October Songs

Don Freund

"A Birthday" by Christina Georgina Rossetti "Unity" by Violet Jacob "Sister Maude" by Christina Georgina Rossetti

Freundworks Publishing

Don Freund: October Songs for Woman's Voice and Piano (2020)

Duration: ca. 12 minutes

"A Birthday" by Christina Georgina Rossetti "Unity" by Violet Jacob "Sister Maude" by Christina Georgina Rossetti

Composer's program note:

October Songs is a sequel (written 18 years and 11 months later) to my 2002 set entitled November Songs. For October Songs, I chose two poems by Christina Georgina Rossetti to surround "Unity" by Violet Jacob. Rosetti's "A Birthday" bubbles over with personal exuberance, while Jacob's poem takes a cosmic perspective — set in a soundscape of floating through space and feeling the impact of galaxies exploding light years away. "Sister Maude" returns to a vernacular music style for a "chanson noire" ballad of murder and betrayal.

A Birthday

by Christina Georgina Rossetti

My heart is like a singing bird Whose nest is in a watered shoot; My heart is like an apple-tree Whose boughs are bent with thickset fruit; My heart is like a rainbow shell That paddles in a halcyon sea; My heart is gladder than all these Because my love is come to me.

Raise me a dais of silk and down; Hang it with fur and purple dyes; Carve it in doves, and pomegranates, And peacocks with a hundred eyes; Work it in gold and silver grapes, In leaves, and silver fleurs-de-lys; Because the birthday of my life Is come, my love is come to me.

Unity

by Violet Jacob

I dreamed that life and time and space were one, And the pure trance of dawn; The increase drawn From all the journeys of the travelling sun, And the long mysteries of sound and sight, The whispering rains, And far, calm waters set in lonely plains, And cry of birds at night. I dreamed that these and love and death were one, And all eternity. The life to be Therewith entwined, throughout the ages spun; And so with Grief, my playmate; him I knew One with the rest, -One with the mounting day, the east and west -Lord, is it true? Lord, do I dream? Methinks a key unlocks Some dungeon door, in thrall of blackened towers, On ecstasies, half hid, like chill white flowers Blown in the secret places of the rocks.

Sister Maude

by Christina Georgina Rossetti

Who told my mother of my shame,Who told my father of my dear?Oh who but Maude, my sister Maude,Who lurked to spy and peer.

Cold he lies, as cold as stone, With his clotted curls about his face: The comeliest corpse in all the world And worthy of a queen's embrace.

You might have spared his soul, sister, Have spared my soul, your own soul too: Though I had not been born at all, He'd never have looked at you.

My father may sleep in Paradise, My mother at Heaven-gate: But sister Maude shall get no sleep Either early or late.

My father may wear a golden gown, My mother a crown may win; If my dear and I knocked at Heaven-gate Perhaps they'd let us in: But sister Maude, oh sister Maude, Bide *you* with death and sin.

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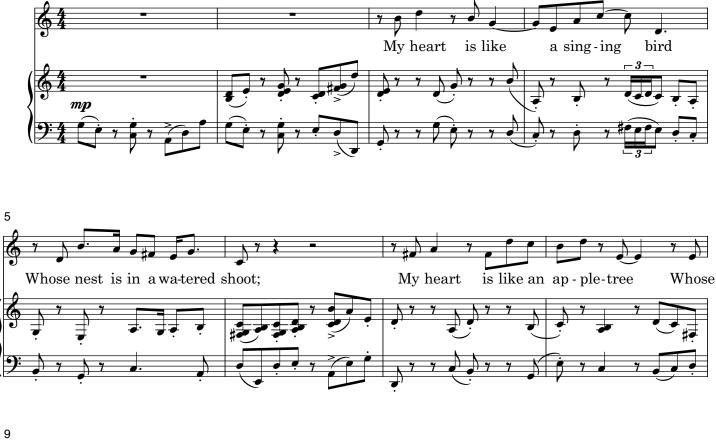
October Songs

