

On This Shining Night

Music for Voice and String Quartet

Roderick Williams *baritone*^a
Sophie Bevan *soprano*^b
James Gilchrist *tenor*^c

Coull Quartet
Roger Coull, Philip Gallaway *violins*
Jonathan Barritt *viola*
Nicholas Roberts *cello*

PETER WARLOCK (1894-1930)

Collected Songs for Voice and String Quartet

- | | | |
|----|---|------|
| 1 | Chopcherry ^c | 1:08 |
| 2 | Corpus Christi ^{ab} | 4:31 |
| 3 | The Fairest May ^c | 1:49 |
| 4 | Mourn no moe ^a | 1:54 |
| 5 | A Sad Song ^b | 2:03 |
| 6 | My gostly fader ^a | 2:04 |
| 7 | My Lady is a pretty one ^c | 2:08 |
| 8 | My little sweet darling ^b | 2:09 |
| 9 | Sleep ^a | 2:16 |
| 10 | Sorrow's Lullaby ^{bc} | 3:57 |
| 11 | Take, O take those lips away ^a | 1:56 |

SAMUEL BARBER (1910-81)

- | | | |
|----|--|------|
| 12 | Dover Beach ^a | 7:28 |
| 13 | Sleep now (arr. Roderick Williams) ^{a*} | 3:01 |

- | | | |
|--------------------------|--|------|
| 14 | Sure on this shining night ^{a*} | 2:37 |
| (arr. Roderick Williams) | | |

SALLY BEAMISH (b.1956) Tree Carols^{a*}

- | | | |
|----|----------------------------|------|
| 15 | The Miracle Tree | 3:16 |
| 16 | The trees are troubled | 2:56 |
| 17 | Vigil | 3:20 |
| 18 | The tree is a changing sky | 4:10 |
| 19 | Bushes and Briars | 4:13 |

FREDERICK DELIUS (1862-1934)

- | | | |
|--------------------------|---|------|
| 20 | I-Brasil (arr. Roderick Williams) ^{a*} | 3:09 |
| 21 | Twilight Fancies ^{a*} | 3:42 |
| (arr. Roderick Williams) | | |
| 22 | Young Venevil ^{a*} | 1:56 |
| (arr. Roderick Williams) | | |

Total duration: 65:57

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Warlock
Barber
Beamish
Delius

Roderick Williams *baritone*
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On This Shining Night

Music for Voice and String Quartet

In considering the longevity of the medium of the string quartet, it may appear somewhat surprising to realise that music for solo voice and string quartet was essentially a 20th-century creation. Favourite songs and arias were doubtless performed *in camera* in the 18th century – as well as earlier and later – in the homes of the nobility who employed musicians, but with the decline of landed gentry in Europe in the wake of the Napoleonic era and the assertion of individual liberties throughout the 1800s, such aesthetic opportunities – relatively rare as they may have been – virtually disappeared from the patina of creative musical art.

It may be thought that a reaction against the increase in the orchestral demands of Berlioz, Liszt and Wagner, and later by Mahler and Richard Strauss, led Schoenberg, in the wake of his Mahlerian-scaled *Gurrelieder*, to react in his own Second String Quartet of 1908 by setting – in the work's third and fourth movements – two poems for soprano and string quartet by Stefan George. Such a startling innovation was equally an *organic* compositional development: the third movement of Schoenberg's quartet, the first of those

two settings, is also cast in the form of theme and variations. In this work, therefore, Schoenberg looked back to the creation of the string quartet as an ensemble and forward to his own time as a reaction against mere size and scale.

One cannot claim fully that where Schoenberg led, others followed, but his textural innovation soon bore rich fruit – not only from Schoenberg himself (in *Pierrot Lunaire*): Darius Milhaud, in his two-movement Third Quartet of 1916, concludes with a memorial setting of a poem by Léo Latil (a friend who had recently died) with solo soprano. Milhaud's Fourth Quartet of 1920 is dedicated to Schoenberg.

