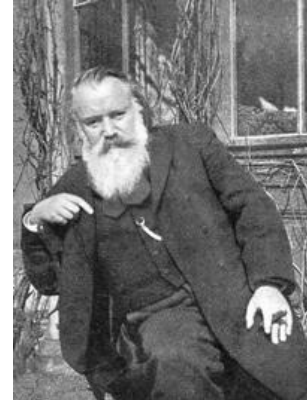


Johannes Brahms was one of the leading musicians of the Romantic era and had a major impact on the musical scene. He is typically considered one of the three B's of classical music, Bach, Beethoven, and Brahms. Brahms spent most of his time in Vienna as a teacher and concert pianist and also wrote for nearly every musical form except opera, including symphonies, chamber music, and, of course, *Requiem* one of the most popular choral works performed today. His style is quite traditional and is rooted in the classical forms of the previous musical period.



Neue Liebeslieder, Op. 65 was written between 1869 and 1874. It followed his set of *Liebeslieder Waltzes* and is considered by some to be superior both in musical style and language as well as most accurately setting the text. The two settings, however, have vastly different outlooks on love. The original *Liebeslieder* are mostly full of joy and rapture whereas the *Neue Liebeslieder* are more passionate and forlorn, dwelling on the angst and pain of love. The poems that Brahms chose to set to music are a collection of love poems from many different countries translated into German by Georg Friedrich Daumer. Each one portrays different characters and romantic situations, most often commenting on the trials and tribulations of love. The very first song sets the tone as it tells us to give up all hope of love, for many have had their hopes shattered and wrecked on the sea of love. After fourteen such forlorn and discouraging settings Brahms turns to a poem by Goethe to close the cycle of songs. He tells the Muses to give up, that even by writing and singing all these songs one cannot heal the pangs of love, however they can give solace.

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***Neue Liebeslieder*, Op. 65**

1. Verzicht, o Herz, auf Rettung,
dich wagend in der Liebe Meer!
Denn tausend Nachen schwimmen
zertrümmert am Gestad umher!

1. Relinquish, o heart, the hope of rescue
as you venture out into the sea of love!
For a thousand boats float
wrecked about its shores!

2. Finstere Schatten der Nacht,
Wogen- und Wirbelgefahr!
Sind wohl, die da gelind
rasten auf sicherem Lande,
euch zu begreifen im Stande?
Das ist der nur allein,
welcher auf wilder See
stürmischer Öde treibt,
Meilen entfernt vom Strande.

2. Dark shades of night,
dangers of waves and whirlpools!
Are those who rest there so mildly
on firm ground
capable of comprehending you?
No: only one who
is tossed about on the wild sea's
stormy desolation,
miles from the shore.

3. An jeder Hand die Finger
hatt' ich bedeckt mit Ringen,
die mir geschenkt mein Bruder
in seinem Liebessinn.
Und einen nach dem andern
gab ich dem schönen,
aber unwürdigen Jüngling hin.

4. Ihr schwarzen Augen, ihr dürft nur
winken;
Paläste fallen und Städte sinken.
Wie sollte steh'n in solchem Strauß
mein Herz, von Karten das schwache
Haus?

5. Wahre, wahre deinen Sohn,
Nachbarin, vor Wehe,
weil ich ihn mit schwarzem Aug'
zu bezaubern gehe.
O wie brennt das Auge mir,
das zu Zünden fordert!
Flammet ihm die Seele nicht --
deine Hütte lodert.

6. Rosen steckt mir an die Mutter,
weil ich gar so trübe bin.
Sie hat recht, die Rose sinket,
so wie ich, entblättert hin.

7. Vom Gebirge Well auf Well
kommen Regengüsse,
und ich gäbe dir so gern
hunderttausend Küsse.

8. Weiche Gräser im Revier,
schöne, stille Plätzchen!
O, wie linde ruht es hier
sich mit einem Schätzchen!

3. On each hand were my fingers
bedecked with rings
that my brother had bestowed on me
with love.
And one after another
did I give to that handsome
but unworthy lad.

