgonljuset lysa alla fälten,
och himlen ler och ljuva blomster dofter
känns strömma från den kejserliga parken.

---

The delightful mild spring night rain knows
when mother earth yearns for this coolness.
It draws near and then flowers bloom in this trail.

When night falls, it comes carefully
it is carried forth on spring’s warm winds
sprinkles everything gently with a drizzle of pearls.

The dark clouds blaze in the evening
over that road that carried me home.
The lonely lantern is reflected in the sea.

In the morning light all the fields shine,
and heaven smiles, and the sweet fragrance of flowers
seems to stream from the imperial gardens.

---

bestänker allting mildt med pärlors dugg.
[be:\'sten\'ker 'altin\' milt med 'p\'e:\'rlurs d\'og:]

De mörka molnen lågo under kvällen
[de: 'm\'o:\'rka 'molnen 'lo\'gu '\'o\'nder 'kv\'el\'len]

över den väg som mig till hemmet förde.
[\'o\'ver den: veg: som: mig til: 'hem\'met \'f\'e:\'rade]

Den ensamma lyktan speglades i sjön.
[\'den: 'en\'sama 'lyktan 'spe\'glades i 'jo\'n]

I morgonljuset lysa alla fälten,
[i 'm\'or\'gonj\'uset 'lysa 'alla 'fel\'ten]

och himlen ler och ljuva blomster dofter
[\'ok: 'him\'len 'le\'r \'ok: 'ju\'va 'blom\'ster '\'o\'f\'ter]

känns strömma från den kejserliga parken.
[kens 'stro\'emma fr\'om den: 'kej\'serliga 'park\'en]

“Människans lott” (Man’s destiny)
Text: Anonymous Swedish translation of a German text by Hans Bethge (1876-1946),
based on a Chinese text by Confucius (551-479 BC)

På sommarns värme följer höstens kyla,
[p: som\'arns 'v\'arme fo\'ler h\'o\'stens 'kyla] på vinterns snöfält följer vårens blom
[p: vin\'terns 'sn\'o\'felt fo\'ler va\'rens 'blom] och rosig stiger solen varje morgon
[\'o\'ch ro\'sig sti\'ger solen varje morgon] och rosigt är dess anlet, när den flyr.
[\'o\'ch ro\'sigt \'ar des\' anlet, n\'ar den fly\'r]

Mot havet tränger floden fram. Och sekler
[Mo\'t havet tr\'an\'ger floden fram. O\'ch sek\'ler] förnyar sig. Med varje morgonstund
[fo\'nor\'ar sig. Med varje morgon\'stund] ler åter solens ljus och oavlättigt
[\'le\'r \'at\'er solens 'ljus och o\'av\'l\'attigt] vandra nya flöden genom strömmen hän.
[\'vandra nya fl\'oden genom str\'o\'mmen h\'an]

Ett liv blomstrar fram, vänder aldrig åter,
[et\'t li\'v bl\'om\'strar fram, \'ve\'nder al\'dri\'g \'at\'er] dess väsen är en vindfläkt som flyr bort
[de\'ss va\'sen \'ar en \'vi\'nd\'fl\'ae\'kt som \'fly\' \'bor\'t] det korta livets summa en eländig
[\'de\'t k\'or\'ta li\'ve\'ts 's\'u\'m\'ma \'en \'e\'l\'a\'n\'ig] förfallen gravhög med en ogräskord.
[\'de\'t k\'o\'rt\'a li\'ve\'ts 's\'u\'m\'ma \'en \'e\'l\'a\'n\'ig]

På sommarns värme följer höstens kyla,
[p: som\'arns 'v\'arme fo\'ler h\'o\'stens 'kyla] på vinterns snöfält följer vårens blom
[p: vin\'terns 'sn\'o\'felt fo\'ler va\'rens 'blom]
och rosig stiger solen varje morgon
[ök: 'rusig 'stiger 'sulen 'varje 'morgon]

och rosigt är dess anlet, när den flyr.
[ök: 'rusigt ær des 'an;let nær den 'fly:r]

Mot havet tränger floden fram. Och sekler
[mut 'havet 'trenger 'floden fram: ök: 'sekler]

förnya sig. Med varje morgonstund
[öö:nja sig med 'varje 'morgonstund]

ler åter solens ljus och oaflåtligt
[ler 'o:ter 'sulens 'jus ök: 'uvvoljligt]

vandra nya flöden genom strömmen hän.
['vandra 'nya 'flöden 'genom 'strömen hän]

Ett liv blomstrar fram, vänder aldrig åter,
[et: liv 'blomst:rar fram: 'vender 'aldrig 'o:ter]

dess väsen är en vindfläkt som flyr bort
[des: 'væsen ær en: 'vindflækt som: 'flyr bort]

det korta livets summa en eländig
[det 'korta 'livets 'soma en 'eländig]

förfallen gravhög med en ogrässkörd.
[öreffal:en 'gravhög med en: 'ugress:]}

Composer: Bo Linde

Bo Linde belonged to a group of composers called the “50-talisterna” (from the 1950s), whose members wrote tonal music reminiscent of the 1930’s despite a dominance of the avant-garde style in mid-century Sweden. Linde studied both composition and piano at the Kungliga Musikhögskolan in Stockholm, and his songs exhibit great
technical skill. He spent most of his life in Gävle (situated on the Baltic Sea in the region
of Norrland), where he worked as a music teacher and critic.  

op. 40

4. “Äppelträd och päronträd” (Apple trees and pear trees)
Text by Erik Blomberg (1894-1965)

Äppelträd och päronträd, Apple trees and pear trees,
plommonträd och bigarå, plum trees and cherry,
alla ljusa jungfrur små, all the light little maidens,
i små svarta flätor stå, wearing little black braids,
rodnande i solen. blushing in the sun.

Nyss var vinden lätt och späd, Just now the wind was light and delicate,
Hör, nu klingar hög och fri Listen, now high and free rings
vårens hela melodi, spring’s whole melody,
hör, nu svinga broms och bi listen, now the fly and bee swing
sträken för fiolen. the bow strokes the fiddle.

