

ORFEO & MAJNUN

Music composed by Dick van der Harst, Moneim Adwan and Howard Moody

*Libretto: Martina Winkel**

Poetic translation into Arabic by Fatena Al Ghorra

*Livret dans sa version originale, sans les modifications et coupures apportées durant les dernières répétitions. / Originele versie van het libretto, zonder de wijzigingen en coupures aangebracht tijdens de laatste repetities.

Note: Layla & Majnun sing in Arabic. Orfeo & Eurydice sing in English.

The choir sings mainly in English, with interspersed elements in other languages.

The Narrator uses the local language(s). All texts by the narrator are spoken, not sung, sometimes secco, sometimes as a melodrama over the orchestra.

1 Begin / Of Light & Sound

Narrator, choir/mixed.

Local language; fragments of English and other languages

*The orchestra starts. No overture, but the sudden sound of the Big Bang like a shock.
Then silence again.*

Narrator: If no body was there to listen,
No ear to hear,
the world was born
in silence.
But that silence
contained every sound.

The choir starts softly, building up, the instruments joining.

The Narrator initiates the stage by a quasi shamanistic conjuration: the beginning of the world, space and time; images and sounds travelling, from the Big Bang of the scientific 'creation myth', moving through space by the waves of light and sound.

The Choir undergoes a development of different qualities from mere sounds, vowels, words, language, expression of contents: a kind of fast forward evolution.

Choir (*humming, syllables, words*): Mmmmm ma ma ma aya aya maim oyno
ba ba ba manu mutu kall tika tika udu nur

Narrator (*fast, over music*): The wind spreading the words like seeds,
first born from need, breath and
singing, the fear and the light
tongue, mouth, heart, and the blood
fire, ashes and black and black,
the eye and the sun, tears and the night
the roots of dreams, the hunger, the pain,
the flight of brains, talk, tell, whisper and scream
filling the hollow; phantoms, pictures, and stories,
feeding the animal grown human.

The choir is echoing selected words of the narrator's text.

2 Longing

*Eurydice, Layla; Orfeo & Majnun enter only at the end; (choir maybe joining the first refrain)
English, Arabic, some lines together/parallel; local language*

Evoked by the Narrator the two young women, Layla and Eurydice, appear.

Narrator: When I look at girls how they laugh together, then suddenly drift into thoughts,
how they run and suddenly stop, when I see them lift their faces, feeling
the wind or the sun or the future, how they sit and ponder, paled by a dream,
blushed by a plan, I sometimes fear what may hinder them, by force or love,
to become who they freely could be. –
There two of them come, appearing from the mist of their stories, separated from
each other and from us by hundreds of years.
Maybe.

Eurydice: Born out of darkness, born by the night,
A floating oval, silver and bright -
An egg, neither moon nor planet.
But then it happens:
a crack, a gap,
the crust is breaking
and out flies
Eros
in a gush of light,
the God of Love and Longing.
- I just like these stories! -
They tickle my brain!
Take me on your shiny wings
To my paradise,
Utopia, love, far away aims...
Make me an arrow, make me a sling
To catch my dreams
How high they may rise.

Layla: How soft is the night,
A shimmering pasture...
My grazing dreams
Mingle with stars
Wander with clouds
Dance with the flute
Drink from the liquid moon.

ما أجمل هذي الليلة
مرعى يتلالا

يرعى أحلامي
المغزولة بالنجمات
تمشي مع الغيمات
وتراقص النايات

(the following, if possible, interwoven; in both languages)

Both: Love has a name,
Shining, sounding
through time and space.

Love has a name,
shining, sounding
through time and space.

الحب له عنوان
تشرق في القلوب
وتسمعها العيون
في الوقت والزمان

Love has a name
والحب له ملامح
Shining, sounding
وتسمعها العيون
through time and space
في الوقت والزمان

Layla: Qays Qays...

Eurydice: ...Orfeo

Layla: Qays Qays...

