

Songs of FAITH, LOVE and NONSENSE

Roderick Williams^a *baritone* · James Way^b *tenor*
Andrew West *piano*

SOMMCD 0627

Songs of Faith, Op.97 (1907) ^{a*}	[19:05]	[17] The Cow and the Coward ^a	1:35
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[15] The Compleat Virtuoso ^a	1:12		
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		Total duration: 78:50	

^aFirst complete recording
^{**}First recordings ^{***}First digital recording

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Charles Villiers
STANFORD

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FAITH, LOVE
and NONSENSE

including
First Recordings

Roderick Williams
baritone

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Charles Villiers STANFORD

Songs of FAITH, LOVE and NONSENSE

1891 proved to a busy year for Charles Villiers Stanford. Besides his considerable teaching duties at the Royal College of Music, and his work at Cambridge (which included Trinity College Chapel, the conductorship of the Cambridge University Musical Society and the Professorship of Music), he had a mounting number of commissions.

The most substantial of these was for a full-length oratorio, *Eden*, for the Birmingham Triennial Festival. For this he had chosen the challenging subject of 'The Fall' from the Book of Genesis and the task of its libretto had fallen to Robert Bridges, a poet who had begun to build his reputation with verse dramas such as *Nero*, sonnet collections such as *The Growth of Love* and the Greek masque, *Prometheus the Firegiver*. In 1890 Bridges published the first four books of his *Shorter Poems*, and from these Stanford selected three poems which were later published in an *Album of 12 English Songs*.

The constancy of love lies at the heart of '**Since thou, O fondest and truest**' in which its simple message might almost be an Irish folksong. In '**I praise the tender flower**', the lover has been made happy by both a flower and a gentle

maid, yet he can only divulge his feelings in a song. Here Stanford's structure of stanzaic variation is more complex, but it is more complicated still in the third song, '**Say, O say! saith the music**', in which the eyes of the lovers meet, an image encouraged by the persistent ostinato of the accompaniment.

In 1896 Stanford enjoyed his most lasting operatic success with his romantic comedy, *Shamus O'Brien*, using a libretto by George H Jessop based on the poem by Joseph Sheridan Le Fanu. Completed in January 1895, it was first staged at the Opéra Comique in London on March 2, 1896 under the direction of Henry Wood. After running for 82 successive nights in the capital with Denis O'Sullivan as Shamus and Joseph O'Mara as Mike Murphy, the opera toured the United Kingdom as the 'Shamus O'Brien Opera Company' (its directors were Augustus Harris, Stanford and Stanford's cousin, Edmond Holmes) first under the baton of Emil Kreuz and later the young Granville Bantock. The work also crossed the Atlantic, receiving 50 performances on Broadway before returning to Britain and Ireland for a second tour. It was also performed in Sydney, Australia to much acclamation.

A combination of slick dialogue, well-constructed vocal numbers and well-rounded characters made for a gripping, yet highly amusing drama in which Shamus is pursued by the authorities for his part in the 1798 Irish Rebellion. Betrayed by the traitorous Mike Murphy to the British, he escapes. A secondary plot is Captain Trevor's love for Kitty O'Toole, the sister of Nora, Shamus's wife.

Captain Trevor of the British Army is captivated by her, a sentiment portrayed in his aria **'My heart is thrall to Kitty's beauty'** (Act II Scene 1) where he is conflicted by his sense of military duty and his secret admiration for Shamus. Also in Act II Scene 1, **'Glengall'** for the dastardly Mike Murphy, shows the mercenary side of the traitor's unsympathetic character; yet his aria, **'Ochone! When I used to be young!'**, a diffident jig, reveals a more complex individual. Opining the passing of youth, Murphy is resentful of being spurned by Nora and seeks revenge. In Act II Scene 2, Shamus is brought to the gallows on a cart (in a processional scene which Wood described as one of the most exciting he knew in opera), at which point his monologue is headed with the defiant hymn **'I love my ould Ireland'**.

