

Wanderer's Song

by Michael Tanner

I have heard whales singing
Seals wooing the island shores
The redbreast's farewell to summer
Cuckoo's two notes, brief as her stay,
Haunting the heath
Swallow's sweet prelude to going away
Wind's lament on wire along the road
Chant of the ferry-men -
Such singers and such songs!

But now I shall keep tryst
With the song that haunts me most
From a place of dimming hills
Where sheep browse purple slopes
Bees make their all-day hum
And sun stands still to hear
Her singing to her flock
In words that I do not know
Though I guess what is in her heart.

Perhaps I shall find her there
Still singing those antique words
With their sad refrain:

Me ne ben pas
Ay! soui delaissado.