Eurydice: ...Orfeo

Orfeo & Majnun: Layla Eurydice Layla
Layla Eurydice Layla

3 The Power of Music

Orfeo, Majnu; Choir/mixed.

English, Arabic; local language

The lines of the choir may be interwoven, repeated, remixed, given to different voices/groups.

During the scene the animals are lured to the stage by the music.

Choir: Who am I?
What is my true name?
Where is my home?
Where can I stay
How can I fly?
What shall we do and why do we feel
Alone.

Majnun: A bowl of glass,
A shining light:

Love is the flame of the world.
The flame shimmers in every thing,
through faces, flowers, body and stone,
Each one a lamp, a vibrating tone -
The sound of light, the breath of the soul.
In love.

أنية من الزجاج
لمعان ضوء
الحب هو وهج العالم
وميض النار في كل شيء
يسافر عبر الوجوه وبين الورود
في الجسم والحجر
يحيل كل واحد منا مصباحا
نغمات راعشة
في الحب تسمع للروح صوت
وترى للضوء بريق

Orfeo: I am an echoe.
I am an echoe of what I feel.
Every thing has a sound.
I resound what they sing to me,
the trees, the ocean, the people around.
The whole world is tuned in harmony.
I am an echoe of what I hear,
You hear your own song inside.

Choir: Every thing has a sound
Trees, ocean, body and stone.
We hear our own song inside.
Each one a lamp, a vibrating tone.
The sound of the light, the breath of my soul -
Love, love – breath of my soul...

يحيل كل واحد منا مصباحا
نغمات راعشة
في الحب تسمع للروح صوت
وترى للضوء بريق

(part of the choir off)

4 How it all began

*Narrator, duet Layla/Qays, duet Eurydice/Orfeo;
Arabic, English; local language.*

Narrator: To love. To be in love. There are so many kinds of love.
To fall in love... There are so many ways to fall in love.
Remember? Do you still know?

Eurydice: Birds birds hundreds of birds
What I saw first was a cloud
A crown alive circling in the sky
Above the head of this stranger
And then: liquid silver
His voice -
Up, up in a sudden flutter
Flew my heart.

Orfeo: You were pale: leaves in shadegreen
your face –
Deep, deep like a silent water
Grew my heart.

(Orfeo & Eurydice off with animals and rest of the choir during transition to oriental music)

Layla: Bent over the pages of the book
I felt a touch on my hair.

Majnun: Meant to write letters I just looked,
My glance got caught in your hair.

Layla: When I looked up I saw you there:
The touch was your mesmerized look.

Majnun: Then your lid opened: a deep black snare.
My fall so endless my soul was hooked.

Both: Love shone in your eyes like through water shines light.
Sent to school I learnt love at first sight.

ليلي:
مانلة فوق الكتاب
وطيفه على شعري ينساب

المجنون:
كنت قد بدأت في كتابة الرسالة
وحينما رأيتها قلبي الضعيف عبر شعرها استكان

ليلي:
رفعت عيناى ورأيتة هناك
نظراته السكرى كانت هي اللمسة

المجنون:
وعندها تفتح الجفنان
عن غابتين عميقتين من المقل
ووقعت كالسحاب بلا نهاية
وتعلقت روجي هناك إلى الأبد

كلاهما:
وهنا تعلمت الغرام مثلما

يتعلم الأطفال أول الأشياء
وكما يتلأل الضياء عبر الماء
الحب كان في عيوننا يلمع

5 Separation

Narrator, Layla, (Majnun); Choir, back stage.
Arabic; local language.

Narrator: See how they bloom in the innocent spring of their love!
Why rip the fresh leaves, why break the stem, why try to tear out the root,
why destroy the beautiful blossom? Because love is against the rules?

Hissing Choir (*backstage*): Listen to them! Watch their shameless stare!
They show their obsession! Indecent display!
Dishonoured your daughter! -

Narrator: So her father snatched her away.
She was confined to their tent.

Layla: So my father snatched me away.
I was confined to my tent.