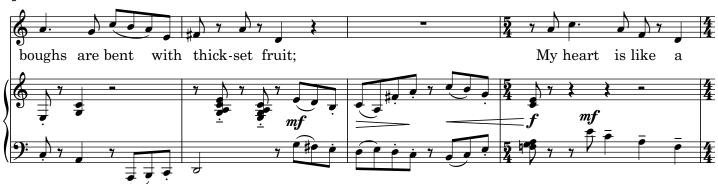
Don Freund

A Birthday

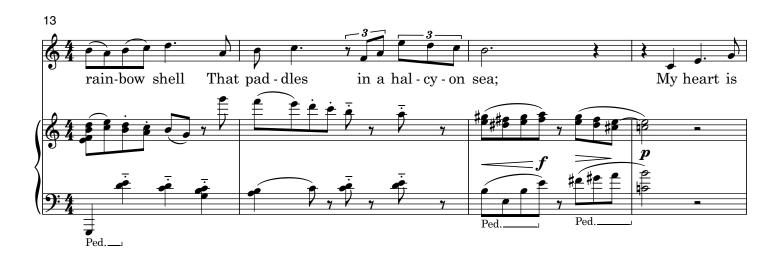
"A Birthday" by Christina Georgina Rossetti

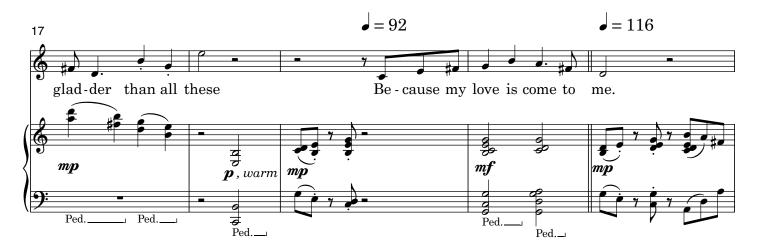
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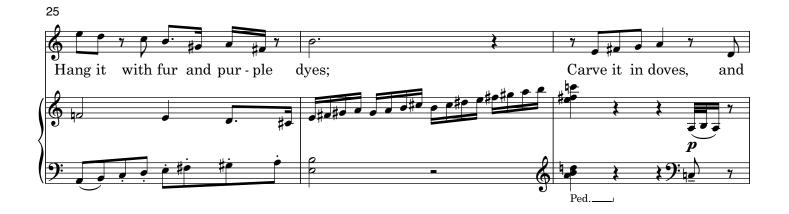


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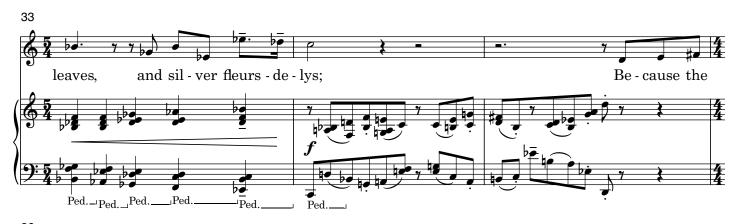






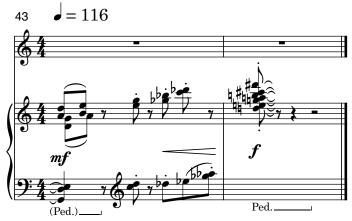








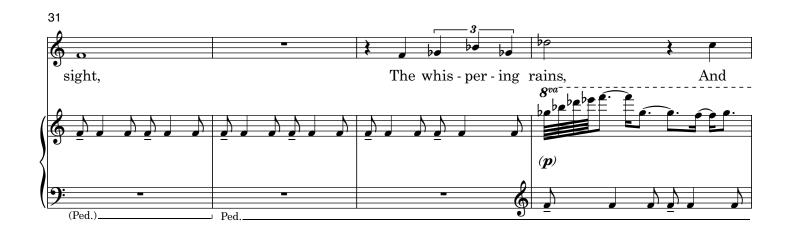




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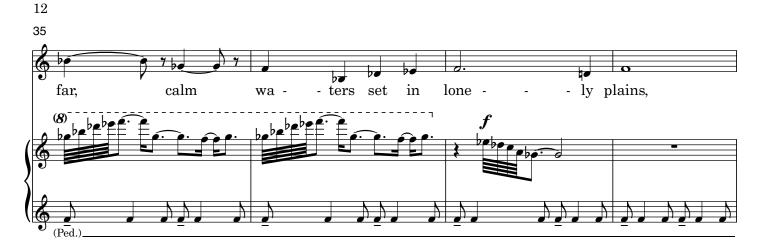


