Liebesglück hat tausend Zungen

a lied, for soprano and piano text **Carl Friedrich Saphir** music **J. Simon van der Walt**

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Programme note

'Liebesglück hat tausend Zungen' (Love's bliss has a thousand tongues) has, as far as I know, only been set once, by the little known Czech composer Jan Bedřich (Johann Friedrich) Kittle (1806-1868). The poet is even more obscure. The only copy of the text of which I am aware is the transcription of the Kittl setting on recmusic.org, where it is credited to a certain 'Carl Friedrich Saphir'. I have been unable to track down any information at all about this person, even to confirm that he actually existed and wrote this poem!

My setting includes one musical quotation which it might be as well to identify in advance: the oboe obligato from the aria 'Mein Freund ist mein' from JS Bach's cantata BWV140 'Wachet auf, ruft uns die Stimme'. The whole of the poem's text is not set: on the other hand, two stray words appear in the setting, one to my mind resonant again of Bach (the Coffee Cantata), the other of Beethoven (choral symphony). A quotation from the Fauré Requiem is narrowly avoided: good job, its French.

Notes to the players

Most of the instructions are given in the score. A couple of points:

- The audience may well choose to laugh at various points, but this piece is not really meant to be funny
- I'd quite like the final song to be in Bb, which entails singing a low G. I don't mind if this comes out sounding a little odd, but not really bizarre. An ossia is provided which would be perfectly acceptable, which takes the ending up a minor third to Db. This replaces page 8; the remainder of the material, both before and afterwards is identical. (No change to the piano part is required at the bottom of page 7, the final augmented chord serves to introduce either key.)

Liebesglück hat tausend Zungen

Liebesglück hat tausend Zungen, Liebesglück spricht immer fort, Blatt um Blatt zum Kranz geschlungen, und zum Liede Wort um Wort. Nicht beglückter Lieb ist's eigen, schweigend lieben, liebend schweigen.

Liebesglück in tausend Sprachen spricht mit seinem Gegenstand, Blättlein, die aus Knospen brachen, werden Wort in Liebeshand. Liebesglück findt aller Orten treuen Dolmetsch seinen Worten.

Liebesglück zieht immer wieder singend vor des Liebchens Haus, tausend kleine nette Lieder flattern aus dem Herzen aus. Nicht beglückter Lieb ist's eigen, schweigend lieben, liebend schweigen.

Schweigend lieben, liebend schweigen, stiller Mund bei stillem Schmerz!
Fremd der Lust, dem Weh' zu eigen, toter Liebe lebt das Herz; will bis es der Tod soll beugen, schweigend lieben, liebend schweigen.

Love's bliss has a thousand tongues

Love's bliss has a thousand tongues Love's bliss always speaks on, Leaf upon leaf bound into a wreath, And bound into song, word upon word. Unrequited love is all it's own, Silently loving, lovingly silent.

Love's bliss in a thousand languages Speaks with his object of Little leaves, broken out of buds, Which become words in lovers' hands. Love's bliss finds in all places Faithful translation of its words.

Love's bliss always flies Singing at his darling's house, A thousand sweet little songs Flicker out of the heart. Unrequited love is all it's own, Silently loving, lovingly silent.

Silently loving, lovingly silent, Hushed mouth in hushed pain! Lust unknown, but pain familiar, The heart lives on dead love; And will be, until death hinders it, Silently loving, lovingly silent.

(Translation by Claire Joanne Thompson)

Liebesglück hat tausend Zungen Carl Friedrich Saphir (text)

J. Simon van der Walt (music)

At the opening of the piece, singer stands at the top end of the piano: both play opening chord together, then singer moves to usual position

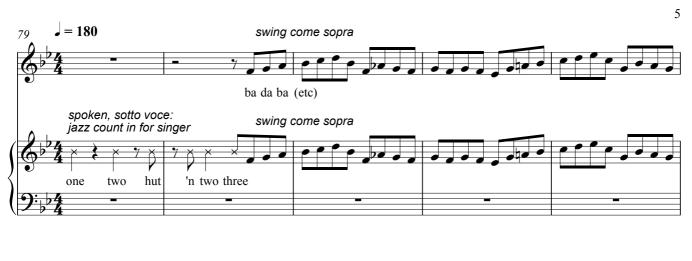
















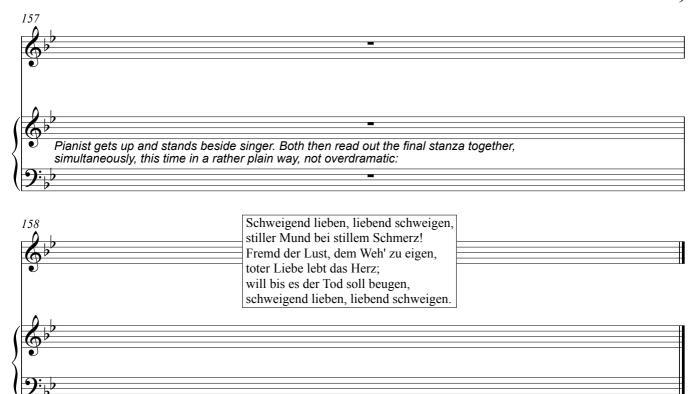












Ossia: final song in Db instead of Bb, other material identical. Please try both versions. JS.