وانتز عني والدي بعيدا
وبقلب خيمتي سجت

Majnun: Gone, gone, the only one gone
Who keeps my heart alive!
Where, how can I find her,
My steps beat the stone, the sand.
Kiss, kiss,
The trace of her feet I follow,
I follow, I see her, I flee -
The world is turning,
The sky tumbling down.
God, let me love for love's sake alone.

رحل، رحل، الواحد الوحيد رحل
من كان يبقى هذا القلب على قيد الحياة
إلى أين وكيف السبيل إليها
خطواتي تسبق الحجارة والرمال
قُبْلُ، قُبْلُ
ألاحق آثار أقدامها
ألاحقها، أراها، وأحسها "أشمها"
والكون والسماء يدوران بي
أه يا الله
اجعلني أحبها من أجل هذا الحب

Narrator: One can understand, that the parents of Qays feared for the sanity
of their son, and for his future. His was a loving father, but how could
he heal the sickness of this soul, how could he bring peace to this mind.

He decided to approach Layla's father.

Layla is listening secretly to the talk of the two men; hidden to them, whom we cannot see, only their shadows, she is visible to us. She repeats parts of what she can hear, quoting either Majnun's or her own father (MF/LF), inserting her own emotions.

Layla: Beat softer my heart, so that i can hear
Without being heard by them.-
(MF) I come in friendship and peace to propose -
Be quiet my heart, keep still –
(MF) The nuptial feast for our children to –
Oh God, my wishes fulfilled! -
(LF) Madness is neither a sin nor a crime –
What does my father say? –
(LF) But he who is mad is unfit to marry.
Your son has a troubled mind.
No matter how rich, how noble, how –
How I want him to be mine!
My love's shining lamp, my soul's soul,
the moon of my night, Qays -
(LF) Majnun I call him, majnun he is.
You have heard my answer, now you can go. –

My father said No.

انبض يا قلبي بهدوء
حتى يمكنني السماع
دون لا يسمعوك
(MF) انا قادم بالحب والسلام لأعرض الزواج
اهدأ يا قلبي
لا تفقد الثبات
(MF) هو عيد العيد لأولادنا
اه يا الله عندما تتحقق الاحلام
لا يجرم العشاق
لا يذنب المجنون
وماذا قال والدي؟
(LF) العاشق المجنون لا يليق بالزواج
(LF) وقال قيس أخطأ الحساب
ما همني يا منيتي إن كنت أغنى الأغنياء
وسيد النبلاء
أنا كل ما يهمني هو أن تكون لي
يا لوعتي كيف السبيل لأن تكون لي
حبيبي مصباح منير
روح الروح وقمر الليالي
قيس
(LF) مجنون أسميته
(LF) وهو المجنون

(LF) هل جاءك الجواب؟
(LF) الآن غادر
والذي قد قال لا

6. Into the Wild

Majnun; Narrator.
Arabic; local language.

Narrator: Rejected. When Qays heard the message he fell to the ground, then, tumbling up, he tore his cloths, and fled from the compound of his tribe to the mountains.

Majnun: Layla!
I've lost her, my Layla!...

خسرتها، ليلاي

Narrator (*music*): A madman, majnun, he had become, and at the same time a poet.
He was the harp of his love and pain. But strange: while he himself was insane, his poems were not.
So, without home for his body and soul Majnun, how he was called now by the people, was roaming the mountains.
But what does he see, one glittering day: a tender Gazelle caught in a trap, the hunter raising his arm –

The narrator turns, acting, into the hunter.

Majnun: Hold your knife, stop the blow!
Do her no harm!
How sweet is all life, let your prey go!
Don't play with death
This large dark eye
Shimmering softly like Layla's. -
All living beings need liberty.

احمل سكينك ووقف الطعنات
لا تؤذها
كم تبدو شهية هذي الحياة
أطلق سراح فريستك
ولا تلاعب الممات
تلك العيون الداكنة الكبيرة
تلمع بنعومة وكأنها ليلى
الكائنات كلها تشتاق "الحرية"

Narrator: And what about me?
I make my living
As a hunter.