Edmond Gore Alexander Holmes was Stanford's cousin through his mother's family, the Henns. Friends throughout their boyhood, they became closer after Stanford met Jennie Wetton, the woman he wished to marry, during his studies in Germany (between 1874 and 1876). Forced to endure a year without seeing or corresponding with her, Stanford relied on regular news from Holmes as a 'go-between' and never forgot this act of kindness after his marriage in 1878. Holmes spent much of his career as a school inspector and became chief inspector in 1905. Although education remained his principal interest, he also wrote widely on religion and philosophy, and, as a disciple of Madame Blavatsky, he was a theosophist. An amalgamation of his beliefs is clearly evident in his poetry which he published between 1876 and 1918.

Christopher Howell has suggested that, on the 25th anniversary of his marriage in 1903, Stanford marked the occasion with the setting of five poems from Holmes' collection of sonnets, *The Triumph of Love*, which had been published in the same year. Though perhaps over-inflated in their language, these poems appealed to Stanford and their central theme, where love triumphs over all adversity, evidently had a powerful autobiographical resonance for him. His musical response was five substantial through-composed songs shaped by the continuity of the English sonnet forms of Holmes' verse. This is palpable from the outset in **'O one deep sacred outlet of my soul'** (Sonnet 37) with its expansive vocal line and symphonic piano accompaniment. Similarly spacious in its cosmic vision is the third song, **'When in the solemn stillness of the night'** (Sonnet 63) and the final song in G minor, **'O flames of passion'** (Sonnet 22), has an impressive tripartite architecture well delineated by the reprise in the tonic major.

By contrast, the second and fourth songs, **'Like as the thrush in winter'** (Sonnet 48) and **'I think that we were children'** (Sonnet 5), have a gentler, more euphonious demeanour and function effectively as interludes between the three larger muscular pillars. Such was his satisfaction with *The Triumph of Love*, and their symphonic grandeur, Stanford chose to orchestrate the third, fourth and fifth songs in June 1906. In this form 'I think that we were children' and 'O flames of passion' were sung at Queen's Hall on October 23, 1909 by Olga Ouroussoff under the direction of her husband, Henry Wood.

Stanford's six *Songs of Faith*, Op.97, composed between May and December 1906, were published in two sets. Three settings of Tennyson formed Set I. The text of '**Strong son of God, immortal Love**' was taken from the introduction to *In Memoriam* and forms a dramatic opening in its proclamation of God and His justice. Also arranged by Stanford as an impressive partsong, 'God and the Universe' (from *The Death of Oenone*), is one of the composer's most original creations in the song idiom. The desolate mood of doubt and fear, superbly depicted in Stanford's accompaniment, aptly supports the deeply questioning attitude of the opening ("Will my tiny spark of being wholly vanish in your deeps and heights?"), yet, uncertainty and disquiet are ultimately replaced by the reassurance of God's purpose in the buoyant conclusion. '**Faith**' (also from *The Death of Oenone*) is also a big-boned dramatic statement. Equally inquisitorial in disposition, the song opens with some of Tennyson's best-known words – "Doubt no longer that the Highest is the wisest and the best".

Walt Whitman's words seem to have propelled Stanford to even greater heights of inspiration in Set II. The dirge-like '**To the Soul**' (from *Passage to India*), a depiction of the soul as it breaks the bonds of death, contains some of Stanford's most experimental chromatic harmony. And this harmonic ingenuity is continued in the scena-like '**Tears**' (from *Leaves of Grass*), a stormy projection of doubt, fear and despair. For '**Joy, Shipmate, Joy!**', Stanford used the metaphor of a sea journey in which the rolling waves (captured in the accompaniment) drive the ship and the ecstatic soul on to the beginning of

a new life beyond. Stanford was evidently proud of his Whitman settings, since, in 1913, he decided to create a work for chorus and orchestra, *Song to the Soul*, Op.97b, in which the material of 'To the Soul' and 'Joy, Shipmate, Joy!' was remoulded. The hope was that it would be performed at the Norfolk Festival in Connecticut in 1915. When this proved logistically impossible, Stanford orchestrated 'To the Soul' and 'Tears' which were sung by the leading American bass-baritone, Clarence Whitehill.

