

The Secret Of Your Heart

*love songs on texts of Rabindranath Tagore
for mezzo-soprano & piano*

Karim Al-Zand
(2004)

PROGRAM NOTE:

Rabindranath Tagore (1861-1941) is one of India's most beloved literary figures. He is known primarily for his poetry, but his voluminous output also includes novels, plays, short stories, travel diaries, autobiographical writings and many essays on philosophy, religion, education and social topics. Tagore was also an accomplished painter and composer. (Of his over two thousand songs, two are now used as the national anthems of India and Bangladesh.) He was a close friend of Gandhi and was active in Indian political life before independence. Much of Tagore's money and time went towards an experimental school he founded at Shantiniketan, based on his ideals of an enlightened and free-thinking educational system. He wrote most of his important works in Bengali, but translated many of them into English himself, including *Gitangali* [Song Offerings], for which he was awarded the Nobel Prize for Literature in 1913. The poems chosen for *The Secret Of Your Heart* are typical in their simple and elegant lyricism, buoyant humor, and striking imagery. They are drawn from two collections (*The Gardener*, 1913 and *The Fugitive and Other Poems*, 1921) and are here arranged in a quasi-narrative.

Premiere performance: *The Secret Of Your Heart* was written for and premiered by mezzo-soprano Aidan Soder. The premiere of the complete *Tagore Love Songs* (see below) was given on April 4, 2005 in Houston, TX.

 September 2004

PERFORMANCE NOTES:

The Secret Of Your Heart is a six-song cycle for mezzo-soprano and piano based on texts of Rabindranath Tagore. It can be paired with another Tagore cycle, *The Sky With All Its Stars* (for baritone and piano) or it may combined with that cycle to form a larger work entitled *Tagore Love Songs*, in which singers alternate six songs each (the last two of which use the same text) then sing a final duet. The poems, drawn from various collections, are not given titles by Tagore; they are titled here by their first line (which may be given in a program).

DURATION:

1. Do not keep to yourself	2'10"
2. When the two sisters go to fetch water	2'20"
3. He whispered, my love	3'00"
4. Then finish the last song	35"
5. My songs are like bees	1'15"
6. My heart, the bird of the wilderness	2'00"

TOTAL: ca. 11'30"

TEXT:

1. Do not keep to yourself

Do not keep to yourself the secret of your heart, my friend!

Say it to me, only to me, in secret.

You who smile so gently, softly whisper, my heart will hear it,
not my ears.

The night is deep, the house is silent, the birds' nests are
shrouded with sleep.

Speak to me through hesitating tears, through faltering smiles,
through sweet shame and pain, the secret of your heart!

2. When the two sisters go to fetch water

When the two sisters go to fetch water, they come to this spot
and they smile.

They must be aware of somebody who stands behind the trees
whenever they go to fetch water.

The two sisters whisper to each other when they pass this spot.
They must have guessed the secret of that somebody who stands
behind the trees whenever they go to fetch water.

Their pitchers lurch suddenly, and water spills when they reach
this spot.

They must have found out that somebody's heart is beating who
stands behind the trees whenever they go to fetch water.

The two sisters glance at each other when they come to this spot,
and they smile.

There is a laughter in their swift-stepping feet, which makes
confusion in somebody's mind who stands behind the trees whenever
they go to fetch water.

3. He whispered, my love

He whispered, "My love, raise your eyes."

I sharply chided him, and said "Go!"; but he did not stir.

He stood before me and held both my hands. I said, "Leave me!";
but he did not go.

He brought his face near my ear. I glanced at him and said,
"What a shame!"; but he did not move.

His lips touched my cheek. I trembled and said, "You dare too
much"; but he had no shame.

He put a flower in my hair. I said, "It is useless!"; but he
stood unmoved.

He took the garland from my neck and went away. I weep and ask
my heart, "Why does he not come back?"

4. Then finish the last song

Then finish the last song and let us leave.

Forget this night when the night is no more.

Whom do I try to clasp in my arms? Dreams can never be made
captive.

My eager hands press emptiness to my heart and it bruises my
breast.

5. My songs are like bees

My songs are like bees; they follow through the air some fragrant
trace--some memory--of you, to hum around your shyness, eager for its
hidden store.

When the freshness of dawn droops in the sun, when in the noon the air
hangs low with heaviness and the forest is silent, my songs return home,
their languid wings dusted with gold.

6. My heart, the bird of the wilderness

My heart, the bird of the wilderness, has found its sky in your eyes.

