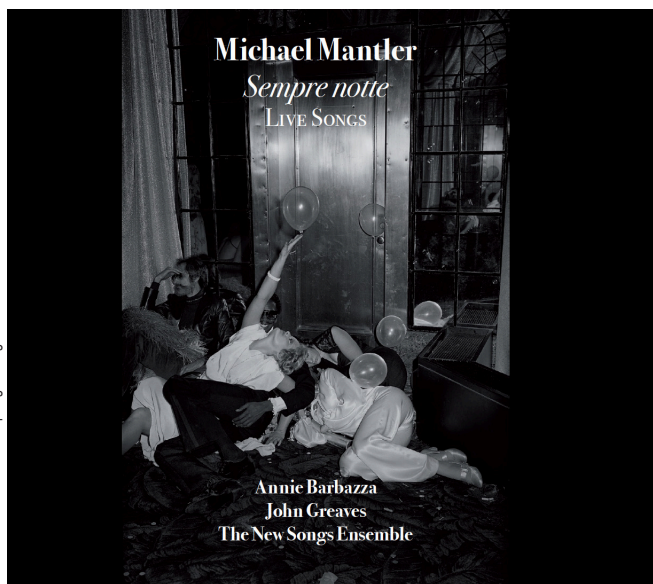


MICHAEL
MANTLER
SONGS

31. AUGUST 2024

PORGY
JAZZ & MUSIC CLUB
BESS

CD-PRÄSENTATION



MICHAEL MANTLER
THE NEW SONGS ENSEMBLE
SEMPRE NOTTE / LIVE SONGS

MICHAEL MANTLER SONGS

THE NEW SONGS ENSEMBLE

ANNIE BARBAZZA, JOHN GREAVES : VOICES

MICHAEL MANTLER : TRUMPET
GARETH DAVIS BASS : CLARINET
BJARNE ROUPÉ : GUITAR
DAVID HELBOCK : PIANO

KOEHNE QUARTET

JOANNA LEWIS : VIOLIN
ANNE HARVEY-NAGL : VIOLIN
ANNA MAGDALENA SIAKALA-TEUREZBACHER : VIOLA
ASJA VALCIC : CELLO

WORDS BY

SAMUEL BECKETT
ERNST MEISTER
GIUSEPPE UNGARETTI
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HAROLD PINTER
EDWARD GOREY
PAUL AUSTER
MICHAEL MANTLER

[1] **TODAY** (Instrumental)

[2] **WAR**

how is it possible ?
we are used to war
we read about it
we see it on TV
but usually
it's not so close
but far away
so we don't care

but this, now
it's happening right here
and doesn't stop
it's close, so close
how can it be ?

that neighbors and friends
will fight and rape
torture, persecute and wound
torment and victimize
betray, forsake each other
how is it possible ?

[3] **BUSINESS**

weapons, they come from everywhere
they come from the West
they come from the East

it really is no problem
there is no shortage
it's good for business

everything's for sale,
you want to buy a jet ?
it can be done
your choice of features
just bring the cash
and we deliver

some nice explosives maybe ?
no color, no smell
undetected, exportable,
a terrorist's delight

how about
some scrap uranium ?
that's easy too
we have it all
just ask and pay
and fight your war

and we supply
the means of death

[4] **CE QU'A DE PIS**

ce qu'a de pis
le coeur connu
la tete pu
de pis se dire
fais-les
ressusciter
le pis revient
en pire

imagine si ceci
un jour ceci
un beau jour
imagine
si un jour
un beau jour ceci
cessait
imagine

silence tel que ce qui fut
avant jamais ne sera plus
par le murmure déchiré
d'une parole sans passé
d'avoir trop dit n'en pouvant plus
jurant de ne se taire plus

[5] **PSS**

there
the life late led
down there
all done unsaid
again gone
with what to tell
on again
retell
head oh hands
hold me
unclasp
hold me