If the 20th-century innovation of music for voice and string quartet was not immediately taken up after World War I to any significant degree, the genre occasionally brought forth music of quality. Samuel Barber's setting of Matthew Arnold's *Dover Beach* and Othmar Schoeck's *Notturmo* (both dating from 1931, and both for baritone and string quartet) are amongst the best of such works. Much later, in the explorative 1960s' era of popular music, Paul McCartney's *Yesterday* – for solo singer and string quartet – revealed a new aural combination which others in that field have been disinclined to follow, but serious works by Boris Blacher, Ernst Toch, Egon Wellesz, George Rochberg, Elisabeth Lutyens and others appeared sporadically.

Composers of the 21st century, however, have explored the medium more fully, and our collection comprises recent original work together

with a number of transcriptions. In the latter regard, the examples by our distinguished baritone-composer soloist, Roderick Williams, reveal anew the wide expressive scope that voice and string quartet can offer composers. Indeed, the original work for baritone and string quartet, ***Tree Carols*** by Sally Beamish – settings of poems by Fiona Sampson – was composed for him.

As the composer has written: “The idea for this collaboration first came about in 2009, when the Coull Quartet approached me about writing a work with Fiona Sampson. The Quartet, Fiona and I discussed at length what form the piece might take, and after some months, Fiona sent me three ‘tree’ poems. *Tree Carols* was commissioned by the University of Warwick for the Coull Quartet. I felt I could respond to them immediately. Once I started to write the music, though, I realised more poems would be needed, and Fiona created two more to complete the set. I was asked to write it for Roderick Williams, and the settings are written very much with his voice in mind. I know Roddy’s voice well, as he created the role of Byron in my opera with Janice Galloway, *Monster*, in 2002. The songs tend to feature the higher register of the baritone range.

“The first poem is set against a string ‘shimmer’ with small solos breaking through. The second is a canon, building in gusts which hover around an unsettled ‘heartbeat’ rhythm in 5/8 time. The central movement is recitative-like, with aggressive chordal interjections from the strings, containing a brief lullaby interlude before the angry mood returns. The fourth song is characterised by wide, searching intervals and pulsing chords. The work

finishes with a song accompanied by birdcalls overlapping in a circular canon, with raw rising fifths.”

The publisher John Bishop (1931-2000) was a lifelong champion of British music, who issued a collection of 10 settings by Peter Warlock (1894-1930) for voice and string quartet. Several of these songs were originally composed for voice and string quartet; the remainder are arrangements by Warlock himself of earlier settings with piano, with one – the *Corpus Christi* Carol, being an arrangement of an earlier choral setting. All, however, are original compositions.

Our first Warlock song, ***Chopcherry***, was composed in 1922. This poem, by the 16th-century English poet and dramatist George Peele, comes from Scene 2 of his comedy *The Old Wives Tale* (1595); it has been set by a number of British composers, notably by Benjamin Britten in his *Spring Symphony* (1949). This setting by Warlock is his second – he considered his earlier version (1917) to be less “nearer the spirit of the words” than the one we hear here, which he described as “much better”.

Warlock made three versions of the ***Corpus Christi*** Carol (*Lully, lullay*). The first was composed in 1919 for solo voice and piano and was followed in 1927 by the present arrangement with string quartet. Soon afterwards, Warlock adapted the work for soprano and tenor soloists with a chorus of mixed voices – clearly his setting meant much to him, as we may appreciate from this second version, reflecting the gentle intimacy of the words.