They are the cradle of the morning, they are the kingdom of the
stars.

My songs are lost in their depths.

Let me but soar in that sky, in its lonely immensity.

Let me but cleave its clouds and spread wings in its sunshine.

—Rabindranath Tagore

Poems 1, 2, 3, 4 and 6 are from The Gardener (New York: Macmillan, 1913), Nos. XXIV, XVIII, XXXI, XXVIII, and LI. Poem 5 is from The Fugitive and Other Poems (Santiniketan: 1921), No. II:VII. All texts are in the public domain.

The Secret Of Your Heart

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Rabindranath Tagore
(1861-1941)

for mezzo-soprano & piano

Karim Al-Zand
(2004)

1. Do not keep to yourself

Extremely Slowly; hushed $\text{♩} = 66$
pp confidentially $\text{♩} = 3$

Do not keep to your-self — the se-cret of your heart, — my

friend! Say it to me, on-ly to me, in secret

You who smile so gent-ly, — soft ly whis per, — my heart will hear it —

The musical score is written for mezzo-soprano and piano. It features a 3/4 time signature and a key signature of one sharp (F#). The tempo is 'Extremely Slowly; hushed' with a metronome marking of 66. The score is divided into three systems. The first system includes the vocal line and piano accompaniment. The second system starts with a circled '4' and includes dynamics like *mp*, *p*, and *pp*. The third system starts with a circled '9' and includes dynamics like *p* and *poco cresc.*. The piano part features complex chordal textures and arpeggiated figures.

⑫ *pp* *mp*
 not my ear. The night is deep, the house is si-lent,
 ⑫ *mp* *sta*

poco rit. - - - - - *a tempo*

⑬ *mf*
 the birds' nests are shroud-ed with sleep. Speak to me
 ⑬ *mf* *sub p*

⑭ *mp*
 through hes-i-ta-ting tears, through fal-ter-ing smiles, through sweet shame and pain,
 ⑭ *mp* *poco cresc.*

take time - - -

⑮ *p*
 the sec-ret of your heart!
 ⑮ *p*

2. When the two sisters go to fetch water

Text: Rabindranath Tagore
(1861-1941)

Music: Karim Al-Zand
(2004)

Quickly; lively and playful ♩ = 96-100

The musical score is written in 7/8 time and consists of a piano accompaniment and a vocal line. The piano part begins with a piano (*p*) dynamic, featuring a melodic line in the right hand and a more rhythmic accompaniment in the left hand. It includes a trill marked *S^{va}* and a section marked *f* (forte) with a tenor (*ten.*) dynamic. The vocal line starts at measure 3 with the lyrics "When the two sis - ters go to fetch water, they come to this spot and they smile. They must be a -". The piano accompaniment continues with a *mp* (mezzo-piano) dynamic and includes a triplet of eighth notes. The score concludes with a final piano accompaniment section marked *S^{va}*.

* These and other, similar figures played short, accented and quickly, like on-the-beat grace notes:

This block shows three examples of on-the-beat grace notes in a 7/8 time signature. Each example consists of a short, accented rhythmic figure followed by a rest. The first example is a quarter note followed by an eighth note. The second example is a quarter note followed by a sixteenth note. The third example is a quarter note followed by a thirty-second note. The text "etc." follows the third example.

⑨

ware of some - bo - dy who stands be - hind the trees when -

⑫

ev - er they go to fetch wa-ter.

⑫

⑮

The two sis - ters whis-per to each o - ther when they

⑮

⑮

pass this spot. *cresc.* *poco f* *p* *conspiratorial* They must have guessed

⑮

Sua *cresc.* *poco f* *p*

21

the se - cret of that some - bo - dy who stands be - hind the trees when -

21

24

ev - er they go to fetch wa - ter. Their pit - chers (l)

24

mf

28

lurch sudden-ly, and wa - ter spills when they reach this

28

f abrupt *mp* *rit.*

31

spot. They must have found out That some-bo-dy's

31

Slowly; pulsating $\text{♩} = 76$ *pp* *plaintive*

35 heart is beat-ing who stands be - hind the trees when - ev - er they

39 go to fetch wa - ter. Tempo I

39 *p* *8va* *9:8*

43 *mf* The two sis - ters glance at each

43 *mf* *mp*

45 o - ther when they come to this spot, and they

45 *3*

(47) smile. There is a laugh - ter in their

(49) *accel. cresc. becoming frantic*
 swift - step - ping feet, which makes con - fu - sion in some - bo - dy's mind

(51) *ff p*
 who stands be - hind the trees when -

(54) ev - er they go to fetch wa - ter.