Äppelträd och päronträd, Apple trees and pear trees,
plommonträd och bigarå, plum trees and cherry,
alla ljusa jungfrur små, all the light little maidens,
rodnande i solen stå are blushing in the sun
med små gröna spetsar på, with little green laces on,
rodnande i solen. blushing in the sun.

Äppelträd och päronträd, [‘ɛpɛltred o ‘pærɔntred]
[plom:ontred o ,bigar’o:] plommonträd och bigarå,
alla ljusa jungfrur små, all the light little maidens,
i små svarta flätor stå, are blushing in the sun
rodnande i solen. with little green laces on,
[‘ru:dnande i ‘suːlən]

52 Hans Åstrand, “Linde, Bo,” in Grove Music Online. Oxford Music Online,
Nyss var vinden lätt och späd,
['nys; vɔ:r 'vinːden 'let: o 'spɛ:d]

Hör, nu klingar hög och fri
['hœ:r nu: 'kliŋːər 'hɔɡ o 'fɾiː]

vårens hela melodi,
['voːrens 'heːla meludːiː]

hör, nu svinga broms och bi
['hœːr nuː 'sviŋːər 'bɾoms o 'biː]

stråken för fiolen.
['stromːen fœːr fiːlen]

Äppelträd och pàronträd.
['ɛpɛltred o 'pærɔntred]

plommonträd och bigarå.
[plɔmɔntred o 'bitʃærʊː]

alla ljusa jungfrur små,
[ɔltːa 'juːsa 'joŋfrʊːːr smɔː]

rodnande i solen stå
['ruːdnande i 'suːlen stɔː]

med små gröna spetsar på,
[meːd smɔː 'grʊːna 'spɛtsar pɔː]

rodnande i solen.
['ruːdnande i 'suːlen]

7. “Den ängen där du kysste mig” (The meadow where you kissed me)
Text by Viola Renvall (1905-1998)

Den ängen där du kysste mig,
the meadow where you kissed me,
den har ett sällsamt sus,
it has a strange murmur,
och solen glimmar över den
and the sun gleams upon it
med vitt förklärat ljus.
with white rapturous light.

Jag tror ranunkeln bugar sig
I believe the buttercup bows
på minnets guldmynt rik
on the memory’s rich gold coin
den ängen där du kysste mig
the meadow where you kissed me
är ingen annan lik.
is unlike any other.
Den ängen där du kysste mig
[den 'en dœr du: 'jysste mej:]

den har ett sällsamt sus
[den 'hør et: 'sel:sam:t 'sœ:s]

och solen glimmar över den
[?œk: 'sœ:len 'glimmar 'over den:]

med vitt förklarat ljus.
[med vit: fœ:rklo:rat 'ju:ς]

Jag tror ranunkeln bugar sig
[jœ: 'trœr ranœŋkeln bugar se:j]

på minnets guldmynt rik
[po 'min:et 'gœld,mynt ri:k]

den ängen där du kysste mig
[den 'en dœr du: 'jysste mej:]

är ingen annan lik.
[ær 'en:jen 'aman lik]

Composer: Gösta Nystroem (1890-1966)

Composer and painter Gösta Nystroem was highly influenced in his works by nature, particularly the sea. Several marine-inspired compositions contributed to Nystroem’s popularity, including the song cycles På reveln (On the reef, 1949) and Själ och landskap: Nya sånger vid havet (Soul and landscape: New songs by the sea, 1952).53 His compositional style ranges from traditional lyricism to impressionism marked by stark dissonance.

Själ och landskap: Nya sånger vid havet (Soul and landscape: new songs by the sea)
Texts by Ebba Lindqvist (1908-1995), from Fiskläge: Själ och landskap (Fishing village: Soul and landscape), 1939

1. “Vitt land” (White land)

Vitt land, tyst hav, mjuk snö faller.
O, göm, göm mitt ansikte,
göm mitt hjärtas hemlighet!

Jag vet den blommar röd på mina läppar.
Jag vet den brister fram ur mina händer,
att vem som hälst kan röra den.

Så må de se den!
Ty vad jag äger
kan ingen, ingen ta ifrån mig!
Ej mer än tömma havet på dess vatten,
ej mer än lyfta solen ifrån himlen!

Och allt skall ha sin tid,
sitt liv,
sin undergång.

Vitt land, tyst hav, mjuk snö faller.
[vitˈland tystˈhav mjukˈsnøːˈfælər]

O, göm, göm mitt ansikte.
[oːˈjoemː joemː mit:ˈanˌsiːkːte]

göm mitt hjärtas hemlighet!
[oːˈjoemː mit:ˈjærtaːˌhemˌliːɡːet]

Jag vet den blommar röd på mina läppar.
[joːɡˈvetː denːˈblumar rœːd poːˈminaˌlepːar]

Jag vet den brister fram ur mina händer,
[joːɡˈvetː denːˈbrister fʁamː urˈminaˌhendeːr]

att vem som hälst kan röra den.
[atːˈvemː somːˈhelst kanː rœːra dɛnː]

Så må de se den!
[soː moː deːˈseː denː]

Ty vad jag äger
[tyːˈvad joːɡˈɛğer]

kan ingen, ingen ta ifrån mig!
[kanː tɕiːˈjeːn tɕiːˈjeːn toː tɕifroːn miːɡ]
Ej mer än tömma havet på dess vatten,
[ej: mer ˈteːma ˈhɔːvet ˈpɔː des: ˈvaten]

ej mer än lyfta solen ifrån himlen!
[ej: meːr ˈlyftta ˈsuːlen ɪfrɔn ˈhimːlen]

Och allt skall ha sin tid,
[ɔk: ˈalːt skal: ˈhɔː sin: ˈtɪd]

sitt liv,
[siːt: ˈliv]

sin undergång.
[siːn: ˈtœnдер.ˈɡɔŋː]

2. “Önskan” (The wish)

Och detta är min enda önskan i kväll:
And this is my only wish tonight:
Jag vill bara luta mig emot mörkret ett tag,
I want to lean against the dark a little while,
känna havet stryka in över min kind,
Feel the sea caress my cheek,
ellер strävt hårt berg röra vid min hud.
Or the coarse, rough cliff touch my skin.
Och låta allting annat strös för vinden,
And let everything else be scattered to the wind,
mitt liv för vinden,
My life to the wind,
och sitta lutad länge emot mörkrets rygg.
And sit leaning so long against the back of darkness.