In commenting on ***The Fairest May***, composed in 1922 for solo voice and piano but rewritten in 1930 for voice and string quartet, and ***My Lady is a pretty one*** – an original setting from 1919 for voice and string quartet – one can do no better than quote from the Warlock authority Michael Pilkington, when he wrote that the song sets “the same poem from an Elizabethan manuscript printed in the Chambers and Sidgwick’s anthology *Early English Lyrics*, a favourite source of verse for the composer. This poem was first set by Warlock as *As Ever I Saw* in 1918, but, astonishingly, was not first published until 1956. In 1930, John Goss told Warlock he intended to include *As Ever I Saw* in a future concert. Warlock was less than happy about this early song and decided to rewrite it. He changed the time-signature to 6/8 rather than 3/4, gave it a more Elizabethan-influenced accompaniment, and made considerable changes to the vocal line. The final violin flourish could have come out of one of Dowland’s lute pieces.”

Mourn no moe is another arrangement with string quartet, of a setting from 1919, the text from *The Queen of Corinth* by John Fletcher. Warlock’s transcription adds a few instrumental bars to the original. ***My gostly fader*** is a poem attributed to Charles, duc d’Orléans, said to have been written during his exile in England. The setting, from 1918, is unusual in that, virtually uniquely in the composer’s style, it appears almost as free recitative. ***My little sweet darling*** (1927) is a revision of a song with piano from 1919 – plus two additional bars, slightly extending the introduction. The text is an anonymous 16th-century lullaby.

A Sad Song and ***Sleep*** (1922) take their texts from plays by Beaumont and Fletcher – the first from *The Maid’s Tragedy*; at the head of the score Warlock quotes briefly from the play:

Evadne: That’s one of your songs, Madam

Aspatia: Believe me, ‘tis a very pretty one

Evadne: Fie on it, Madam! The words are so strange,
they are able to make one dream of hobgoblins”.

Sorrow’s Lullaby is from 1927 and is dedicated to Arnold Bax. The poem is by Thomas Lovell Beddoes and this enchanting work, for soprano, baritone and string quartet, is marked 6/8, ‘With a gentle lilt’, with the string quartet muted throughout. This gem is akin to a mini-cantata, the gently clashing tonalities at the close producing a moving effect.

The final song, ***Take, O take those lips away*** (1918) from Shakespeare’s *Measure for Measure*, is Warlock’s second setting of these immortal words, following a version made two years earlier. As the original published piano accompaniment is virtually unplayable on a keyboard, it is more than likely that he had strings in mind to support the voice from the outset.

We have glancingly mentioned Samuel Barber’s masterly ***Dover Beach***, his Op.3. Barber’s songs constitute arguably the finest group of art songs by a 20th-century American composer. He was the nephew of the internationally-admired American contralto Louise Homer (1871-1947), who – amongst many successes – had been selected by Toscanini to sing Marina in Mussorgsky’s

Boris Godunov at the American premiere. Barber himself possessed an excellent singing voice, and made the first recording of *Dover Beach* with the Curtis String Quartet for RCA.

If it is unsurprising that songs form a significant part of Barber's output, it may also be thought appropriate that the baritone Roderick Williams has arranged two of Barber's songs, for Williams himself is also a composer. The words of ***Sleep Now*** are by James Joyce, from his (appropriately entitled) *Chamber Music* – 36 poems, published in 1907. *Sleep Now* has been set by many composers, of which Barber's was one of the earliest. It dates from 1939, one of a group of three, immediately following his one-movement First Symphony. Barber's natural, unselfconscious lyricism, heard at its most famous in his very next work, the String Quartet, Op.11 – the slow movement of which is the original version of his *Adagio for Strings* – 'fits' Joyce's text like a glove.

A comment which may be applied to ***Sure on this shining night*** with words by James Agee – one of Four Songs Barber wrote between 1937-40, published as his Op.13. *Sure on this shining night* achieved such wide popularity that (as reported by the Library of Congress) "In 1979, Barber moved into an apartment in New York City and needed to call Gian Carlo Menotti, whom he knew was visiting. Upon trying to dial the number from a telephone booth, Barber could not recall the new phone number. The composer contacted the operator for assistance who initially refused, but confessed that she

possessed a weakness for *Sure on this shining night* and requested him to sing the opening phrase to confirm his identity. Barber complied and was rewarded with Menotti's new telephone number!"

