



**Grigory  
SMIRNOV**  
(b. 1982)

**Dowson Songs • Chaconne**

**Martin Bakari, Tenor • Adrian Daurov, Cello  
Konstantine Valianatos, Piano**



**Grigory  
SMIRNOV  
(b. 1982)**

<b>1</b>	<b>Chaconne</b>	<b>10:42</b>
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<b>3</b>	<b>A Coronal</b>	<b>3:55</b>
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<b>5</b>	<b>Exile</b>	<b>5:24</b>
<b>6</b>	<b>Interlude</b>	<b>1:05</b>
<b>7</b>	<b>When this, our rose, is faded</b>	<b>5:34</b>
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<b>9</b>	<b>I would not alter thy cold eyes</b>	<b>3:28</b>
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**Grigory Smirnov  
Dowson Songs · Chaconne**

The twentieth century proved cataclysmic for so-called 'classical music' (that is, music commonly regarded as for the elite, in contrast to 'popular music', created for the masses.) The advent of radio and television meant that music was more widely accessible than ever before; however, this explosion in mass media did not result in correspondingly vastly increased audience figures for 'classical music'. Many composers reacted to this by becoming adherents of the avant garde: music specifically written in the knowledge that it was going to be appreciated by a small circle of people who would understand its intricate intellectual mechanisms.

Nevertheless, there are a few composers who have resisted the temptation to classify themselves as either the authors of 'popular' or 'classical' music; musicians who still view melody as being the soul of music and have chosen not to avoid tonality and the consonant-dissonant harmonic system, and yet create music which is indisputably 'high classical'. Grigory Smirnov is one of this ilk, and his music has a sincerity and timelessness which makes it hard to date. It explores eternal questions: life, love, death, and has no open stylistic declarations. Rather, it should be appreciated as a window to the composer's vulnerable soul.

**Chaconne**

*Chaconne* for cello and piano was completed in the Autumn of 2013. The work was commissioned by Carol Andrea Whitcomb, a long-time supporter of the Tanglewood Music Center, and premièred by cellist Adrian Daurov and pianist David Kaplan at Merkin Concert Hall at the Kaufman Music Center in New York on April 7, 2014.

This music was born as a result of the composer's reflections on the concept of overcoming the dualism of the individual and environment; in other words, the idea that environment is constantly changing and going through the recurring process of death and rebirth. The composition is based on a steady, harmonised descending scale pattern, above which a melody unfolds. In the process of

musical development and dialogue, the borders between the melody and harmony start to vanish, as if the melody becomes a 'co-creator' of the surrounding harmony. As indicated by the title, the work follows the Baroque chaconne idea by incorporating a series of variations on a short repeated harmonic progression.

**Dowson Songs**

The song cycle *Dowson Songs*, based on poems by Ernest Dowson, was completed in late 2013. It was commissioned by The ASCAP Foundation Charles Kingston Fund and premièred by tenor Martin Bakari and pianist Julius Abrahams at Merkin Concert Hall in the Kaufman Music Center, New York, on April 7, 2014.

Ernest Christopher Dowson (1867–1900) was an English Romantic poet and notable translator of French poetry. Due to his early death at the age of thirty-two, he left a fairly small body of work. Nevertheless, he is considered one of the most gifted poets of his time who influenced many other poets and writers, including W. B. Yeats and Oscar Wilde. Dowson had quite a troubled life, shadowed by an unsuccessful romantic relationship that became the main inspiration for his writing. The leading themes of his poetry are lost love and the sadness of separation, which he was able to express with a remarkably beautiful lexicon. Dowson is the author of some poetic phrases that later became iconic and frequently quoted, such as 'gone with the wind' and 'days of wine and roses'.

For this song cycle, Grigory Smirnov has collated ten poems by Dowson from different collections and organised them in such a way as to have them tell a story, with the end goal of finding a resolution to the poet's drama through music, with a particular focus on the concept of the transformative evolution of love.

*Booklet notes compiled from material supplied  
by Michail Kazinik and the composer*

## Grigory Smirnov

### Dowson Songs (2013)

on poems by Ernest Dowson (1867–1900)

#### 1. Tears fall within mine heart

*After Paul Verlaine*

Tears fall within mine heart,  
As rain upon the town:  
Whence does this languor start,  
Possessing all mine heart?

O sweet fall of the rain  
Upon the earth and roofs!  
Unto an heart in pain,  
O music of the rain!

Tears that have no reason  
Fall in my sorry heart:  
What! there was no treason?  
This grief hath no reason.

Nay! the more desolate,  
Because, I know not why,  
(Neither for love nor hate)  
Mine heart is desolate.