Och detta är min enda önskan i kväll:
[ɔk: ˈdeːta ˈæːr min: ˈteːnda ˈteːnskan i ˈkvelː]

Jag vill bara luta mig emot mörkret ett tag,
[jag vill ˈbærːa ˈlutːa miːg ˈeɪmut ˈmœːrkret ˈteːt ˈteːg]

känna havet stryka in över min kind,
[ˈteːna ˈhɔːvet ˈstryːka inː ˈteːnə ver min: ˈfɪnd]

ever strävt hårt berg röra vid min hud.
[ˈeːlər ˈstreːft hɔːrt ˈbærj ˈɾɔːra vid min: ˈhʊd]

Och låta allting annat strös för vinden,
[ɔk: ˈlɔːta ˈæːlːtːiː ˈteːnət ˈstrøːːs ˈfœːr ˈvinːeːn]

mitt liv för vinden,
[mitː ˈliv ˈfœːr ˈvinːeːn]

och sitta lutad länge emot mörkrets rygg.
[ɔːk: ˈsiːtːa ˈlutːad ˈleŋɡ ˈteːmut ˈmœːrkrets ˈryːɡː]
3. “Bara hos den” (Only in the one)

**Bara hos den vars oro är större än min har jag ro.**
Så ger havet mig ro,
Det ensamma havet, som sjunger sin sång bortanför lust och nöd. —
Så kommer jag i kväll till dig,
**du hav som alla komma till**
**men ingenstans har själv att gå.**

**Bara hos den vars oro är större än min har jag ro.**
[ˈbɔːrə hʉs ˈden ˈvɑːs ˈuˌːru æːr ˈstœrə en ˈmin ˈhɔːr ˈjʊːŋ ˈruː]  

Så ger havet mig ro,
[ˈsoː jɛːr ˈhɔːvet mig ˈruː]  

Det ensamma havet, som sjunger sin sång  
[deːt ˈenˌsamːa ˈhɔːvet som ˈʃœŋər sin ˈʃʊŋː]  

bortanför lust och nöd. —  
[ˈbɔrtˌanfœːr ˈlʊst ˈɔːk ˈnœːd]  

Så kommer jag i kväll till dig,
[ˈsoː ˈkɒmːər ˈjʊːŋ i ˈkvelː ˈtɪlː ˈdiːɡ]  

**du hav som alla komma till**
[duː ˈhʊv somː ˈʔata ˈkomːa tilː]  

**men ingenstans har själv att gå.**
[menː ˈʃɨŋːenˌstæns ˈhɔr ˈʃɛːːv ˈʔaːt ˈɡoː]  

“Det enda” (The only thing), from *Sinfonia del Mare* (Symphony of the sea)  
Text by Lindqvist, from *Labyrint: Vid havet* (Labyrinth: By the sea), 1949 (partial setting)

Såsom man flyr från den älskade,  
inte orkar förtäras och förnyas i ett, i ett,  
så har jag flytt från havet.  
Men snart kommer tiden,  
då jag måste dit igen,  
sitta vid havet och veta,  
att det är det enda på jorden.  
Och såsom till sist allt liv är förvärvat,  
som man lever allena utan den älskade,  
så vet jag, att dessa soliga dagar i skogen och denna fågelsång, som jag lyssnar till,  

As one flees from the loved one,  
unable to be devoured and reborn time and again,  
so have I fled from the sea.  
But soon comes the time,  
when I must return,  
to sit by the sea and to know,  
that it is the only thing on earth.  
And so in the end it is in vain,  
that one lives without the loved one,  
so I know, that these sunny days in the forest  
and this birdsong that I listen to,
skall jag genast ge upp
för ett stråkdrag av vinden från havet.

Trots allt det liv jag kämpar för och ber om, 
är detta ändå, vad jag innerst ville:
att kasta allt, som är av egen vilja, 
och sjunka ner och dö som våg i havet. 
Så kan jag längta efter denna vila 
som älskande till kärleken.
Liksom en klädnad, främmande och lånad, 
ville jag lägga ner det liv jag levat 
och finna vägen hem på havets stigar.

Hur blev livet så litet med ens?
Jag lutar mig ut genom natten: 
ur rymdens skål 
drinka vi båda 
samma tunga dryck 
av undergång.

Såsom man flyr från den älskade, 
[so:som: man: ‘flyr from den: ‘elskade ]

inte orkar förtyssas och förnyas i ett, i ett, 

så har jag flytt från havet. 
[so: hœr jœg ‘flyt: from ‘hœvet]

Men snart kommer tiden, 
[men: ‘snœrt ‘kœmœr ‘tidœn]

då jag måste dit igen, 
[do: jœg ‘mostœ diœt iœjen]

sittå vid havet och veta, 
[’sitta vid ‘hœvet œk: ‘vetœ]

att det är det enda på jorden. 
[œt: deœt ‘œr det ‘œnda po: ‘juœden]

Och såsom till sist allt liv är förgäves, 

som man lever allena utan den älskade, 
[œm: man: leœver allœnœ utan den: ‘elskœde]
så vet jag, att dessa soliga dagar i skogen
[so: 've:t jɔɡ at: 'de:sə 'suːlɪɡa 'dɔːɡar i 'skʊːɡe:n]

och denna fågelsång, som jag lyssnar till.
[ɔk: 'deːna 'foːɡelˌsɔːn som: jɔɡ 'lysːnar tɪl:]

skall jag genast ge upp
[skal: jɔɡ 'geːnast jəːp]

för ett stråkdrag av vinden från havet.
[fɔːr etː 'strɔːkˌdraːɡ ɔv 'vɪnːən frɔːn 'hɔːvət]

På reveln: Tre sånger (On the reef: Three songs)

2. “Otrolig dag” (Incredible day)
Text by Einar Malm (1900-1988)

Mellan gula strandrågax
ser jag havet däsa
ångbåtsrök och sillmåsflax
tumlare som blåsa.