*what is the worst
the heart knew
the head could
at worst tell itself
make them
resuscitate
the worst comes back
worse*

*imagine if this
one day this
one beautiful day
imagine
if one day
one beautiful day this
ceased
imagine*

*a silence such as what was
before never will be again
for the wretched murmur
of a word without a past
having said too much overwhelmed
swearing never to be silent again*

[6] VIEIL ALLER

vieil aller	<i>old goings</i>
vieux arrêts	<i>old stoppings</i>
aller	<i>going</i>
absent	<i>absent</i>
absent	<i>absent</i>
arrêter	<i>stopping</i>
rien nul	<i>nothing no one</i>
n'aura été	<i>will have been</i>
pour rien	<i>for nothing</i>
tant été	<i>have been so much</i>
rien	<i>nothing</i>
nul	<i>no one</i>
en face	<i>facing</i>
le pire	<i>the worst</i>
jusqu'à ce	<i>until</i>
qu'il fasse rire	<i>it makes you laugh</i>
chaque jour envie	<i>everyday wishing</i>
d'être un jour en vie	<i>to be alive one day</i>
non certes sans regret	<i>though not without regret</i>
un jour d'être né	<i>of having been born one day</i>
d'où	<i>wherefrom</i>
la voix qui dit	<i>the voice saying</i>
vis	<i>live</i>
d'une autre vie	<i>from another life</i>
fous qui disiez	<i>fools who were saying</i>
plus jamais	<i>never again</i>
vite	<i>quick</i>
redites	<i>say it again</i>
son ombre une nuit	<i>his shadow one night</i>
lui reparut	<i>reappeared to him</i>
s'allongea	<i>stretched</i>
pâlit	<i>paled</i>
se dissolut	<i>dissolved</i>
rêve	<i>dreaming</i>
sans fin	<i>endlessly</i>
ni trêve	<i>with no respite</i>
à rien	<i>of nothing</i>

[7] DARKER THAN THE LIGHT

In the end
 one of the two
 says:
 I've gotten you
 used to
 loneliness.
 In the end
 the other
 of the two says:
 Look, all that's close
 is so far
 so far.

Life connects
 only to life
 to nothing
 else. The
 other
 is „there where
 one thinks
 nothing
 nothing
 nothing“,
 for ever.

Just as someone
 had thought,
 to die:
 To turn
 from one side of
 experience to
 one of emptiness,
 un-afraid,
 a change of cheeks,
 nothing more.

And what
 does this sun
 do to us
 what jumps
 out of the narrow gate
 of those great embers?
 I don't know
 anything darker
 than the light.

[8] **SPEECHLESS**

Mark, nothing
appears
now, yet
your hands
are not estranged
from each other,
they themselves
know nothing
of grasping

(the one
who is dead
had wondered about that).
But what is this
beyond
sleep?
Reason
strolls
through hot grasses,
god-less.

Everything seems edge
despite („infinite“)
depth,
decay clings to it
like mould.
I shudder.

In the mind
the eyelashes
appearing all white,
before the eyes
unregal purple.
In the region
one hears
a song without sound.

The breath exchanged
indeed.
Now, lovely moment,
the air stands still.
Not lonely and not to miss.
What had been oath,
the stir of solitude.
I've told you
what's dear to me in vain,
and each may speak it's own in vain.

Many
have no speech.
Had I not my fill of misery, I
would not move my tongue.