4. You black eyes, you need only
beckon,
and palaces fall and cities sink.
How should then my heart withstand
such strife, inside its weak house of
cards?

5. Protect, protect your son,
my neighbor, from woe;
for I go with my black eyes
to enchant him.
O how my eyes burn
to inflame his passion!
If his soul will not ignite,
your hut will catch fire.

6. Mother gave me roses
because I am so troubled.
She is right: roses droop
just as I do, wilting away

7. From the mountains, wave upon
wave,
come gushing rain;
and I would gladly give you
a hundred thousand kisses.

8. Soft grass in my favorite haunts,
fair, quiet spots!
O how pleasant it is to linger here
with one's darling!

9. Nagen am Herzen fühl ich ein Gift
mir.
Kann sich ein Mädchen,
ohne zu fröhnen zärtlichem Hang,
fassen ein ganzes wonneberaubtes Leben
entlang?

9. I feel a poison gnawing at my heart.
Is it possible for a maiden
not to give in to her tender inclinations
and live her entire life robbed of bliss?

10. Ich kose süß mit der und der
und werde still und krank,
denn ewig, ewig kehrt zu dir,
o Nonna, mein Gedanke!

10. I sweetly fondle this girl and that,
and grow quiet and sick at heart,
for always, always, toward you
my thoughts turn, o Nonna!

11. Alles, alles in den Wind
sagst du mir, du Schmeichler!
Alle samt verloren sind
deine Müh'n, du Heuchler!
Einem andern Fang' zu lieb
stelle deine Falle!
Denn du bist ein loser Dieb,
denn du bist um alle!

11. All, all is lost to the wind
of what you say to me, you flatterer!
Altogether, all your efforts
are lost, you pretender!
Be so good as to set your trap
for another!
For you are a loose thief,
for you have been with them all!

12. Schwarzer Wald, dein Schatten ist so
düster!
Armes Herz, dein Leiden ist so
drückend!
Was dir einzig wert, es steht vor Augen;
Ewig untersagt ist Huldvereinerung
wie wir uns so lieb.

12. Dark forest, your shade is so
gloomy!
Poor heart, your sorrow presses so
heavily!
The only thing valuable to you is
standing before
your eyes;
eternally forbidden is that union with
love.

13. Nein, Geliebter, setze dich
mir so nahe nicht!
Starre nicht so brünstiglich
mir ins Angesicht!
Wie es auch im Busen brennt,
dämpfe deinen Trieb,
daß es nicht die Welt erkennt,

13. No, my love, don't sit
so near me!
Do not stare so ardently
at my face!
However much your heart may burn,
suppress your urges,
so that the world will not see
how much we love each other.

14. Flammenauge, dunkles Haar,
Knabe wonnig und verwogen,
Kummer ist durch dich hinein
in mein armes Herz gezogen!
Kann in Eis der Sonne Brand,
sich in Nacht der Tag verkehren?

Kann die heisse Menschenbrust
atmen ohne Glutbegehren?
Ist die Flur so voller Licht,
daß die Blum' im Dunkel stehe?
Ist die Welt so voller Lust,

15. Nun, ihr Musen, genug!
Vergebens strebt ihr zu schildern,
wie sich Jammer und Glück
wechseln in liebender Brust.
Heilen könnet die Wunden
ihr nicht, die Amor geschlagen,
aber Linderung kommt einzig,
ihr Guten, von euch.

14. Flaming eyes, dark hair,
sweet and audacious boy,
because of you my poor heart
toils with sorrow!
Can the sun's fire make ice,
or turn day into night?
Can the ardent breast of a man
breathe without glowing desire?
Is the field so full of light
that the flowers stand in darkness?
Is the world so full of joy
that the heart is abandoned to torment?

15. Now, you Muses, enough!
In vain you strive to describe
how misery and happiness
alternate in a loving breast.
You cannot heal the wounds
that Amor has caused,
but solace can come
only from you, Kindly Ones.