Världen skymtar skön och vid,
verksam i det stilla.
Hur kan man i denna frid
vilja något illa.

Mellan gula strandrågax
Through the shore’s golden rye

[ˈmeːlan ˈguːla ˈstrændratʃax]
[ˈsez jɔɡ ˈhɔːvət ˈdɑːsa]
[ˈɔŋbotːsˌɾɔːk ɔːk ˈsilmoːfɔlaks]
[ˈtʊmlare som ˈbɫɑːsa]
[ˈværːden ˈskytˌtar ˈʃɔːn ɔːk ˈviːd]
[ˈvɛrksam i det ˈstɪlːa]

Hur kan man i denna frid
[ˈhʊr kanː ˈmæn i ˈdeːnə ˈfriːd]
vilja något illa.
[vilja 'nɔɡot 'ɪla]

3. “Havet sjunger” (The sea sings)
Text by Lindqvist, from Fiskläge: Själ och landskap (partial setting)

Och om du älskar mig eller ej
gör det samma,
on ditt hjärtä är varmt eller kallt
gör detsamma,
och våra ord må vi spara.

Men om din längtan liknar min,
så lägg ditt huvud nära mig och lyssna,
lyssna
hur havet sjunger.

Det stora havet sjunger nära dig,
nära mig.
Det frågar inte efter ditt eller mitt,
och vår rödaste önskan förbleknar.

Vem ropar på oss långt där ute,
vem kallar på oss,
vem är i nöd för vår skull?

Låt oss kasta oss dit ut,
där vi hörde ropet,
och ditt rop skall stiga och sjunka i havet,
och mitt rop skall stiga och sjunka i havet,
tills allt blir tyst.

Och om du älskar mig eller ej gör det samma,
[ɔk: om: dœ: 'ɛlskar miŋ ɛlɛr ej: 'ɡœr det 'samːa]

om ditt hjärta är varmt eller kallt gör detsamma,
[ɔk: om dit: 'jœrta ær 'vaːmt ɛlɛr 'kaːt 'ɡœr det 'samːa]

och våra ord må vi spara.
[ɔk: ˈvɔrə 'ʊrd moː viː 'spɔra]

Men om din längtan liknar min,
[menː ɔm: dinː 'leŋtæn 'ˈliknar minː]

så lägg ditt huvud nära mig och lyssna, lyssna
[soː 'lɛg: dœt 'huvʊd 'nærə miŋ ɔk: 'lysna 'lyssna]

hur havet sjunger.
[huːr ˈhɔvet '[œŋər]
Det stora havet sjunger nära dig, nära mig.
[det 'stora 'hovet 'ʃjʌŋə 'næra dig 'næra miːŋ]

Det frågar inte efter ditt eller mitt,
[det 'fɾogar 'inte 'ɛfter dit 'ɛfter mitː]

och vår rödaste önskan förbleknar.
[ɔːk 'vɔː 'röːdaste 'œːnskan fɔːrˌbleːknar]

Composer: Ture Rangström (1884-1947)

Ture Rangström was a composer, conductor, and critic, and was one of the founding members of the Society of Swedish Composers in 1918. As a song composer, Rangström had a keen sensitivity to language, and is considered one of the most important composers of the Swedish romans. His melodies attempted to capture the unique melodic quality of the Swedish language.54

The transcription below uses a mixture of högsvenska and talad svenska, as heard in a recording entitled Elisabeth Söderström sings Swedish songs.55 In that sense, the following is a descriptive rather than prescriptive transcription, and although the level of formality is at the discretion of each singer, it is difficult to dispute that Söderström’s interpretation serves as an authoritative model.

“Flickan under nymåne” (The girl beneath the new moon)
Text by Bo Bergman (1869-1967)

Jag har nigit för nymånens skära.
I have bowed to the crescent of the new moon.

Tre ting har jag önskat mig tyst.
Three things I have quietly wished.

Det första är du
The first is you

och det andra är du
and the second is you

och det tredje är du, min kära.
and the third is you, my love.


55 Elisabeth Söderström, et al., Elisabeth Söderström sings Swedish songs (Swedish Society Discofil, 1987).
Men ingen får veta ett knyst.
Jag har nigit för nymånens skära
tre gånger till jorden nu.

Och om månen kan ge vad vi önska,
så önskar jag tre gånger till,
och krona jag bär,
när marken sig klär
och björkarna gunga av grönska
och lärkorna spela sin drill.
Det är långsamt att önska och önska.
O, vore min kära här!

Lyft nu upp honom, stormmoln, på vingen
och tag honom, våg, på din rygg.
Han är ung som jag
han är varm som jag,
han är härlig och stark som ingen,
och säll skall jag sova och trygg
i hans armar engång under vingen
av natten, tills natt blir dag.

Flickan under nymån
[flika 'ondə ny'mo'nən]

Jag har nigit för nymånens skära.
[jo: hɔr 'nigik fœr ny'mo'nens 'ækə]

Tre ting har jag önskat mig tyst.

Det första är du
[det 'fœsta ?œr 'du]

och det andra är du
[?o de: 'andrə ?œr 'du]

och det tredje är du, min kära.
[?o de: 'tredje ?œr 'du: mi: 'kærə]

Men ingen får veta ett knyst.
[men ˈʔjœnən foɾ ˈveɪ:a ʔet: 'knystə]

Jag har nigit för nymånens skära
[jo: hɔr 'nigik fœr 'ny'mo'nens 'ækə]

tre gånger till jorden nu.
[tre: ˈɡɵn̥ər til: 'juːrden | nu:]
Och om månen kan ge vad vi önska,

så önskar jag tre gånger till,

och krona jag bär,
[?o 'kru:n: jo: 'bær]

när marken sig klär
[nær 'marken sej: 'klær]

och björkarna gunga av grönska

och lärkorna spela sin drill.
[?o 'lærkœn:a 'spela sin 'dril:]

Det är långsamt att önska och önska.