[9] **SEMPRE NOTTE**

La mia squallida
vita si estende
più spaventata di sé

In un
infinito
che mi calca e mi
preme col suo
fievole tatto

L'ILLUMINATA RUGIADA

La terra tremola
di piacere
sotto un sole
di violenze
gentili

PROVERB! (UNO)

S'incomincia per cantare
E si canta per finire

[10] **È SENZA FIATO**

È senza fiato, sera, irrespirabile,
Se voi, miei morti,
e i pochi vivi che amo
Non mi venite in mente
Bene a portarmi quando
Per solitudine, capisco, a sera

[11] **NON GRIDATE PIÙ**

Cessate d'uccidere i morti,
Non gridate più, non gridate
Se li volete ancora udire,
Se sperate di non perire

Hanno l'impercettibile sussurro,
Non fanno più rumore
Del crescere dell'erba,
Lieta dove non passa l'uomo

EVERLASTING NIGHT

*My squalid life
stretches out
more fearful of itself*

*In an
infinity
which oppresses me and
weighs heavy upon me through its
light touch*

THE SUNSTRUCK DEW

*Earth quivers
with pleasure
beneath a sun
whose violence
is gentle*

PROVERBS (ONE)

*Beginning has us singing
And we sing to make an ending*

MOTIONLESS

*It is motionless, the evening, unbreathable,
if you my dead
and the few living beings I love
do not come to mind
and bear me affection when
through solitude, I comprehend, at eventide*

OUTCRY NO MORE

*Stop killing the dead,
Outcry no more, do not outcry
If you would hear them still,
If you would hope not to die*

*Their whisper is imperceptible,
They are no louder
Than the growing of the grass,
Happy where man does not pass*

[12] **CADENCE**

Tout est gâché
 Tout est perdu
 Tout est gagné
 Tout est foutu
 Tout est en tout
 et tout et tout

Tout est à vous
 Tout est à nous
 Tout est à tous
 et tout et tout

*All is wasted
 All is lost
 All is won
 All is shot
 All is in all
 and all and all*

*All is yours
 All is ours
 To all is all
 And to everything*

[13] **A L'ABBATTOIR**

Adieu lézards adieu corbeaux
 Bonsoir les hommes et vous les veaux
 Tout est à recommencer
 Quand vous gueulez
 Comme des damnés

Je sais bien que tout s'effondre
 Chaque jour et chaque nuit
 Que je n'ai plus rien à attendre
 Et que tout ce qui s'ensuit
 C'est de savoir que je suis dupe

Les soirs tombent comme les années
 Je ne sais même plus les compter
 Ce n'est plus jamais à prendre
 Mais pour toujours tout laisser
 Rien ne peut recommencer

Adieu vantard adieu salaud
 Bonsoir crétin et toi le veau
 C'est moi qui ai commencé
 Quand je gueulais
 Comme un damné

AT THE SLAUGHTERHOUSE

*Good bye lizards good bye crows
 good night men and to you cattle
 A/I must start over
 when you are screaming
 like damned souls*

*Yes I know all is collapsing
 every day and every night
 that I have nothing left to hope for
 and all that's left
 is knowing that I'm a fool*

*Nights fall like years
 I can't even count them now
 It's never there to take again
 only to leave forever
 Nothing can begin again*

*Good bye braggart good bye bastard
 good night idiot and you the cattle
 I'm the one who started it
 when I was screaming
 like a damned soul*

[14] **WHEN I RUN**

when I run
 when I run
 when I run
 over the grass
 she floats
 under me floating
 under me
 I turn
 I turn
 I wheel
 I glide
 I wheel
 in stunning light
 the horizon moves
 from the sun
 I am crushed by the light

Words from the play *Silence*, used by permission, published by Grove Press, Inc., © 1969 H. Pinter, Ltd.

[15] **FOR INSTANCE**

for instance
 those shapes in the trees
 you'll find they're just birds resting
 after a long journey
 I go up with the milk
 the sky hits me
 I walk in this wind
 to collide with them waiting
 there are two
 they halt to laugh
 and bellow in the yard
 they dig and punch
 and cackle where they stand
 they turn to move
 look round at me to grin
 I turn my eyes from one
 and from the other to him
 from the young people's room
 silence
 sleep
 tender love
 it's of no importance
 of no importance