#### 2. A Coronal

Violets and leaves of vine,  
Into a frail, fair wreath  
We gather and entwine:  
A wreath for Love to wear,  
Fragrant as his own breath,  
To crown his brow divine,  
All day till night is near.  
Violets and leaves of vine  
We gather and entwine.

Violets and leaves of vine  
For Love that lives a day,  
We gather and entwine.  
All day till Love is dead,  
Till eve falls, cold and gray,  
These blossoms, yours and mine,  
Love wears upon his head.  
Violets and leaves of vine  
We gather and entwine.

Violets and leaves of vine,  
For Love when poor Love dies  
We gather and entwine.  
This wreath that lives a day  
Over his pale, cold eyes,  
Kissed shut by Proserpine,  
At set of sun we lay:  
Violets and leaves of vine  
We gather and entwine.

#### 3. Transition

A little while to walk with thee, dear child;  
To lean on thee my weak and weary head;  
Then evening comes: the winter sky is wild,  
The leafless trees are black, the leaves long dead.

A little while to hold thee and to stand,  
By harvest-fields of bending golden corn;  
Then the predestined silence, and thine hand,  
Lost in the night, long and weary and forlorn.

A little while to love thee, scarcely time  
To love thee well enough; then time to part,  
To fare through wintry fields alone and climb  
The frozen hills, not knowing where thou art.

Short summer-time and then, my heart's desire,  
The winter and the darkness: one by one  
The roses fall, the pale roses expire  
Beneath the slow decadence of the sun.

#### 4. Exile

By the sad waters of separation  
Where we have wandered by divers ways,  
I have but the shadow and imitation  
Of the old memorial days.

In music I have no consolation,  
No roses are pale enough for me;  
The sound of the waters of separation  
Surpasseth roses and melody.

By the sad waters of separation  
Dimly I hear from an hidden place  
The sigh of mine ancient adoration:  
Hardly can I remember your face.

If you be dead, no proclamation  
Sprang to me over the waste, gray sea:  
Living, the waters of separation  
Sever for ever your soul from me.

No man knoweth our desolation;  
Memory pales of the old delight;  
While the sad waters of separation  
Bear us on to the ultimate night.

#### 5. Interlude

(instrumental)

**6. When this, our rose, is faded**  
*Amantium Irae*

When this, our rose, is faded,  
And these, our days, are done,  
In lands profoundly shaded  
From tempest and from sun;  
Ah, once more come together,  
Shall we forgive the past,  
And safe from worldly weather  
Possess our souls at last?

Or in our place of shadows  
Shall still we stretch an hand  
To green, remembered meadows,  
Of that old pleasant land?  
And vainly there foregathered,  
Shall we regret the sun?  
The rose of love, ungathered?  
The bay, we have not won?

Ah, child! the world's dark marges  
May lead to Nevermore,  
The stately funeral barges  
Sail for an unknown shore,  
And love we vow to-morrow,  
And pride we serve to-day:

What if they both should borrow  
Sad hues of yesterday?  
Our pride! Ah, should we miss it,  
Or will it serve at last?  
Our anger, if we kiss it,  
Is like a sorrow past.  
While roses deck the garden,  
While yet the sun is high,  
Doff sorry pride for pardon,  
Or ever love go by.

**7. Seraphita**

Come not before me now, O visionary face!  
Me tempest-tost, and borne along life's passionate sea;  
Troublous and dark and stormy though my passage be;  
Not here and now may we commingle or embrace,  
Lest the loud anguish of the waters should efface  
The bright illumination of thy memory,  
Which dominates the night; rest, far away from me,  
In the serenity of thine abiding-place!

But when the storm is highest, and the thunders blare,  
And sea and sky are riven, O moon of all my night!  
Stoop down but once in pity of my great despair,  
And let thine hand, though over late to help, alight  
But once upon my pale eyes and my drowning hair,  
Before the great waves conquer in the last vain fight.

**8. I would not alter thy cold eyes**  
*Flos Luna*

I would not alter thy cold eyes,  
Nor trouble the calm fount of speech  
With aught of passion or surprise.  
The heart of thee I cannot reach:  
I would not alter thy cold eyes!

I would not alter thy cold eyes;  
Nor have thee smile, nor make thee weep;  
Though all my life droops down and dies,  
Desiring thee, desiring sleep,  
I would not alter thy cold eyes.

I would not alter thy cold eyes;  
I would not change thee if I might,  
To whom my prayers for incense rise,  
Daughter of dreams! my moon of night!  
I would not alter thy cold eyes.

I would not alter thy cold eyes,  
With trouble of the human heart:  
Within their glance my spirit lies,  
A frozen thing, alone, apart;  
I would not alter thy cold eyes.