O, vore min kära här!
[?o 'vœ:re min: 'fœra hœr]

Lyft nu upp honom, stormmoln, på vingen

och tag honom, våg, på din rygg.
[?o 'tœg 'hœn:om 'vœg po: din: 'ryg;]

Han är ung som jag

han är varm som jag,
[han: ?œ:r 'vœrn som: tœg]

han är härlig och stark som ingen,

och säll skall jag sova och trygg
[?o 'sel: skal: jo: 'sova ?o 'tryg;]

i hans armar engång under vingen

av natten, tills natt blir dag.
[?œv 'natten tils 'nat: bli:r 'dœg]
Composer: Jean Sibelius (1865-1957)

Jean Sibelius, the singular musical figure of Finland, was raised in a Swedish-speaking family. Sibelius grew up in a time of economic and cultural upheaval, as the Finnish-speaking majority struggled to overcome years of oppression by Swedish and Russian rule. With his engagement to pro-Finnish Aino Järnefelt and his discovery of the epic folk poetry of Finland, Sibelius experienced an awakening of nationalist sentiment and strove to write music with a uniquely Finnish voice. His orchestral tone-poem *Finlandia*, originally titled *Suomi herää*, “Finland Awakens,” is certainly his best-known work.56

*Sex sånger* (Six songs), op. 36

3. “Bollspelet vid Trianon” (Tennis at Trianon)
   text by Gustaf Fröding (1860-1911)

*Det smattrar prat och slår boll och skrattar emellan träden vid Trianon,*

*små markisinnor i schäferhattar,*

*de le och gnola, lonlaridon.*

*Små markisinnor på höga klackar,*

*de leka oskuld och herdefest*  

*för unga herdar med stela nackar,*

*vicomte Lindor, monseigneur Alceste.*  

*Men så med ett*  

*vid närmste stam*  

*stack grovt och brett*  

*ett huvud fram.*  

*Vicomten skrek: “Voilà la tête-là!”*  

*och monseigneur slog förbi sin boll*  

*och “qu’est-ce que c’est?” och*  

*There is chattering, a ball game and laughter among the trees near Trianon,*

*little marquises wearing shepherd hats,*

*they smile and hum ‘lonlaridon.’*

*Little marquises in high heels,*

*they play innocent sheperdesses*  

*for young shepherds with stiff necks,*

*Viscount Lindor, Monseigneur Alceste.*

*But all of a sudden*  

*from behind the nearest tree,*

*stuck out, thick and broad,*

*a head.*

*The Viscount shouted “Look at the head there!”*  

*and Monseigneur missed his ball*  

*and “What is it?” and*

---

“qui est la bête là?”
det ljöd i korus från alla håll.

Och näsor rynkas förnämt koketta,
en hastig knyck i var nacke far
och markisinnorna hoppa lättta
och bollen flyger från par till par.

Men tyst därifrån
med tunga fjät
går dräggens son
Jourdan Coupe-tête.

Det smattrar prat och slår boll och skrattar
[det 'smatrar prɔt ɔk 'slɔːr 'bol: ɔk: 'skratːaːr]

demellan träden vid Trianon,
[e'melːan ˈtreːdən vid triaŋo]

små markisinnor i schäferhattrar,
[smoː markiˈsinːʊr i ˈʃeːfərˈhatːar]

dele och gnola, lonlaridon
[deː 'leː ɔkː 'ɡnula ˈlɔlariːdo]

Små markisinnor på höga klackar,
[smoː markiˈsinːʊr poː ˈhɔːɡa 'klakːar]

deleka oskulde och herdefest
[deː 'leːka ˈuːskʊld ɔkː ˈheɾːdefɛst]

för unga herdar med stela nackar,
[foːr ˈɵːja ˈheɾdaːr med ˈstɛlə ˈnakːar]

vicomte Lindor, monseigneur Alceste.
[vikˈköːtə ˈlinːdɔr mʊsənʒœːr alːseːst]

Men så med ett
[menː soː meːd ˈɛtː]

vid närmste stam
[vid ˈnærːmastɛ stamː]

stack grovt och brett
[ˈstɑkː ˈgruvt ɔkː ˈbrɛtː]

ett huvud fram.
[ɛtː ˈhʉːvod framː]
Vicomten skrek: “Voilà la tête-là!”
[vikotən’skrekt vwa’la la tet ‘la]

och monseigneur slog förbi sin boll
[ɔk: mœsɔnjœr ‘slɔɡ fjœrbi: sin ‘bo:l]

och “qu’est-ce que c’est?” och “qui est la bête là?”
[ɔk: kesœ se ɔk: k i e la bet la]

det ljöd i korus från alla håll.

Och näsor rynkas förnämt koketta,
[ɔk: ‘nesur ‘ryŋkas fœrnɛm tœk’ɛtə]

en hastig knyck i var nacket far
[en: ‘hasœtik ‘knjɛk i vœr ‘nakœt fœr]

och markisinnorna hoppa lättta
[ɔk: marki’sinʊrna ‘hɔpə ‘letə]

och bollen flyger från par till par.
[ɔk: ‘bɔlən ‘flygər frən ‘pɔr til ‘pɔr]

Men tyst därifrån
[men: ‘tysœt dœɾifrœn]

med tunga fjät
[me:d ‘tøŋa fœjɛt]

går dräggens son
[ɡør ‘dɾæɡɡɛns søn]

Jourdan Coupe-tête.
[ʒʊrdən kuːp tet]

Fem sånger (Five songs), op. 37

1. “Den första kyssen” (The first kiss)
Text by Johan Ludvig Runeberg (1804-1877)

På silvermolngets kant satt aftenstjärnan,
från lundens skymning frågte henne tårnan:
Säg, aftenstjärna, vad i himlen tänkes,
när första kyssen åt en älskling skänkes?

The evening star sat on the rim of silver mist.
From the grove’s twilight the maiden asked her:
Tell me, evening star, what do they think in heaven
when you give the first kiss to your lover?
Och himlens blyga dotter hördes svara:
På jorden blickar ljusets änglaskara,
och ser sin egen sällhet speglad åter;
blott döden vänder ögat bort och gråter.

And heaven’s shy daughter was heard to answer:
The angels of light look toward the earth
and see their own bliss reflected back;
only death turns his eyes away and weeps.