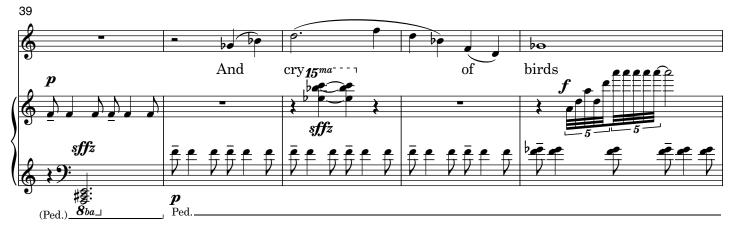




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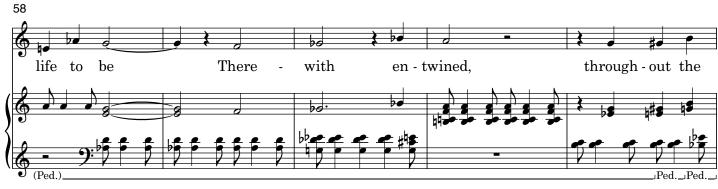


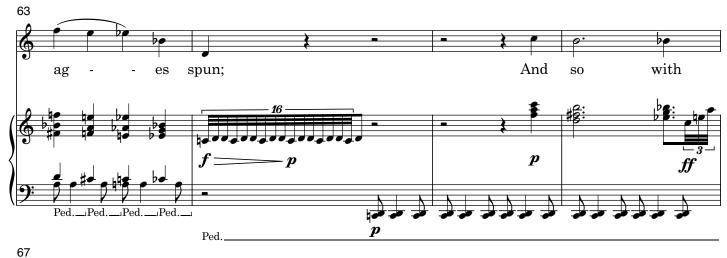


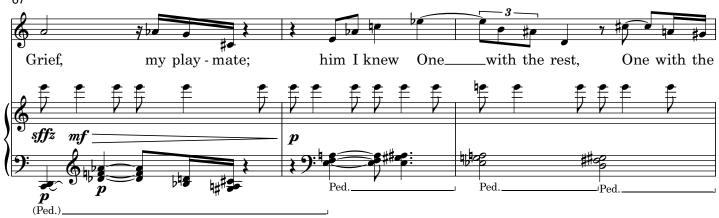
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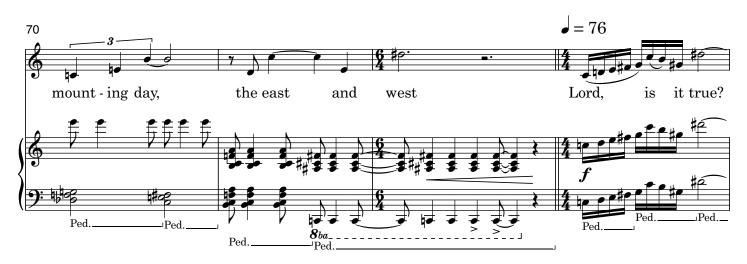
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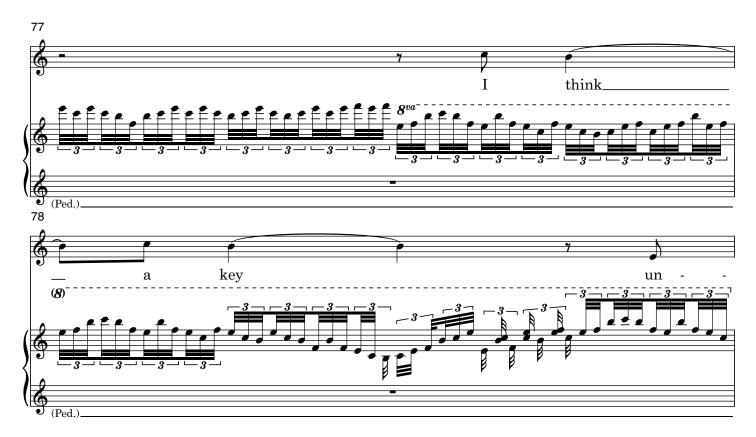