Majnun (*spoken?*): Take my horse
And let the deer free.

خذ حصاني
وأطلق الغزالة في الفضاء

Majnun: Gazelle,
watching me gently with your glance,
flee to her tent and tell her
the thirsty words of my longing.
Leaves, whisper into her ear,
Wind, as a cloud rush her to me
raining balm on my longing.

غزالتي
رقيقةً وانت تنظرين لي بهاته العينان
طيري إلى خيامها
قولي لها
كلماتي العطشى من الأشواق
أيتها الأشجار وشوشي شوقي اليها
شوقي اليها
ويا ريح احملها للغيوم
وامطريها بلسمًا عليًا

Narrator: To Majnun the world and everything in it
became a mirror of Layla.
And of his love.

Majnun: Brother Raven, sharing my grief,
My light will fade
In the shadow of death...
Tell her, take leave!

Raven raven black like her hair,
Dark like my heart.
Raven raven yellow your stare;
Night full of stars.

أخي الغراب يا رفيق ألامي
قل لها ان نوري سينطفئ
مادام هذا الموت حول وجداني يحوم
قل لها
للمعتم مثل قلبي الحزين من شعرها استعار لونه
صديقي الغراب اللامع المضيء مثل ليلة تكسوها النجوم

Narrator: The raven flew up into the fading light and it seemed as if the wings stretched across the sky covering it with black feather.

Majnun: What a deep night that night is!

ما هذه الليلة الليلية

7 Whirlwind of Words

Layla, Majnun/virtual duet, Choir, mixed, backstage (choir quotes, if possible, in English).
Arabic, English; local language.

Layla: Day and night I sit hidden in thoughts,
living behind a screen.
Between two fires
I am consumed:
Love shouts: Up, up and flee! -
Fear disgrace! warns Reason.

في الليل والنهار أجلس بالخفاء في قلب أفكاري
وأعيش خلف ملاءة ما بين نارين
ويأكلني الضياع
الحب يصرخ انهضي هيا انهضي
وحلقي وحاذري
فالعار نار؟

Narrator: But Majnun's words knew no boundaries. They traveled with the caravans, were sung in the bazars, floated in the air and echoed in Layla's heart.
Secretly she bundled her loving thoughts to bouquets of verses
And, answering his, threw her poems like blossoms into the wind.
Many who listened to their songs, took them to all horizons
and sometimes turned into lovers themselves.

8 The Wedding

Layla, Eurydice, Narrator, Choir/ small ensemble, female only.
English, Arabic; local language.

Two wedding ceremonies are interwoven: Layla, forced by her father, is married to Ebn Salam.
Eurydice marries out of free will her famous lover Orfeo. Partly front stage, partly behind the screen.
Choir text paraphrases ancient wedding hymns by the Greek poet Sappho; simple, almost dancy.

Choir (women): Sweet like honey her eyes,
Her face a rosy sunrise –
Tenderly take her hand,
Embrace your graceful bride.
Let us praise Aphrodite!

Blessed be this marriage, O Beloved!

مبارك هذا الزواج يا أيها الأحباب

Eurydice: The veil between us will rise.
When you look into my eyes
Will you see me behind my face,
Is it my soul you will embrace?

Orfeo: I feel my desire's flame rise
When i look into your shimmering eyes
In their mirror I see my face
Veiled in love's fiery haze.

9 The Messenger

*Narrator, Majnun, Orfeo, Choir/small ensemble female only, short.
Arabic, English; local language.*

Narrator: Some news from the real world to the lonesome wanderer:
The girl you are craving for
has been married today.
Her father gave her away to a noble young Arab.
So much for faithfulness, sorry to say.

Majnun faints and drops to the ground.

*Orfeo, having left the wedding crowd, has come to the foreground of the stage.
The Narrator turns to him and looks at him with a silent stare.*

Orfeo: *(spoken)* Eurydice? - She is –
(sung) Gone?