We know from Stanford's autobiography, *Pages from an Unwritten Diary* (1914), and from the comedic antics of his penultimate opera, *The Critic*, that he possessed a highly articulate, dry humour like many literary Irishmen of his era. A channel for this humour were the parties (or *levées*) he used to hold at his Kensington home, and later at his house in Lower Berkeley Street where he would entertain friends and many of his past and present students. His first biographer and fellow countryman, Harry Plunket Greene, tells us that "nothing that Stanford ever composed showed that 'playboy' side of his character like the set of 'Limericks' which on rare occasions he was persuaded to sing and play himself. So far as we know he never wrote them down – the MSS. have never been found".

Stainer & Bell, who published the *Nonsense Rhymes* in 1960 did indeed find the manuscripts when searching among bomb-damaged archives. On the title page we learn of the composer and his origin through the use of an anagram

and two anadromes “Karel Drofnatski [Stanford]... born at a town situated on the river Yeffil [Liffey] in the province of Retsniel [Leinster]”. Harnessing the absurdity of Edward Lear’s words, Stanford was able to use them as a peg on which to hang his hilarious matrix of satirical quotations, musical parodies and intellectual quips. All the *Rhymes* have a detailed ‘scholarly’ postscript in which some clue to the satire or parody is given (these need to be read in full in order to appreciate Stanford’s true sense of wit). For example, “**The Hardy Norsewoman**” makes reference to Grieg’s *Peer Gynt* while lampooning the obscurity of Ibsen’s plays. “**The Compleat Virtuoso**” was a tribute to the violinist Joseph Joachim (who often attended his parties), but also the great 19th-century violin concertos by ‘Max von Beetelsohn’. “**The Absent Barber**” combines references to Handel and *Home, sweet home*, while the pastoral evocation of “**The Cow and the Coward**” invokes quotations from Beethoven’s *Pastoral* Symphony. “**Barkerolle**” not only makes reference to “walking the dogs” but also to “Johann Sebastian Barker”.

Elements of Greek folk music form an essential part of ‘**Dithyramb**’, the ancient Greek hymn, and those techniques associated with playing the lyre, notably the liberally thrummed chords and the melodramatic tremolando. Drofnatski’s portrayal of the ecclesiastical atmosphere of “**The Generous Parishioner**” is by way of a serene Schumannesque organ voluntary which begins and ends the rhyme, but which is violently interrupted by the piano’s *glissandi* in contrary motion as the waistcoat is torn into pieces.

‘**Limmerich ohne Worte**’, for piano only, is a direct quotation of the first nine bars of Mendelssohn’s *Song Without Words* (Op.53 No.4) which, Drofnatski reliably informs us, can be used as a metric model for any poems of the Limerick species. ‘**Boat Song**’, replete with a top operatic ‘C’, bore a dedication to ‘Signor Robinsonio Carusoe’; ‘**Nileinsamkeit**’ and its succession of third intervals not only referred to Brahms’s song *Feldeinsamkeit* but also to the Fourth Symphony and the *Vier Ernste Gesänge*. A parody of Bachian arioso forms the basis of ‘**The Aquiline Snub**’ and the opening of ‘**Tone Poem**’ recalls *Francesca da Rimini*, which Tchaikovsky conducted in Cambridge in 1893 during the CUMS Jubilee (and which continues with extracts from the *Pathétique* Symphony). In ‘**Gongdichtung**’ the excesses (as Stanford perceived them) of Richard Strauss’s *Ein Heldenleben* and the *Sinfonia Domestica* were caricatured in juxtaposition to Beethoven’s *Eroica* Symphony (an ‘heroic’ expression of artistic balance and wisdom), while, in the final rhyme of the set, ‘**A Visit of Elizabeth**’, *Tristannhäuser* becomes the focus of Drofnatski’s comic confusion of Wagner’s operas.

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SONGS OF FAITH, Op.97

1 Strong Son of God, immortal Love

(Alfred, Lord Tennyson, 1809-92)

Strong Son of God, immortal Love,
Whom we, that have not seen thy face,
By faith, and faith alone, embrace,
Believing where we cannot prove;

Thine are these orbs of light and shade;
Thou madest Life in man and brute;
Thou madest Death; and lo, thy foot
Is on the skull which thou hast made.

Thou wilt not leave us in the dust:
Thou madest man, he knows not why,
He thinks he was not made to die;
And thou hast made him: thou art just.