~ Translation © Lynn Steele

På silvermolnets kant satt aftonstjärnan,
[po: 'silvər 'mɔlnets 'kant sat: 'aftɔn]'

från lundens skymning frågte henne tärnan:
[frɔn 'lʊndens 'skɔ:mɪŋ fɾɑːɡte 'hɛnɛ 'tærnən]

Säg, aftonstjärna, vad i himlen tänkes,
[seːɡ 'aftɔn] ['ɛərnə vɔːd i 'himːlen 'teŋkəs]

när första kyssen åt en älskling skänkes?
[neːr 'fɔːrsta 'ʃι:sən otː ˈɛnː ˈɛlɛsklin 'ʃeŋkəs]

Och himlens blyga dotter hördes svara:
[ˈɔːk ˈhimːlens 'blyːɡa ˈdotər ˈhœːrdəs ˈsvɔːrə]

På jorden blickar ljusets änglaskara,
[po: 'juːrdən 'blikar 'juːsəts ˈenɡlaʃkɔːɾə]

och ser sin egen sällhet speglad åter;
[ˈɔːk seːr sinː ˈseɡn ˈselːhɛt ˈspeɡlad ˈɔtər]

blott döden vänder ögat bort och gråter.
[blɔt ˈdɔːdən ˈvɛnər ˈɔːɡət bɔrt ˈɔːk: ˈɡroːtə]

4. “Var det en dröm?” (Was it a dream?)
Text by Josef Julius Wecksell (1838-1907)

Var det en dröm, att ljutit en gång
jag var ditt hjärtas vän?
Jag minns det som en tystnad sång,
då strängen darrar än.

Was it a dream that once, in a wonderful time,
I was your heart’s true love?
I remember it as a song fallen silent,
of which the strains still echo.

Jag minns en törnros av dig skänkt,
en blick så blyg ochöm;
jag minns en avskedstår, som blänkt.
Var allt, var allt en dröm?

I remember a rose you tossed,
a glance so shy and tender;
I remember a sparkling tear when we parted.
Was it all, all a dream?

En dröm lik sippans liv så kort
ulti en vägrön ångd,
vars fägring hastigt vissnar bort
för nya blommors mängd.

A dream as brief as the life of a primrose
in a green meadow in springtime,
whose beauty soon withers away
before a crowd of new flowers.
Men mången natt jag hör en röst
vid bittra tårars ström:
göm djupt dess minne i ditt bröst,
det var din bästa dröm!

But many a night I hear a voice
through the flood of my bitter tears:
hide this memory deep in your heart,
it was your best dream!

~ Translation © Lynn Steele

Var det en dröm, att ljusv en gång
[jövä 'dröem at: 'jûv at: 'dröm]

jag var ditt hjärtas vän?
[jövä vœ:r dìt: jærtas vœ:n]

Jag minns det som en tystnad sång,
[jövä 'mins det som: 'tens: 'tystnad son]

då strängen darrar än.
[do: strejken 'darar en]

Jag minns en törnros av dig skänkt,
[jövä 'mins en 'tœrnrus: 'svnit 'drjekt]

en blick så blyg och öm;
[?en 'blick: so: 'blyg: òk: 'fjm]

jag minns en avskedstår, som blänkt.
[jövä 'mins ?en 'av: 'vedstor som: 'bljukt]

Var allt, var allt en dröm?
[vœr 'alit vo:r 'alit en: 'dröm]

En dröm lik sippans liv så kort
[en: 'dröm lik: 'sip:ans 'liv so: 'kört]

uti en vårgrön ängd,
[œti ?en 'vu:grœn 'en]

vars fägring hastigt vissnar bort
[vœrs 'fe:grinj 'hasitikt 'visnær bort]

för nya blommors mängd.
[fo:r ny:as 'blum:ors 'meng]

Men mången natt jag hör en röst
[men: 'mœnjen | 'nat: jövä 'hœr en: 'rœst]
Flickan kom ifrån sin älsklings möte,
kom med röda händer. Modern sade:
"Varav rodna dina händer, flicka?"
Flickan sade: "Jag har plockat rosor
och på törnen stungit mina händer."

Åter kom hon från sin älsklings möte,
kom med röda läppar. Modern sade:
"Varav rodna dina läppar, flicka?"
Flickan sade: "Jag har ätit hallon
och med saften målat mina läppar."

Åter kom hon från sin älsklings möte,
kom med bleka kinder. Modern sade:
"Varav blekna dina kinder, flicka?"
Flickan sade: "Red en grav, o moder!
Göm mig där och ställ ett kors däröver,
och på korset rista, som jag säger:
En gång kom hon hem med röda händer,
ty de rodnat mellan älskarns händer.
En gång kom hon hem med röda läppar,
ty de rodnat under älskarns läppar.
Senast kom hon hem med bleka kinder,
ty de bleknat genom älskarns otro."

Flickan kom ifrån sin älsklings möte,
[k'flikan k'om: 'ifron sin: 'el:skliNs 'mote]

kom med röda händer. Modern sade:
[kom: 'med 'roDa 'henDere 'mowDere 'soDe]

"Varav rodna dina händer, flicka?"
[v'oRoN 'rudna 'dina 'henDer 'flikiA]

Flickan sade: "Jag har plockat rosor
[k'flikan 'soDe jow hoo 'ploka't 'rusor]
och på törnen stungit mina händer.”
[øk: po: ‘törnen ‘støgit mina ‘hender]

Åter kom hon från sin älsklings möte,
[?otter kem: hun from: sin: ‘elsklings ‘möte]

kom med röda läppar. Modern sade:
[kom: med ‘röda ‘lepar ‘modern ‘söde]

“Varav rodna dina läppar, flicka?”
[vusov ‘rudna ‘dina ‘lepar ‘flika]

Flickan sade: “Jag har ätit hallon
[flikian ‘söde jö: hor ‘ätit ‘hallon]

och med saften målat mina läppar.”
[?øk: med ‘saften ‘molat mina ‘lepar]

Åter kom hon från sin älsklings möte,
[?otter kem: hun from: sin: ‘elsklings ‘möte]

kom med bleka kinder. Modern sade:
[kom: med ‘bleka ‘findar ‘modern ‘söde]

