

The Enchanted Year.

...By Josef Marx

1. Farewell (Autumn)

The composer takes the poem of Fofanow to express the moment of the passing of his youth. He likens it to the Autumn of the year, - pale and cold, in which even the trees allow their leaves dumbly to fall from them. The moon with golden light glides like a pale skiff through the grey waves of cloud; the flowers, a blossomless crowd, are shivering in their death dance; and he is alone in this place of desolation. In the depths of his soul youth painlessly dies, and in dying bids him farewell and blesses him with the last pale rays of sunset. He, however, sobs in bitter regret, lost in unknown pain, and feels the same loneliness that Adam must have felt when the gates of Eden were closed to him.

2. December (Winter)

Here the composer takes the poem of Kernstock. He is sitting in his room, fireless and hungry. He hears a tapping on his window, and sees the sweet face of his mother who gazes at him with loving eyes. He hears her voice calling him, as when a child, to see the laden Christmas tree, telling him of the coming of the Christ child. His joy overflows, - when suddenly he realizes it is only a twig tapping on the pane and the night wind rising. In his bitterness he cries out, "Go to sleep, you fool! No Christ child will ever visit you: and the dead do not return."

3. Songs (Spring)

Christian Morgenstern, Josef Marx's great friend, inspires the music. The composer feels within his soul the surging of dream voices, - young girls with their clear young bodies calling to each other and chasing each other over the slopes of the hills, - the deep rustle of the broad blue river, - an eagle circling and calling overhead, - Songs, everywhere songs! - In the sunshine, in the green grass, in the forest, in the river, in the valley! -

4. In my dream Native Land (Summer)

Here the composer, with the words of Carl Hauptmann, likens the summer to his return to his native land among the fields and meadows, and to his Beloved. He tells her in this native land of his dreams she blossoms still, her song still sounds; for in this land no flower can fade, no song can die away, - for there is everlasting Spring.

5. In the Campagna (Rome)

The composer makes his own poem to express his philosophy of life. He finds in the beauties of Nature a balm for his soul, - the endless expanse that ends only in the sea, the joy of the sun that shines in his heart, the sparkle of hill and palace, the rustle of the pine forest, the joys of reunion with Nature, the contemplation of strange flowers, old marble so full of history, the blue sky, white clouds, the happiness of life, - human joys, to know that tomorrow will be as yesterday, and then will also fade into the past and yet not have been lived in vain. For always the Spring will return, and the hour will come again when man's greatest works, faithfully dedicated to the gods, will blossom into new life, - the deepest meaning of life will ripen into perfection.

So he greets Campagna, the holy and everlasting enigma, the native land of his soul and the Infinite. For in Nature echoes the song of Eternity, of suffering, and of love. Blissfully full of joy sounds the song of Pan, who striding over twilight meadows raises his arms in Blessing. The Joy of Longing, never-ending Desire. - To humbly approach the Feast of the Gods, to say Farewell and then perish, while the nymphs are softly dancing their roundelay, and stars are shining in the dew of the night.