2 God and the Universe

(Alfred, Lord Tennyson, 1809-92)

Will my tiny spark of being wholly vanish in your deeps and heights?
Must my day be dark by reason, O ye Heavens, of your boundless nights,
Rush of Suns, and roll of systems, and your fiery clash of meteorites?
"Spirit, nearing yon dark portal at the limit of thy human state,
Fear not thou the hidden purpose of that Power which alone is great,
Nor the myriad world, His shadow, nor the silent Opener of the Gate."

3 Faith

(Alfred, Lord Tennyson, 1809-92)

Doubt no longer that the Highest is the wisest and the best,
Let not all that saddens Nature blight thy hope or break thy rest,
Quail not at the fiery mountain, at the shipwreck, or the rolling
Thunder, or the rending earthquake, or the famine, or the pest!
Neither mourn if human creeds be lower than the heart's desire!
Thro' the gates that bar the distance comes a gleam of what is higher.
Wait till Death has flung them open, when the man will make the Maker
Dark no more with human hatreds in the glare of deathless fire!

4 To the Soul

(Walt Whitman, 1819-92)

Darest thou now O Soul,
Walk out with me toward the Unknown Region,
Where neither ground is for the feet
nor any path to follow?

No map there, nor guide,
Nor voice sounding, nor touch of human hand,
Nor face with blooming flesh,
nor lips, nor eyes, are in that land.

I know it not O Soul;
Nor dost thou – all is a blank before us;
All waits, undream'd of, in that region,
[that inaccessible land].

Till when the [ties loosen],
All but the ties eternal, Time and Space,
Nor darkness, gravitation, sense,
nor any bounds, [bound] us.

Then we burst forth – we float,
In Time and Space, O Soul, prepared for them;
Equal, equipt at last, –
(O joy! O fruit of all!) them to fulfil, O Soul.

5 Tears

(Walt Whitman, 1819-92)

Tears! tears! tears!

In the night, in solitude, tears,

On the white shore dripping, dripping, suck'd in by the sand,

Tears, not a star shining, all dark and desolate,

Moist tears from the eyes of a muffled head;

O who is that ghost? that form in the dark, with tears?

What shapeless lump is that, bent, crouch'd there on the sand?

Streaming tears, sobbing tears, throes, choked with wild cries;

O storm, embodied, rising, careering with swift steps along the beach!

O wild and dismal night storm, with wind – O howling and desperate!

O shade so sedate by day, with calm countenance and steady pace,

But away at night as you fly, none looking – O then the unloosen'd ocean,

Of tears! tears! tears!

6 Joy, Shipmate, Joy!

(Walt Whitman, 1819-92)

Joy, shipmate, joy!

(Pleas'd to my soul at death I cry.)

Our life is closed, our life begins,

The long, long anchorage we leave,

The ship is clear at last, she leaps!

She swiftly courses from the shore,

Joy, shipmate, joy!

THREE SONGS BY ROBERT BRIDGES

(Robert Bridges, 1834-1930)

**7 Since thou,
O fondest and truest**

Since thou, O fondest and truest,

Hast loved me best and longest,

And now with trust the strongest,

The joy of my heart renewest;

Since thou art dearer and dearer

While other hearts grow colder,

And ever, as love is older,

More lovingly drawest nearer:

Since now I see in the measure

Of all my giving and taking,

Thou wert my hand in the making,

The sense and soul of my pleasure;

The good I have ne'er repaid thee

In heaven I pray be recorded,

And all thy love rewarded

By God, thy master that made thee.

**8 I praise the
tender flower**

I praise the tender flower,

That on a mournful day

Bloomed in my garden bower

And made the winter gay.

Its loveliness contented

My heart tormented.

I praise the gentle maid

Whose happy voice and smile

To confidence betrayed

My doleful heart awhile;

And gave my spirit deploring

Fresh wings for soaring.

The maid for very fear

Of love I durst not tell:

The rose could never hear,

Though I bespake her well:

So in my song I bind them

For all to find them.