[16] **THE HAPLESS CHILD**

there was once a little girl named Charlotte Sophia
 her parents were kind and well to do
 she had a doll whom she called Hortense
 one day her father a colonel in the army was ordered to africa
 several months later he was reported killed in a native uprising
 her mother fell into a decline that proved fatal
 her only other relative an uncle was brained by a piece of masonry
 Charlotte Sophia was left in the hands of the family lawyer
 he at once put her into a boarding school
 there she was punished by the teachers for things she hadn't done
 Hortense was torn limb from limb by the other pupils
 during the day Charlotte Sophia hid as much as possible
 at night she lay awake weeping and weeping
 when she could bear it no longer she fled from the school at dawn
 she soon lost consciousness and sank to the pavement
 a man came and took the locket with her parents pictures inside
 another man came from the opposite direction and carried her off
 he brought her to a low place he sold her to a drunken brute

Charlotte Sophia was put to work making artificial flowers
 she lived on scraps and tapwater
 from time to time the brute got the horrors
 Charlotte Sophia's eyesight began to fail rapidly
 meanwhile her father who was not dead after all returned home
 every day he motored thru the streets searching for her
 at last the brute went off his head
 Charlotte Sophia now almost blind ran into the street
 she was at once struck down by a car
 her father got out to look at the dying child
 she was so changed he did not recognize her

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 Copyright © 1972 by Edward Gorey, published by G.P.Putnam's Sons,

[17] WHAT'S LEFT TO SAY

we've searched examined	what's going on
observed and scrutinized	what is the point
studied and inquired	what have we found
probed investigated	what do we ask
explored and analyzed	what says it all
what have we learned	what's to conclude
what do we know now	what's left to say
what do we think	what is the word
understand and realize	

Words from *The School of Understanding*, Copyright © 1996 Michael Mantler

[18] IT'S ALL JUST WORDS

if you have nothing to say
 it's all just words
 if you have something to say
 all just words
 if you have nothing to say
 it's all just words
 if you have something to say
 all just words
 if you have something to say
 all just words
 if you have something to say
 all just words
 if you have nothing to say
 it's all just words
 if you have something to say
 all just words

[19] WHAT DID YOU SAY

what did you say?
 I can't remember maybe I didn't say anything
 suit yourself it makes no difference to me
 do you think we'll ever find it?
 what?
 I said do you think we'll ever find it?
 I heard what you said then I said what
 oh you mean what
 yes what
 yes yes now I see what
 well?
 I can't remember
 maybe I wasn't asking anything
 suit yourself it makes no difference to me

[20] WHAT DO YOU SEE

what do you see?
 nothing
 what do you see?
 absolutely nothing
 what do you see?
 nothing
 what do you see?
 absolutely nothing

[21] IT MAKES NO DIFFERENCE TO ME

what did you say?
 I can't remember maybe I didn't say anything
 suit yourself it makes no difference to me
 do you think we'll ever find it?
 what?
 I said do you think we'll ever find it?
 I heard what you said then I said what
 oh you mean what
 yes yes now I see what
 well?
 I can't remember maybe I wasn't asking anything
 suit yourself it makes no difference to me

Excerpts from *Hide and Seek* by Paul Auster Published in *Hand to Mouth* by Henry Holt and
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[22] UNDERSTANDING

understand understand understanding	but other people
what does it mean	not knowing
many words to choose from	each others' speech
in many languages	they too communicate
but how to use them	it's really possible
[how to make sense]	it has been done
	[but how]
people talking	perhaps they're tolerant
from one country	humane, compassionate
they speak the same	unbiased, openminded
have conversations	they're understanding
they hear the words	they comprehend maybe
but do they really	and hear each other
[understand each other]	[without speaking]
people talking	
from different places	
in many languages	
they have studied	
intelligence and learning	
[is that the answer]	

Words from *The School of Understanding*, Copyright © 1996 Michael Mantler

Samuel Beckett (1906-1989), Irish, went to Paris in the late Twenties, where he began writing both prose and poetry. Until 1945 he wrote in English, but thereafter directly in French, consciously choosing the estrangement of the second, adopted language to „write without style.“

His literary output consists of novels, poetry, and plays, including his seminal *Waiting for Godot*, a classic of the contemporary theater. He is considered one of the most important writers of the 20th century, with an influence on contemporary literature as powerful as that of Joyce, Proust, and Kafka. In 1969 he was awarded the Nobel Prize for Literature.