“Varav blekna dina kinder, flicka?”
[vusov ‘blekna din: ‘findar ‘flika]

Flickan sade: “Red en grav, o moder!
[flikian ‘söde ‘red en: ‘gröv o: ‘moder]

Göm mig där och ställ ett kors däröver,

och på korset rista, som jag säger:

En gång kom hon hem med röda händer,

ty de rodnat mellan älskarns händer.
[ty: de: ‘rudnat melan ‘elskarns ‘hender]

En gång kom hon hem med röda läppar,
ty de rodnat under älskarns läppar.
[ty: de: ’rudnat ’onder ’elskarns ’lepar]

Senast kom hon hem med bleka kinder,
[’sənast kəm: hən həm: med ’ble:kə ’kinder]

ty de bleknat genom älskarns otro.”
[ty: de: ’bleknat ’jenəm ’e:lskarns ’u;tru:]

“Vilse” (Lost), from Sju sånger (Seven songs), op. 17, no. 4
Text by Karl August Tavaststjerna (1860-1898)

Vi gingo väl vilse ifrån hvarann
[Hvart togo de andra vägen?]
Jag ropar i skogen hvad jag kan
[Men du står och låtsar förlägen.
Blott eko det svarar: hallå, hallå!
Och gäckande skrattar en skata,
Men himmeln blir plötsligen
dubbelt så blå,
Och vi höra upp att prata.
Säg, skulle din puls slå takt till min,
När samtala går, så staccato?
Min kärlek, min kärlek tar våldsamt
mitt sinn’.
Jag glömer att känna som Plato.
Jag ser i ditt öga, jag forsvar och ser,
Pupillerna vidgas och slutas,
Och när du ett ögonblick strålande ler,
Då kunde ett helgon mutas.

Vi gingo väl vilse ifrån hvarann
[Vi ’jiŋo ve:l ’vilse i’frәn va’ran:]

Hvart togo de andra vägen?
[var: ’tugə de: ‘andra ’ve:ʒen]

Jag ropar i skogen hvad jag kan
[jʊŋ ’rupər i ’skuːɡən vud jʊɡ ’kan:]

Men du står och låtsar förlägen.
[men: du: ’stoːr ək: ’lɔtsər fɔr’leɡən]

Blott eko det svarar: hallå, hallå!
[blɔt: ’e:ko det ’svaɻar hɑːlo: hɑːlo:]

Och gäckande skrattar en skata,
[ʔək: ’jeːkændə ’skrattər ən: ’skɔːta]

We went astray from each other
Where did the others go?
I call into the woods what I can
But you stand there and feign embarrassment.
Only the echo answers: hello, hello!
And a magpie laughs mockingly.
But the heavens become suddenly
twice as blue,
And we cease to speak.
Say, should your pulse beat at the same rate as mine,
When the conversation goes so staccato?
My love, my love, be overcome by
this feeling,
I forget to feel like Plato,
I look into your eyes, I search and look,
The pupils widen and narrow,
And when you brilliantly smile for an instant,
Then a saint could be bribed.
Men himmeln blir plötsligen dubbelt så blå,

Och vi höra upp att prata.

Säg, skulle din puls slå takt till min,
[see:ɡ 'skœ:ɡ 'din: 'pø:ls slo: 'takt til: min:]

När samtalet går, så staccato?
[na:eɾ 'sam:to:let go:ɾ sø: stak:əto]

Min kärlek, min kärlek tar våldsamt mitt sinn',

Jag glömmer att känna som Plato.
[jɔɡ | ɡlœmːəɾ at: 'ʃena som: 'plaːto]

Jag ser i ditt öga, jag forskar och ser,
[jɔɡ 'se:ɾ i dit: 'ʃɔɡa jɔɡ 'fɔrskar øk: 'se:ɾ]

Pupillerna vidgas och slutas,
[pupilːerna 'vıd:ɡas øk: 'sluːtas]

Och när du ett ögonblick strålande ler,
[ø:k 'nær du: et: 'ʃʊɡən'blik: 'strːalande le:r]

Då kunde ett helgon mutas.
[doː kɔndə et: 'helɡɔn 'mutas]

Composer: Wilhelm Stenhammar (1871-1927)

Wilhelm Stenhammar, Swedish pianist and conductor, was largely self-taught as a composer. Stenhammar was self-conscious of his lack of training, and felt that perhaps he could not compare to his Swedish contemporaries, Wilhelm Peterson-Berger and Hugo Alfvén.

Stenhammar’s early works, including the song cycles Sånger och visor (Songs and ballads, 1888), Ur Idyll och epigram av J.L. Runeberg (From Idyll and epigram by J.L. Runeberg, 1893), and Fem visor ur Idyll och epigram av J.L. Runeberg (Five ballads
from Idyll and epigram by J.L. Runeberg, 1895-6) were written in a late Romantic style with suggestions of folk color, although he did not quote folk songs directly as Peterson-Berger and Alfvén did.  

“Adagio” from Fem sånger av Bo Bergman (Five songs of Bo Bergman), op. 20

Text by Bo Bergman (1869-1967)

Vattnet rörs och vinden spelar, 
vind och vatten ta varann.
Bakom skogens glesa dungar
gula rågen gungar av och an.
Det är bara du som felar.
Hjärtat saktar sina slag.
Jag hör svag musik som spelar
mig till sömns i dag.
Molnen glida lått som vita
svanar över himlens sjö,
men de tiga där de fara,
svanar sjunga bara när de dö.
Ont och tungt har jag fått slita,
det är tungt på tiggarstig.
Jag vill fara med de vita
svanarna till dig.

The water laps and the wind plays, 
wind and water embrace each other. 
Behind the forest’s sparse groves 
the yellow rye swings back and forth. 
Only you are missing. 
The heart slows its beat. 
I hear distant music singing 
me to sleep today. 
The clouds glide easily like white 
swans across heaven’s sea, 
but they subside where they go, 
swans sing only when they die. 
Pain and heaviness have made me toil, 
it is a difficult journey. 
I want to journey with the white 
swans to you.