**9 Say, O say!
saith the music**

I love my lady's eyes
Above the beauties rare,
She most is wont to prize,
Above her sunny hair,
And all that face to face
Her glass repeats of grace.
For those are still the same
To her and all that see:
But oh! her eyes will flame
When they do look on me:
And so above the rest
I love her eyes the best.
Now say
[Say, say! saith the music]
Who likes my song?
I knew you by your eyes,
That rest on nothing long,
And have forgot surprise;
And stray
[Stray, O stray! saith the music]
as mine will stray,
The while my love's away.

10 My heart is thrall to Kitty's beauty

My heart is thrall to Kitty's beauty,
And honour points the path of duty –
Alas! alas! they can't agree.
If Shamus dies, she can but hate me;
If he survives, what trials wait me!
Alas! alas! and woe is me!
The rebel must not be forgiven!
The fair, bright maid, with eyes like heaven,
Must weep and suffer – all thro' me.
Oh, for the power to solve these puzzles,
To snatch him from the levelled muzzles
And set him free, and set him free!
Oh, were I not a British soldier,
I'd give up all, so I might hold your
Soft hand in mine, all fancy free!
But ere you will consent to marry,
I must disgrace the sword I carry –
It cannot be! It cannot be!
It cannot be! No!
Adieu, adieu, my mountain fairy,
Your heart is soft, but will not vary
Its stern decree – its stern decree.
I turn my back on love and beauty;
This thorny path – the path of duty –
Leads far from thee – far, far from thee!

11 Glengall

Oh! yer honour, don't be hard,
But about that same reward,
I can't do without it at all;
And Government, I'm told,
Is loth to part with gold,
And I daren't stop longer in Glengall.
And I think I'm not to blame,
For telling you the same
For they'll skin me if they catch me in Glengall.
Just think of all I've done,
An' all the risks I've run,
And entirely, Captain, for your sake.
His Reverence looks black,
And my colleen turns her back,
And her neighbours regard me as a snake.
Sure, I've strove to trate you right,
And he leaves me in this plight
He couldn't be more cruel to a snake.
So you see, I've lost my girl,
Set the village in a whirl,
And maybe, done damage to my soul.
I took ye from the bog,
I've hunted like a dog:
Don't leave me unrewarded at the goal.
You may take but little pride
In standing at my side,
But don't leave me unrewarded at the goal.

**12 Ochone, when I used
to be young!**

Ochone, when I used to be young!
Them was the days I was free and hearty,
The life and soul of a dancing party –
The first boy axed when a song was sung!
Oh, when I used to be young.
Then I could coort as sweet as honey;
Divil a hair I thought of money,
Och, sure, I was brave and young.
Ochone, when I used to be young!
Now look at me, poor and batter'd,
Caubeen* patch'd and coat all tatter'd –
Look at the work of a woman's tongue.
Born from the kings that ruled the parish,
Sure any girl should be proud of marriage
Wid the ouldest stock she lived among.
Ochone, when I used to be young!
The fairies danced at my mother's marryin',
The banshee keened at my father's burryin',
The wildest keen that ever she sung!
Sure all the world it has turn'd agin me
Since Nora sour'd the love within me
Wid a could, sharp 'No' from her cruel tongue.
Ochone, when I used to be young!

*An Irish peasant beret

13 I love my ould Ireland

I love my ould Ireland, and sure ye can't blame me;
I've fed on her legends, I've chanted her songs;
The name that I bear, if I failed her, would shame me;
I weep o'er her woes, and I burn at her wrongs.
I've fought, and I've fallen; I've heard the dread warning
That told me my life must be yielded ere night;
Yet, though you must kill me this beautiful morning,
There's stuff in your hearts that will own if I'm right.
With my pike in my hand and my foot on the heather,
I'd fight you again as I fought you before;
But now I'll forgive ye, the whole lot together,
And own that my fate is the fortune of war.
I'm telling you this on the road to the gallows,
Not a shake in my voice, not a tear in my eye;
I'm not conquered yet; 'tis the motive that hallows
The life that we live, the death that we die!

NONSENSE RHYMES

(Edward Lear, 1812-88)

14 The Hardy Norsewoman

There was a Young Lady of Norway,
Who casually sat in a doorway;
When the door squeezed her flat,
she exclaimed, "What of that?"
This courageous Young Lady of Norway.

