

Setting Lucretius to Music - An Example from Catullus

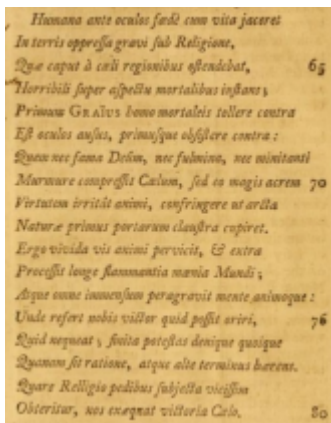
Post by "Cassius" of August 3, 2018 at 9:20 AM

Some years ago I came across on Youtube this Latin poem "A Thousand Kisses" by Catullus sung in a catchy updated style. It has stuck with me ever since. Too bad, isn't it, that we don't have someone qualified to set some Lucretius to music like this? 😊

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Yzs2Fq1ICZU>

[As Martin pointed out, not exactly "punk rock" as referenced on the youtube page, is it?]

Probably of all Lucretius this passage below would be one of the most useful ones to set to music, or even just to have someone read the Latin in an engaging modern way:



For those who prefer their "s" and "f" in a modern font, also with slight changes in the text. (note for example in the last line obteritur vs opteritur). This is Munro:

Humana ante oculos foede cum vita iaceret
in terris oppressa gravi sub religione
quae caput a caeli regionibus ostendebat
horribili super aspectu mortalibus instans, 65
primum Graius homo mortalis tollere contra
est oculos ausus primusque obsistere contra,
quem neque fama deum nec fulmina nec minitanti
murmure compressit caelum, sed eo magis acrem
inritat animi virtutem, effringere ut arta 70
naturae primus portarum claustra cupiret.
ergo vivida vis animi pervicit, et extra
processit longe flammantia moenia mundi
atque omne immensum peragravit mente animoque,
unde refert nobis victor quid possit oriri, 75
quid nequeat, finita potestas denique cuique
quanam sit ratione atque alte terminus haerens.
quare religio pedibus subiecta vicissim
opteritur, nos exaequat victoria caelo.