3. He whispered, my love

Text: Rabindranath Tagore
(1861-1941)Music: Karim Al-Zand
(2004)

Moderately; but inconstant, capricious $\text{♩}=80$ *sentimental pp*

He whis - . . .

pered, "My love, raise your eyes."

I sharp - ly chid - ed him, and said

"Go!"; but he did not stir.

pp *8va* *Red.* *p* *accel. a* *mocking p* *subito* *suddenly resolute* *mf* *p*

* Pedal the harmonic changes but catch grace notes within the pedal (grace notes played before the beat throughout).

⑭ He stood be - fore me and

⑮ held both my hands.

accel. a - - - -

⑳ I said, "Leave me!"; but he did not go.

subito
molto accel. - - - - (♩=152) ♩=80

㉕ He brought his face near my ear.

ardent

More Motion ♩.=66 (♩.=♩.)

30 *mf* mischievous molto accel. - - - - - *f*

I glanced at him _____ and said, "What a shame!"; _____

subito $\text{♩} = 80$

33 *mf*

but he did not move. _____ His lips _____ touched my

37 **More Motion**

cheek. I trem - bled and said,

40 *molto accel.* - - - - - *f* subito $\text{♩} = 80$

"You dare too much"; but he had no shame. _____

4. Then finish the last song

Text: Rabindranath Tagore
(1861-1941)

Music: Karim Al-Zand
(2004)

Quickly; forceful, declamatory ♩=104

f angry, heated

Then fin-ish the last song _____ and let us leave. For-get this night _____

④ _____ when the night is no more. Whom _____ do I try to clasp in my arms?

⑦ *ff* Dreams _____ can nev-er be made cap-tive. *f* My eag-er hands *decresc.* press

⑩ *molto rit.* _____ *mp* emp-ti-ness _____ to my heart and it bruis-es my breast.

⑩ _____ *mf* _____ *mp* _____ *p* _____

5. My songs are like bees

Text: Rabindranath Tagore
(1861-1941)

Music: Karim Al-Zand
(2004)

Ad libitum Extremely quickly; droning ♩=96+

p

My songs are like bees; they

ppp light, evenly

(silently depress
D \sharp to G \flat)

Sost. →
Una Corda →

p

④ fol - low through the air some fra-grant trace— some

④

⑦ mem - - 'ry of you, to

⑦

⑩ hum a-round your shy - ness, ea - ger for its hid - den store.

⑩

⑬

⑬

⑬

Sost. →
Una Corda → 8^{va}

⑬ Slowly; recitative-like ♩ = 56

freely

⑬

When the fresh-ness of dawn droops in the sun, when in the noon the

⑬

mf

mp

(8^{va}) - - - - -
Red. →

8^{va} - - - - -

⑬

air hangs low with hea - vi - ness and the for - est is

⑬

p

pp

8^{va} - - - - -

8^{va} - - - - -

Ad libitum

Tempo I

⑳

p

si - lent, my songs re - turn home

⑳

ppp

p

Sost. →
Una Corda →

22

their lan - - guid wings dus - ted with

Sost. ___

25

gold.

glissando 8^{va}

no cresc.

8^{va}

(let ring)

Red. ->

6. My heart, the bird of the wilderness

Text: Rabindranath Tagore
(1861-1941)Music: Karim Al-Zand
(2004)

Freely

start slowly
tr^h with a quiet flourish *tr*^h
pp *p*
red. →

② Slowly; delicate ♩ = 66 *pp* sotto voce
My heart, the

⑤ bird of the wil - der - ness, *p* has

⑤

⑧ becoming more full voiced
found its sky in your eyes. *mp*

⑧

⑪ *mp*
They are the cra - dle of the morn - - - - ing

⑭ they are the king - dom of the stars.

⑰ *cresc.*
My songs are lost in their

⑳ *poco f*
depths. Let me but soar in that sky, in its

23 lone - ly im - men - si - ty. *mf* Let me but

8va *mf* 8va

26 cleave its clouds and spread wings in its sun -

decresc.

15^{ma} 8^{va} *decresc.* 8^{va} 15^{ma} 8^{va}

29 shine. *pp* a tempo My heart has

10:8 *pp* a tempo

32 found its wings. *rit.*

32 *b^b* as before *ppp* 8^{va} 8^{vb}

b^b as before *ppp* 8^{va} 8^{vb}