15 The Compleat Virtuoso

There was an Old Man of the Isles,
Whose face was pervaded with smiles:
He sang High dum diddle,
and played on the fiddle,
That amiable Man of the Isles.

16 The Absent Barber

There was an Old Man with a beard,
Who said, "It is just as I feared!
Two Owls and a Hen,
four Larks and a Wren,
Have all built their nests in my beard!"

17 The Cow and the Coward

There was an Old Man who said, "How,
Shall I flee from that terrible Cow?
I will sit on this stile,
and continue to smile,
Which may soften the heart of that Cow".

18 Barkerolle

There was a Young Lady of Ryde,
Whose shoe-strings were seldom untied;
She purchased some clogs,
and some small spotted dogs,
And frequently walked about Ryde.

20 The Generous Parishioner

There was an Old Man in a pew,
Whose waistcoat was spotted with blue;
But he tore it in pieces,
to give to his nieces,
That cheerful Old Man in a pew.

22 Boat Song

There was an Old Man in a boat,
Who said, "I'm afloat! I'm afloat!"
When they said, "No! you ain't!"
he was ready to faint,
That unhappy Old Man in a boat.

23 Nileinsamkeit

There was an Old Person of Philae,
Whose conduct was dubious and wily;
He rushed up a Palm,
when the weather was calm,
And observed all the ruins of Philae.

19 Dithyramb

There was a Young Lady of Tyre,
Who swept the loud chords of the lyre;
At the sound of each sweep,
she enraptured the deep,
And enchanted the people of Tyre.

24 The Aquiline Snub

There was an Old Man with a nose,
Who said, "If you choose to suppose,
That my nose is too long,
you are certainly wrong!"
That remarkable Man with a nose.

25 Tone Poem

There was a Young Lady of Russia,
Who screamed so that no one could hush her;
Her screams were extreme,
no one heard such a scream,
As was screamed by that Lady of Russia.

26 Gongdichtung

There was an Old Man with a gong,
Who bumped at it all the day long;
But they called out, "O law!
you're a horrid old bore!"
So they smashed that Old Man with a gong.

27 A Visit of Elizabeth

(Anon.)

There was a Young Lady of Joppa,
Who came a society cropper,
One day with a friend,
she went off to Ostend,
And the rest of the story's improper.

Five Sonnets from THE TRIUMPH OF LOVE, Op.82

(Edmond Gore Alexander Holmes, 1850-1936)

28 Sonnet 37: O one deep sacred outlet of my soul

O one deep sacred outlet of my soul!
O aching of wound through which my life-blood flows!
Were it not well that Time should make thee whole,
And soothe with numbing touch thy poignant throes?
Ah no! for in Time's triumph love would die,
And love is more than life. O wounded heart,
Bleed on, exultant in love's agony,
Bleed on, defiant of Time's healing art.
Dear wound, bleed on; and ever, as the tide
Of inward life wells up and gushes through,
Into the hollows of my heart will glide,
From deep mysterious fountains lost to view,
Drawn by the pulsing outrush of my blood,
Love's life-renewing, life-transforming flood.

29 Sonnet 48: Like as the thrush in winter

Like as the thrush in winter, when the skies
Are drear and dark and all the woods are bare,
Sings undismayed, till from his melodies
Odours of spring float through the frozen air;
So in my heart, when sorrow's icy breath
Is bleak and bitter, and its frost is strong,
Leaps up, defiant of despair and death,
A sunlit mountain of triumphant song.

Sing on, sweet singer, till the violets come,
And south winds blow; sing on, prophetic bird!
Oh, if my lips, which are for ever dumb,
Could sing to men what my sad heart has heard –
Life's darkest hour with songs of joy would ring,
Life's blackest frost would blossom into spring.

30 Sonnet 63: When in the solemn stillness of the night

When in the solemn stillness of the night,
My musing soul is filled with love of thee,
I seem to stand upon the world's last height,
The flaming rampart of all things that be.
And as I pause upon that lonely verge
And plunge my gaze into the gulf below,
I see the cosmic billows sweep and surge
From death to life, with endless ebb and flow.
But howsoever deep my thought may sink
Of light and life, and wonder and desire,
Love still remains, – the love that thou hast waked –
Its deeps unfathomed and its thirst unslaked.