Choir *(women)*: Persephone
Snatched you away
From our care
Caged you
In a dark bridal chamber
We cut our hair
With sharpened blades
Sacrificed our locks
Laying them unto your grave.

Orfeo: My house my table my bed to share I vowed
You vowed to follow me
Now to the House of Hades I follow you.

10 Otherworld

Orfeo, Narrator.

English; local language.

The narrator takes on the role of Charon; very dry, even casual, while Orfeo is almost too dramatic.

Narrator: Passport? Bordercontrol.
Why do you seek entrance
To the realm of the dead,
Alive as you are?

Orfeo: Eurydice! Eurydice!

Narrator: Ah, one of those. An artist.

Orfeo: Tears, tears extinguish my sight,
Drown my soul.
Sorrow and grief
Wash over me:
My vision is blind...

Narrator: You should decide:
Weeping or singing.
You can't have both
at the same time.

Orfeo: Gone! Gone! The heart of my heart
I have lost.
Where -

Narrator: You've certainly not lost your voice. –
Could you answer just a few questions:
Is it art? Is it real?
Is it pain? Is it true?
Is it beauty? Does it count? –
He does not hear.

Orfeo: Death, death, you stole her from me
Like a thief!
You robbed my soul,
my mind,
abducted my muse...

Narrator: Well, you're still singing about her.
Absent she's still feeding your music.
I personally prefer the sound of your song
To the usual sheer whailing.
I let you pass.
The test will follow later.

Orfeo: Who are you, telling me this?
Neither human nor shadow nor god?

Narrator: Charon my name, ferryman.
I row to the other side.
Usually souls.
Just continue, my chap!
I've seen centuries
Passing by.

11 The Rendezvous

*Narrator, Layla, Majnun.
Arabic; local language.*

Layla has written a letter to Majnun. The narrator is her messenger, speaking the letter.

Narrator: I know a garden like paradise there amongst palmtrees we can hide
Above us only the swirling sky underneath a breathing green carpet
Come to me: next to cypresses we will sit side by side.

Majnun (*repeats the last sentence in Arabic*):

Come to me: next to cypresses we will sit side by side.

تعال يا حبي إلي
نجلس هنا متجاورين
بظلال شجر السرو

Majnun, having read the letter, meets Layla.

ليلي:
توقف ها هنا
عشر خطوات بعيدا
دعنا هنا نبقى

Layla:
Stop right there!
Ten steps away
Let us stay here.

المجنون:
انت قد غيرت رايتك
مثلما يغير القمر ملامحه

Majnun:
You have changed your mind
Like the moon changes its face.

ليلي:
لكن قلبي ما يزال كما هو

Layla:
But my heart is still the same.

المجنون:
منحته لرجل آخر

Majnun:
You gave it to another man.

ليلي:
أقسم أنني مثلما الماء نقية

Layla:
I swear I'm pure like the water!

المجنون:
كم يحرق روحي العطش

Majnun:
How burns the thirst my soul!

ليلي:
أشرب من عينيك فقط
وسأشرب كلماتك مع قلبي
القرب هو الخطيئة
في دين العشاق

Layla:
I drink only from your eyes
And I'll drink your words with my heart.
Nearness is the sin
In the lover's religion.

المجنون:
عندما أراكِ ينعقد لساني
يجفّ الآبار من كلماتي

Majnun:
When I see you my tongue is tied,
Dried the wells of my words.

كلاهما:
ذائبين بذلك اللهب النقيّ نفسه
نسميه الشغف

Both:
We melted with the same pure flame

Narrator: All of a sudden Majnun turned and rushed away into the darkness.
He fled Layla to long even more for her.
Animals started to follow him. Wild beasts, he had saved or fed.
He himself ate very little. As he said once: I have eaten the eater in me.
So he shared his food with the beasts and they became his companions.
Animals mirror the humans: they were as good as he.

12 Walking Dead / Layla's Life

Layla, Eurydice / virtual duet.
Arabic, English.