**9. The gift of Silence**  
*Amor Umbratilis*

A gift of Silence, sweet!  
Who may not ever hear;  
To lay down at your unobservant feet,  
Is all the gift I bear.

I have no songs to sing,  
That you should heed or know:  
I have no lilies, in full hands, to fling  
Across the path you go.

I cast my flowers away,  
Blossoms unmeet for you!  
The garland I have gathered in my day;  
My rosemary and rue.

I watch you pass and pass,  
Serene and cold: I lay  
My lips upon your trodden, daisied grass,  
And turn my life away.

Yea, for I cast you, sweet!  
This one gift, you shall take:  
Like ointment, on your unobservant feet,  
My silence, for your sake.

**10. The days of wine and roses**

*Vitae summa brevis spem nos vetat incohare longam*

They are not long, the weeping and the laughter,  
Love and desire and hate:  
I think they have no portion in us after  
We pass the gate.

They are not long, the days of wine and roses:  
Out of a misty dream  
Our path emerges for a while, then closes  
Within a dream.

**11. A land of Silence**

*Beata Solitudo*

What land of Silence,  
Where pale stars shine  
On apple-blossom  
And dew-drenched vine,  
Is yours and mine?

The silent valley  
That we will find,  
Where all the voices  
Of humankind  
Are left behind.

There all forgetting,  
Forgotten quite,  
We will repose us,  
With our delight  
Hid out of sight.

The world forsaken,  
And out of mind  
Honour and labour,  
We shall not find  
The stars unkind.

And men shall travail,  
And laugh and weep;  
But we have vistas  
Of gods asleep,  
With dreams as deep.

A land of Silence,  
Where pale stars shine  
On apple-blossoms  
And dew-drenched vine,  
Be yours and mine!

**12. Postlude**  
(instrumental)

*Ernest Dowson*

**Grigory Smirnov**



[www.grigorysmirnov.com](http://www.grigorysmirnov.com)

Grigory Smirnov is a composer and pianist living in New York. His music has been performed around the globe in major venues, such as the Lincoln Center, Tanglewood Festival, Merkin Concert Hall, Brevard Music Center, Moscow Philharmonic Concert Hall and The Copenhagen Opera House. Among his recent works is the song cycle *Dowson Songs*, commissioned by The ASCAP Foundation and premiered at the Merkin Concert Hall in the Kaufman Music Center, New York. As a pianist, Grigory Smirnov performs classical, contemporary and improvisational music. He currently teaches at Rutgers University in New Jersey, USA.

Born in Novosibirsk, Russia, Grigory Smirnov started music lessons at the age of five. He attended Novosibirsk Music College as a pianist and the Novosibirsk Glinka State Conservatory, where he studied composition with distinguished Russian composer Yuri Yukechev. During his years in Russia, he was awarded a composition prize at the Prokofiev International Competition and made his debut as a composer of orchestral music when his composition *Pastorale* was premiered by the Novosibirsk Philharmonic Orchestra. In 2009 Grigory Smirnov was awarded a full scholarship by The Juilliard School and moved to the United States. At Juilliard he studied with Christopher Rouse and received a Master of Music degree in composition. He was also a composition fellow at Tanglewood Music Center.

"Grigory Smirnov is an exceptionally talented composer with a unique voice. I think his music is extremely beautiful and powerful. He should go far." *John Corigliano*

## Martin Bakari



Praised by *Opera News* as “vocally charismatic” and possessing a “golden tenor,” Martin Bakari has performed to great acclaim a wide range of opera, art song, oratorio, musical theatre, jazz, baroque, contemporary, and chamber works in important music venues throughout the US and abroad. Martin Bakari trained at Juilliard, Tanglewood and the Boston University Opera Institute and his recent and upcoming engagements include appearances with Virginia Opera, Portland Opera, Opera Carolina, Palm Beach Opera, Metropolitan Opera Educational Outreach, American Opera Projects, Little Opera Theatre of NY, Opera North, the Kennedy Center, the New Hampshire Philharmonic, Salem Philharmonic, and Yellow Springs Chamber Orchestras, and performances of *Porgy and Bess* at Dresden Semperoper, Staatsoper Hamburg, Deutsches Theater München, Alte Oper Frankfurt, and the Kölner Philharmonie.