31 Sonnet 5: I think that we were children

I think that we were children long ago
In some far land beyond the gates of death,
Where souls, too innocent for bliss or woe,
Wait for renewal of their mortal breath.

I think we played together on the shore
Of some blue inlet of eternity,
And heard the waters rolling evermore,
And saw the mystic light on land and sea.
I think we roam'd together, side by side, –
Heart link'd to heart in childhood's guileless love –
Haunted by fears of Ocean waste and wide,
By gleams of glory from the worlds above,
By faint remembrances of days on earth,
By dim forebodings of our second birth.

32 Sonnet 22: O flames of passion

O flames of passion, will ye never die
That trampled into dust anon revive,
And wrap my heart in fire and stream on high!
O rebel flames, die down and ye shall live.
Ay, ye shall burn more bravely than of old,
Fed by the fuel of love's self-control,
Burn 'till your fiercer heat seems pale and cold,
Burn in the furnace of love's inmost soul.
Ay, ye shall burn, when Love has quenched your fire,
Burn on for aye, triumphant in your death;
For, as your tempest-driven waves expire,
They wake again, lit by love's purest breath;
Wake to new life, though lost to mortal sight,
In love's white flame, in love's transcendent light.

RODERICK WILLIAMS is one of the most sought-after baritones of his generation. He performs a wide repertoire from baroque to contemporary music, in the opera house, on the concert platform and is in demand as a recitalist worldwide.

He enjoys relationships with all the major UK opera houses and has sung opera world premieres by David Sawer, Sally Beamish, Michel van der Aa, Robert Saxton and Alexander Knaifel. Recent and future engagements include the title role in

Eugene Onegin for Garsington, the title role in *Billy Budd* with Opera North, Papageno for the Royal Opera House, Covent Garden and productions with Dallas Opera, English National Opera and Netherlands Opera.

Roderick sings regularly with all the BBC orchestras and all the major UK orchestras, as well as the Berlin Philharmonic, London Philharmonic, Deutsches Symphonie-Orchester Berlin, Russian National Orchestra, Orchestre Philharmonique de Radio France, Ensemble Orchestral de Paris, Accademia Nazionale di Santa Cecilia in Rome, Cincinnati Symphony, Music of the Baroque Chicago, New York Philharmonic, London Symphony and Bach Collegium



Photograph: Benjamin Ealovega

Japan amongst others. His many festival appearances include the BBC Proms (including the Last Night in 2014), Edinburgh, Cheltenham, Bath, Aldeburgh and Melbourne Festivals.

Roderick Williams has an extensive discography. He is a composer and has had works premiered at the Wigmore and Barbican Halls, the Purcell Room and live on national radio. In December 2016 he won the prize for best choral composition at the British Composer Awards.

In 2015 he started a three-year odyssey of the Schubert song cycles culminating in performances at Wigmore Hall in the 2017-18 season and has now recorded them for Chandos.

He was Artistic Director of Leeds Lieder in April 2016 and won the RPS Singer of the Year award in May 2016. He was awarded an OBE in June 2017.

Tenor **JAMES WAY** was Second Prize-winner of the 62nd Kathleen Ferrier Awards. A former Britten-Pears Young Artist and laureate of Les Arts Florissants' 'Jardin des Voix' young artists programme and the Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment's Rising Stars award, he holds an Independent Opera Voice Fellowship.

A versatile performer whose repertoire spans the baroque to the present day, he is increasingly in demand on the concert platform. Appearances include

the Philharmonia, Bournemouth and City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestras, L'Orchestre de chambre de Paris, Munich Philharmonic, RTÉ National and Swedish Radio Symphony Orchestras. BBC Symphony Orchestra appearances include the European premiere of Ross Harris' *FACE*, Berlioz's *Les nuits d'été*, works by Lili Boulanger and Vaughan Williams' *Serenade to Music* at the Last Night of the Proms.

Highlights with Europe's premier early music ensembles include Handel's *Il trionfo del Tempo e del Disinganno* (Tempo) with Freiburger Barockorchester/René Jacobs and *Samson* (title role) with Dunedin Consort/John Butt, Monteverdi's *Vespers* with English Concert/Laurence Cummings, *Acis & Galatea* (Acis) with Les Arts Florissants and *Messiah* with the FBO/Trevor Pinnock and Les Arts Florissants/William Christie.