Eurydice (*quasi con coloratura, vivace, but with sudden changes of tempo and mood;*
bubbling surface, dark undercurrents, nano moments of irony):

I am free!
I am free!
He did it again!
His magic,
His music miracle!
I should have known
Even gods would give in.
They took my dead hand
And put it into his palm.
It did not get warm.
You may take her with you,
you won her back,
the gods said over my head.
Then to me,
that I have to hold my pace,
Follow him up,
One step behind,
Silent under your veil.
Well, I am used to,
I will not fail! -
Plus a minor rule for him:

He must not look at me.
I am free! Almost!
I shall have a new life!
Maybe even without
him.
A new life is a new beginning.
We will see...

Layla: (slight changes to come)
Kill me! Kill me, I said
I'd rather be dead
Than touched by you.
My father forced me
Not my own heart,
I'll never belong to you. -
My husband by name gave in
held me in his prison of love
never again tried me to win
but kept me a caged dove. -
Now he has died. I am free.
Free to mourn openly
Finally I can weep
not hiding the tears anymore
They think I cry for him
My cheeks are crusted with salt
More majnun than Majnun,
More Layla than before.

خد بيدك السيف الان واقتلني
لان يسيل دمي على الطرقات
اهون من ان تدنسني يداك
لو كان قلبي صاحب القرار ما اقتربت
لكنه أبي جرحي اللي في الكف
لذا لن أنتمي يوماً اليك
يا من سموك في الأوراق زوجي
خبأتني في سجن حب
اسكنتني سجناً من الظلام
ققصا حديدياً يموت به الحمام
لا لن تحاول سلب روجي من جديد
فانا الان استنشق حرية
انا حرة في الحزن مثلما اشاء وفي البكاء مثلما اشاء
فدموعي لن اخفيها بعد الان
في ظنهم هذا الانين عليه
وجنتاي أذابهما ملح البكاء
مجنون أكثر من أول
مجنون

13 Ascending / Layla dies

Layla, Narrator as her mother, Orfeo, Eurydice.
Arabic, English.

Layla and the narrator as her silent mother are in the foreground of the stage,
Orpheus with Eurydice in the back, probably behind the translucent screen.
The two text-levels shall be more interwoven...

Orfeo: Say
something. -
Eurydice.
Speak to the blind.

Layla: Mother, I will reveal my secret
I draw back the curtain
because I will leave.

أماه يا أماه
الآن سوف ابوح لك بحقيقة السر الذي خبأته
وأزيح ستائر لي لأنني سأغادر

Orfeo: Are you there?
Next to me?
Can you hear
Me?

Layla: Qays always has been my sole love,
more dear than the sunlight
fading now in my eyes.

قيس هو حبي الوحيد على الدوام
أعز من شعاع شمس
يغيب في عيوني الآن

Orfeo: Can you see?
Do you look?
Do you watch
Me?

Layla: Adorn me like a bride;
My shroud shall be red as blood.
Red is a festive colour
and is not my death a feast?

زينبني كالعروس
ولوني كفني بأحمر كالدّم
أحمر كلون الاحتفال
أوليس موتي يوم عيدي

Orfeo: May I touch?
Take your hand?

Can you feel
Me?

Layla: Cover me with the veil of earth
I will not lift it again.

غطني بحجاب الأرض
انني لن ارفع هذا الحجاب بعد الآن

Orfeo: Are you here?

Layla: When will you follow, my wild one, my love,
When will you come, Qays...

متى ستلحق بي
مجنوني الوحيد، حبي
متى سنأتي قيس

Orfeo: Eurydice?
(Is it you?)
Who
are
you –

(Orfeo turns to Eurydice, who, dying again, vanishes. At the same moment Layla dies too.)

14 (Re)Turn > The Scream

Orfeo, Majnun.

Instant black.

In complete darkness we hear a desperate double scream of Orfeo and Majnun.

15 Double Lamentation

Orfeo, Majnun / virtual duet 2; Animals gathering cautiously.

English, Arabic.

(Lights slowly up again.)