Ernst Meister (1911-1979), German, was recognized as one of Germany's greatest modern poets, in the line of Hölderlin, Trakl, and Celan, the latter of whom he discovered. He was awarded a number of literary awards, including the Petrarca-Preis, the Rilke-Preis, and from the German Academy for Languages and Literature, posthumously, the Büchner-Preis.

Many of his poems, from his earliest publication in 1935 (*Ausstellung*) until his last and perhaps most achieved work (*Wandloser Raum*) in 1979, are meditations on death. He also published numerous other volumes of poetry and several radio plays.

Giuseppe Ungaretti (1888 -1970), the first and one of the most important and influential of modern Italian poets. He was born in Alexandria, Egypt. He studied at the Sorbonne, and while in Paris he became a close friend of Guillaume Apollinaire's. He published his first volume of poetry in 1916, a definitive break with the late 19th-century conventions of Italian poetry. After living in Italy for a number of years, he went to Brazil as a professor of Italian literature at the University of Sao Paulo. On his return he taught at the University of Rome.

His work deals with the large themes of human existence: loneliness, love, loss, nature. But above all, his work is a long record of confrontation with death. T.S.Eliot ranked Ungaretti as „one of the few authentic poets“ of the century. He was nominated for the Nobel Prize for Literature in 1969.

Philippe Soupault (1897-1990), French, founded the review *Litterature* with Breton and Aragon in 1919, and was the co-author of *Les Champs magnétiques*, the first Surrealist text. He was active in French Dada and a central figure of Surrealism in its early years. He eventually drifted away from the movement and embarked on a prolific writing career, producing journalism, essays, poetry, pieces for radio and theater, and many novels, including his perhaps best known work, *Last Nights of Paris*.

He directed Radio Tunis from 1937 to 1940, when he was arrested by the collaborationist Vichy government, and spent six months in prison before escaping to Algiers and, eventually, to New York. He went on to serve as the American press officer for the Free French forces of Charles de Gaulle, and, after the war, taught briefly at Swarthmore College before returning to France.

Harold Pinter (1930–2008), was a British playwright, screenwriter, director and actor. A Nobel Prize winner (2005 - „who in his plays uncovers the precipice under everyday prattle and forces entry into oppression's closed rooms“), Pinter was one of the most influential modern British dramatists. His best-known plays include *The Birthday Party*, *The Homecoming* and *Betrayal*.

Edward Gorey (1925–2000) was an American writer, Tony Award-winning costume designer, and artist, noted for his own illustrated books as well as cover art and illustrations for books by other writers. Gorey's illustrated (and sometimes wordless) books, with his characteristic pen and ink drawings often depict vaguely unsettling narrative scenes in ostensibly Victorian and Edwardian settings.

Paul Auster (1947–2024) was an American novelist, essayist, translator, and poet. His three novels *City of Glass*, *Ghosts* and *The Locked Room*, comprising *The New York Trilogy*, brought him international recognition as a startlingly original writer. Since then he had published many novels, including *The Music of Chance* (which was nominated for a PEN/Faulkner Award and also made into a movie). Auster's other writings include poetry volumes, essays and memoirs, as well as the short play *Hide and Seek*, the basis for Michael Mantler's composition. Paul Auster's work has been translated into more than thirty languages and he is the recipient of several prestigious awards, including the Commandeur de L'Ordre des Arts et des Lettres and the Prix Medicis Etranger (for the best novel by a foreign author) in France.