Opera credits include Staatsoper Berlin (Purcell's *King Arthur*; AKAMUS/René Jacobs), Royal Festival Hall (the Holy Fool, *Boris Godunov*; Philharmonia/Jakub Hruš'a), Aldeburgh and Edinburgh International Festivals (Ballad Singer, *Owen Wingrave*, Mark Wigglesworth), Gondolier (*Death in Venice*) and Davy (Roxanna Panufnik's *Silver Birch*), Garsington Opera; Vistola Fiume/Pastore, *La liberazione di Ruggiero* for Brighton Early Music Festival, the Young King (George Benjamin's *Lessons in Love and Violence*), Mariinsky Theatre, St Petersburg; Sellem (worldwide



Photograph: Ben McKee

tour of *The Rake's Progress* conducted by Barbara Hannigan), and *Il trionfo del Tempo e del Disinganno* (Tempo), Opéra national de Montpellier/Thibault Noally.

James's recording of Purcell's *The Fairy Queen* with the Gabrieli Consort won high praise, their *Gramophone* award-nominated *King Arthur* winning the Opera category and Recording of the Year at the 2020 *BBC Music Magazine* awards.

ANDREW WEST plays for many of today's leading singers, including Benjamin Appl, James Gilchrist, Susan Gritton, Robert Murray and Hilary Summers. He appears regularly with tenor Mark Padmore and baritone Roderick Williams. Concerts with Mark Padmore have included the 2013 world premiere of Harrison Birtwistle's song-cycle *Songs from the Same Earth*, subsequently programmed in Amsterdam, Cologne and Wigmore Hall; and the opening recital of the 2016-17 season at the Library of Congress in Washington DC. With Roderick Williams he has performed at many of the leading British music festivals, as well as the Nuremberg Chamber Music Festival where he has been Artistic Director since 2005. Andrew's other chamber music partners have included flautist Emily Beynon, violinist Sarah Chang and cellist Jean-Guihen Queyras.



Photograph: Angela Cushway

CD recordings include Strauss Lieder with soprano Emma Bell; music by Les Six with Emily Beynon (Hyperion); and Schubert's *Die schöne Müllerin* with Robert Murray (Stone Records). He is also the pianist for the three-CD set of Parry's English Lyrics for SOMM Recordings, for whom he has recently recorded Schumann's *Frauenliebe und-leben* with Roderick Williams.

Andrew is Chairman and Artistic Director of the Kirckman Concert Society, which for over 50 years has auditioned exceptional young musicians and offered debut recitals at major London venues. He read English at Clare College, Cambridge before studying under Christopher Elton and John Streets at the Royal Academy of Music. He was pianist-in-residence at Lancaster University from 1993-99, where he first collaborated with Ronald Woodley in numerous piano duo and clarinet recitals. Andrew is currently Professor of Chamber Music and Accompaniment at the Guildhall School of Music and Drama, and Royal Academy of Music, where he was recently made a Fellow.

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John Covell and Constance Frydenlund
Professor and Mrs. Jeremy Dibble · Dr. Colleen Ferguson · Dr. David Frankel
Mr. and Mrs. David Colville · Dr. David Miller
Mark and Laura Fisher · Charles Covell.

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THE
STANFORD
SOCIETY

The Stanford Society was formed in 2007 to promote greater interest in Stanford's life and music and to encourage and support performances and recordings of his music. The Society holds an annual Stanford Festival Weekend in a Cathedral City in the UK or Ireland. These Weekends have included performances of music by Stanford (including premiers of the Second Violin Concerto and Variations for Violin and Orchestra in orchestrations by Jeremy Dibble) and his students and contemporaries as well as talks, social events and Cathedral services.

Society members also receive regular newsletters with news and information about performances of Stanford's music and new recordings.

Further information about the Stanford Society may be found at the Society's website at www.thestanfordsociety.org or by contacting Daniel Wilkinson, the Society's Honorary Secretary. His email address is wilkinsondb@hotmail.co.uk