Vattnet rörs och vinden spelar,
[vatːnet rœrs ɔːk ‘vinden ‘speːlar]

vind och vatten ta varann.
[vинд ɔːk ‘vatːn tɔː vːranː]

Bakom skogens glesa dungar
[ˈboʊkɔm skɔːɡens ˈgleːsa ˈdʊŋɡar]

gula rågen gungar av och an. 
[ˈɡuːla rɔːɡen ˈɡʊŋɡar ˈɔːv ˈɔːkː ˈanː]

Det är bara du som felar. 
[det ɛːr ˈboʊra duː som ‘feːlar]

Hjärtat saktar sina slag. 
[jaːrˈtæt ˈsaktar ˈsina ˈslɔŋ]

Jag hör svag musik som spelar
[mig höra 'svag musik som: 'spelar]

till sömns i dag.
[mig till: 'scemns i dag]

Molnen glida lätt som vita
[mol:nen 'glida 'let: som: 'vita]

svanar över himlens sjö,
[sv:na 'ø::er 'him:ens 'jo]

men de tiga där de fara,
[men: de: 'tiga dær de: 'føra]

svanar sjunga bara när de dö.
[sv:na 'ø::a 'børa nær de: 'dø]

Ont och tungt har jag fått slita,
[unt ok: 'tønt hór jøg fát: 'slita]

det är tungt på tiggarstig.
[det òær 'tønt po: 'tigar:sti:gi]

Jag vill fara med de vita
[jøg vil: 'føra med de: 'vita]

svanarna till dig.
[sv:namarna til: di:gi]

“I skogen” (In the forest) from Sånger och visor (Songs and ballads)
Text by Albert Theodor Gellerstedt (1836-1914)

Kärt är att råka dig, nattviol,
where you stand pale among the grass
der blek du står ibland gräsen
and breathe out after the sun has set,
och sukar ut efter sjunken sol
din doft, ditt innersta väsen.

Ljuft är att höra din sång, du trast,
So tender to hear your song, nightingale,
der högst i granen på spaning
on the lookout in the highest fir tree,
du jublar ut under kvällens rast
You rejoice in the break of night
om morgon rodnad din aning.
as you sense the blushing morning.

Men lär mig, nattviol, blid som din,
But teach me, gentle orchid,
en sorg, när fröjd har gått under!
your sorrow, when joy has disappeared!
Trast, lär mig tolka så glad som din,
Nightingale, teach me to understand
min tro på ljusare stunder!
your joy, my belief in happier moments!
I skogen
[i ’skø:gen]

Kärta är att råka dig, nattviol
'[fæ:ɾ tær at: ’roka dig ’næ:tviul]

där blek du står ibland gräsen
[ðær ’blek du: ’stor i’blæn ’gre:sen]

och suckar ut efter sjunken sol
[ɔk: ’sɔkæɾ ut ’ef æt ’ʃɔŋkən ’su:l]

din doft, ditt innersta väsen.
[din: ’dɔft diː ’in’ersta ’væːsen]

Ljuftr är att höra din sång, du trast,
[luft ’ɔr at: ’hɔ-ra din: ’sɔŋ du: ’trasː]

där högst i granen på spaning
[ðær ’hɔ:ɡst i ’grɔ:nen poː ’spanɪŋ]

du jublar ut under qvällens rast
[du: ’juːblær ’ut ˈɔndəɾ ’kvelːnːs ’ræːst]

om morgon rodnad din aning.
[ɔm: ’mɔrɡən ’roʊndəd din: ’æniŋ]

Men lär mig, nattviol, blid som din,
[menː ’lær mig: ’næ:tviul ’blid sɔm: dinː]

en sorg, när fröjd har gått under!
[ɛn ’sɔːɾ nær ’frœ:jd houː ’ɡotː ’ɔndəɾ]

Trast, lär mig tolka så glad som din,
[træst ’lær mig: ’tɔlka sɔː ’ɡlæd sɔm: dinː]

min tro på ljusare stunder!
[min: ‘truː poː ’jusəɾ ‘stənðəɾ]
CHAPTER 5
CONCLUSIONS

The Swedish language, although not widely studied by North American singers, can be mastered with regard to lyric diction with a reasonable investment of time and effort. While this essay supplies IPA transcriptions of many art song texts, it also provides the necessary resources for students to accomplish their own transcriptions in a few straightforward steps. Swedish-language romanser offer study and performance opportunities for singers at all levels. Their unique themes from the Nordic sensibility make them a unique addition to any singer’s repertoire.

Additional Resources

Some reliable dictionaries were mentioned previously, and Göteborg Universitet Språkbanken (University of Gothenburg Language Bank) hosts a searchable nineteenth century Swedish dictionary, to aid in word-for-word translations of older texts.58

Swedish libraries with extensive chamber music collections include the Statens Musikbibliotek (State Music Library), the library of the Kungliga Musikaliska Akademien (Royal Academy of Music), and the library of the Kungliga Musikhögskolan (Royal College of Music), all of which are located in Stockholm.

For those interested in Swedish choral music, Richard Sparks published a guide to post-World War II repertoire, *The Swedish Choral Miracle*, which includes an extensive appendix of works by select composers.59

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Future Initiatives

The recently-formed non-profit organization, Northern Lights Chamber Music, is dedicated to the presentation of recitals of Scandinavian art song and chamber music. The inaugural concert in March 2012 featured Swedish pianist Matti Hirvonen as guest artist in Miami. Future plans include additional recitals in South Florida, Michigan (Blodgett Recital Series), and in other locations across North America. With the financial support of Scandinavian cultural organizations, perhaps a competition could provide incentive for young singers to study the Scandinavian repertoire.

Possible future projects include new editions of art songs which include English translations and IPA underlay. This could also be expanded to the choral repertoire, as Scandinavian choral music has a rich tradition which certainly merits attention.

I am pleased to have recently signed a publishing agreement with Scarecrow Press for a book on Scandinavian art song and diction, to be co-authored by Professor Donald Simonson of Iowa State University. It is my hope that the publication of this guide to Scandinavian song will continue to promote the study and performance of this long-neglected repertoire.
WORKS CITED