In addition to his roles in operas by Rossini, Donizetti, Mozart, Britten, Offenbach, Gounod, Gershwin, Sullivan, and Strauss, Martin Bakari is a champion of new music and has sung in premières and important performances of works by composers including William Bolcom, David Lang, John Harbison, Wynton Marsalis, Daniel Sonenberg, and Grigory Smirnov. Recent and upcoming recording projects include David Lang’s *The Difficulty of Crossing a Field* (Beth Morrison Projects/Cantaloupe Music) and Wynton Marsalis’ *Abyssinian Mass* (Blue Engine Records/Sony). A passionate voice teacher and music educator, Mr. Bakari is a proud recipient of Juilliard’s Morse Teaching Artist Fellowship and

works as a teaching artist for the Metropolitan Opera.

[www.martinbakari.com](http://www.martinbakari.com)

## Adrian Daurov



Adrian Daurov is a Russian-born cellist who performs as a soloist with symphony orchestras all around the world and frequently collaborates with artists including Alicia Keys, Josh Groban, Burt Bacharach and Sigur Rós, to name a few. He also regularly plays with the Swedish folk-rock band First Aid Kit as well as the cello rock band Break of Reality.

Since his début as a soloist with the St Petersburg Symphony Orchestra aged 15, Adrian Daurov has received top prizes at several international music competitions in Europe and the US and has also toured Europe as a soloist with the St Petersburg Chamber Orchestra. After his studies at the St Petersburg Conservatory in Russia, Adrian Daurov received the Jerome L. Greene Scholarship study at The Juilliard School with the renowned cello pedagogues André Emelianoff and David Soyer (of the Guarneri Quartet), where he completed his Bachelor and Master degrees in 2009. In 2007 Adrian Daurov was appointed the principal cellist of the Chamber Orchestra of New York, and from 2008 until 2015 served as the founding member of the ASCAP Award-winning string quartet Voxare. He has performed live on WNYC’s show Soundcheck with John Schaefer, WQXR’s Classical Beer Jam with Matt Abramovitz, the Regis and Kelly Live Show, Good Morning America, the Late Show with David Letterman and Late Night with Jimmy Fallon. Adrian Daurov performs as a duo with acclaimed pianists Di Wu and Spencer Myer and has collaborated with composers Mohammed Fairouz, Daron Hagen, Daniel Capelletti and Grigory Smirnov. His recent and upcoming concerto engagements include solo performances with the symphony orchestras of Bozeman, Wyoming, Longwood and Kalamazoo.

[www.adriandaurov.com](http://www.adriandaurov.com)

### Konstantine Valianatos



Konstantine Valianatos has attracted attention as an exciting young musician of great talent in both the United States and in Europe, having won numerous awards at international competitions. He is the recipient of the Gina Bachauer, Yamaha, Onassis, I.K.Y., George and Marie Vergottis Foundation, and Starr Foundation scholarships. In 2004, Konstantine Valianatos was presented with the highest accolade from the Athens Academy by the President of the Hellenic Republic.

Konstantine Valianatos enjoys an international performing career and has appeared as a featured soloist in concerto performances with the Athens State Orchestra, the Thessaloniki State Symphony Orchestra, the Aspen Music Festival Orchestra, and the Las Colinas Symphony Orchestra. He has performed as a soloist and chamber musician in numerous prestigious venues, including the Salle Cortot in Paris, Carnegie's Weill and Zankel Recital Halls, the Kosciuszko Foundation, the Thessaloniki Megaron, and the Athens Megaron, and has been featured on WQXR's McGraw-Hill Young Artist's Showcase. Konstantine Valianatos holds degrees from the National Conservatory of Greece and the Ecole Normale in Paris, where he studied with Germaine Mounier, as well as B.M. and M.M. degrees from The Juilliard School, where he continues his studies in pursuit of the D.M.A. degree under the tutelage of Julian Martin and Veda Kaplinsky.

With violinist Regi Papa and cellist Benjamin Capps, he is a founding member of the award-winning Olympus Piano Trio. In 2015, the Olympus Trio had its Merkin Hall debut, sponsored by the Onassis and Hellenic-American cultural foundations, to critical acclaim. Their forthcoming album on LP Classics will feature works by Mendelssohn, Ravel, and Hatzis.

The distinguished Russian-born composer Grigory Smirnov is, in the words of fellow composer John Corigliano, “an exceptionally talented composer with a unique voice”. His works are powerful and timeless, and not beholden to any particular stylistic affiliations. *Dowson Songs* comprises ten poems by the English Victorian poet Ernest Dowson which Smirnov has organised into a musical narrative exploring, with great richness, the transformative evolution of the poet’s love. In *Chaconne*, for cello and piano, Smirnov cleverly manages to dissolve the borders between melody and harmony whilst following Baroque ideas.

**Grigory  
SMIRNOV**  
(b. 1982)

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**Martin Bakari, Tenor (2-13) • Adrian Daurov, Cello (1)**  
**Konstantine Valianatos, Piano**

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