Orfeo: I see the void.
The void watches me.
All words are burnt.
Ashes
under my tongue.

Sitting at
an abyss
too deep to be filled
with love

too dark to be lit
by memory.

Majnun: Eternal new moon.
Someone blew out the sun.
The world is growing cold.
Night is all
and night I've become.
Soundless sound
fills my soul.

قمر جديد خالد
أحدهم يطفىء الشمس
العالم يزداد برودة
ليلة هي كل شيء
والليل أنا أصبحت
صوت بلا أي صوت يملا هذي الروح

16 Is this the End?

Narrator, choir, mixed.
English, Arabic; local language.

Choir (*parts, split up*): A cloud, a wind, a thunderstorm,
Majnun flew down from the mountains.
He fell as if struck by lightening.
There he lies, embracing her grave.
Wonder of love!
See the wild ones, the beasts
Gather around him as guards.

Choir: Do not come near,
they may tear us apart.

Narrator: Orpheus (they say) retreated to the mountains, far from the homes men and women share, and there he sang to the beasts of the forest, tamed by his melodies.
But look: a crowd of women storms through the woods. They worship the god of ecstasy. In wild trance and frenzy they punish Orfeo for his solitude.
They fall upon him and hack and tear him apart, scatter his bloodstained remains.

Orfeo (*spoken over the music*): His head was carried away by the river,
the waves took the lyre along;
Floating downstream both exhaled their soft songs;
Hear the riverbanks answer: echoe to singer and strings.

Choir (*parts, split*): A year has gone by,
smoke in the sky.
The animals leave one by one.

Empty the space.
Silent the air.

Majnun (*spoken over the music*): Still at her grave
Majnun is spread.
Time changed his shape:
white and shining his bones,
the shimmering soul is gone.

واقفا عند قبرها
مجنون يتبعثر
الوقت غير شكله
وعظامه وضاءة بيضاء
وروحه المتألئة غابت

Choir: Let us open the grave
and lay him next to Layla.
Side by side they may sleep
now in peace.

Narrator: It is told, that a wise man in his dream saw Layla and Qays, how in paradise
they sat on thrones, exchanging kisses of blissful love, united at last. -
Others tell that Orfeo was lifted to the place of the Gods to dwell there amongst
Them, while his lyre was transported up to the sky and turned into a stellar
constellation.
You can see the figure when you look up at night: an instrument made of stars.

17 Lovers in the Sky

Narrator, Layla, Majnun, Eurydice, Orfeo, choir, all.
English, Arabic; local language(s).

Narrator (*music!*): Close to our planet, an Asteroid is travelling through
space. It was named Eros, and the craters covering its surface carry the
names of starcrossed lovers, told in old stories, written in books, sang all
over the world. There is a crater called Pelléas, nearby Mélisande can be
found, Shah Jahan near his wife Mahal,
Layla, Eurydice, Orfeo, Majnun ...

During the text the choir, the soloists and others join and say/sing the names of lovers, from history, literature, opera, names of friends, Romeo & Juliet, Tristan & Iseult, etc.

Their names are different, their love is the same.
Inscribed in the map of the sky we share, they have become shimmering signs. -
But: why did they first have to die? Why could they not live their love?
We have to change our minds.

Orfeo and Eurydice: Time goes by
but Love remains.
Love reigns the earth
and the sky.

Choir (female): Why did they first have to die?
Why could they not live their love?
We have to change our minds.

Tutti & Choir (Partly with Soloists): Time goes by
but Love remains.
Love reigns the earth
and the sky.

It is not only a heavenly thing:
Give it a place in the world.
Make it a part of our lives.

الوقت يمضي إنما الحب يبقى
الحب يسود البلاد
والسمااء

وهذا ليس من ضرب الخيال
امنحوا للحب موطننا في هذه الدنيا
واجعلوه واقعا في يومنا وحياتنا

Time goes by
But love remains
Love reigns the earth
and the sky.

THE END

Martina Winkel, 2017
Poetic translation to Arabic by Fatena Al Ghorra