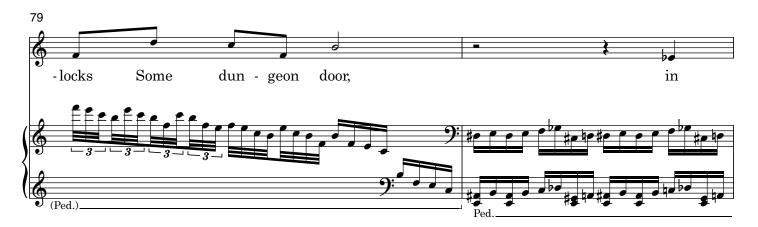




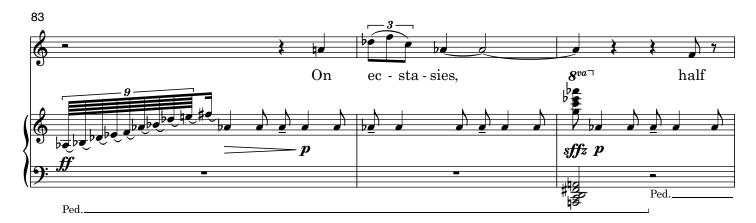


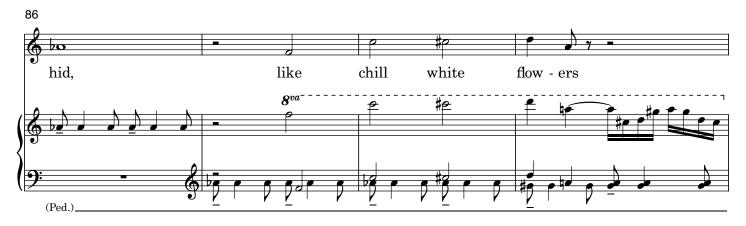




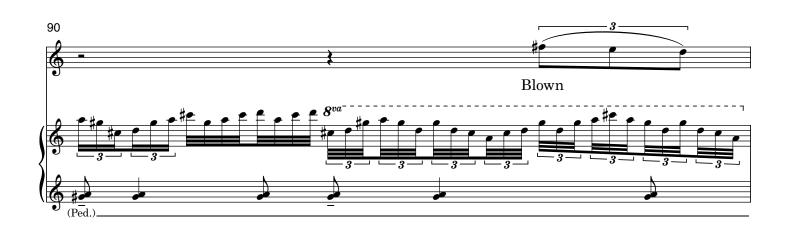


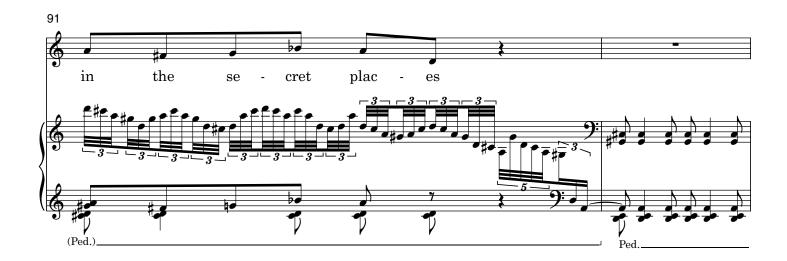


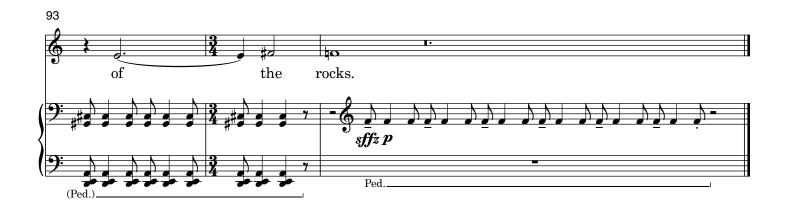












Sister Maude

"Sister Maude" by Christina Georgina Rossetti