Peter Warlock was one of the first fellow-British composers to acknowledge the genius of Frederick Delius. He was just 17 when he encountered Delius, leading to an extensive correspondence between the composers, which was published in 2000. Warlock, however, was no slavish imitator of the older man, as we may hear in the three songs by Delius concluding our recital. These have been transcribed for baritone and string quartet by Roderick Williams, in the nature of companion settings to Warlock's originals, the two composer-friends joined on this disc as they were in life.

Delius was more widely-travelled than Warlock, conveying in sound the expression of feelings from a more broadly-based perspective, as we find in his *Seven Songs from the Norwegian* (1890 – dedicated to Grieg's wife Nina; settings of Bjørnstjerne Bjørnson, Henrik Ibsen and Aasmund Olafson Vinje). From this group, Roderick Williams has taken the first two: ***Twilight Fancies*** (with evocative opening fifths, so suitable for string timbre), and the vivacious ***Young Venevil***, in the English translations of Fanny Copeland and Peter Pears, preceded by a similar transcription of Delius's ***I-Brasil***, composed in 1913 to Fiona Macleod's text – which had been sent to Delius by Warlock.

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PETER WARLOCK (1894-1930)

1 Chopcherry

George Peele (c.1556-96)

Whenas the rye reach to the chin,
And chop-cherry, chop-cherry ripe within,
Strawberries swimming in the cream,
And schoolboys playing in the stream;
Then, O, then, O then my true love said,
Till that time come again
She could not live a maid.

2 Corpus Christi

Anon.

Lully, lullay, lully, lullay!
The faucon hath borne my make away.

He bare him up, he bare him down,
He bare him into an orchard brown.

Lully, lullay, lully, lullay!
The faucon hath borne my make away.

In that orchard there was a hall
That was hanged with purple and pall;

And in that hall there was a bed:
It was hanged with gold so red;

And in that bed there lithe a knight,
His woundes bleeding day and night;

By that bedside there kneeleth a may,
And she weepeth night and day.

By that bedside there standeth a stone,
CORPUS CHRISTI written thereon.

Lully, lullay, lully, lullay!

3 The Fairest May

Anon.

She is gentle and also wise;
Of all other she beareth the prize,
That ever I saw.

To hear her sing, to see her dance!
She will the best herself advance,
That ever I saw.

To see her fingers that be so small!
In my conceit she passeth all
That ever I saw.

Nature in her hath wonderly wrought,
Christ never such another bought,
That ever I saw.

I have seen many that have beauty,
Yet is there none like to my lady
That ever I saw.

Therefore I dare this boldly say,
I shall have the best and fairest may
That ever I saw.

4 Mourn no moe

John Fletcher (1579-1625)

Weep no more, nor sigh, nor groan,
Sorrow calls no time that's gone:
Violets pluck'd, the sweetest rain
Makes not fresh nor grow again:
Trim thy locks, look cheerfully;
Fate's hid ends eyes cannot see:
Joys as wingèd dreams fly fast,
Why should sadness longer last?
Grief is but a wound to woe;
Gentlest fair, mourn, mourn no moe.

5 A Sad Song

John Fletcher (1579-1625)

Lay a garland on my hearse,
Of the dismal yew;
Maidens, willow branches bear;
Say I died true.

My love was false, but I was firm
From my hour of birth.
Upon my buried body lie
Lightly, gentle earth!

6 My gostly fader

Attrib. Charles, Duc d'Orléans (1394-1465)

My gostly fader, I me confesse,
First to God and then to you,
That at a window – wot ye how? –
I stale a cosse of grete sweteness,
Which don was out avisèness;
But hit is doon, not undoon now.
My gostly fader, I me confesse
First to God and then to you.

But I restore it shall doutless
Agein, if so be that I mow;
And that to God I make a vow
And elles I axè foryefness.
My gostly fader, I me confesse
First to God and then to you.

7 My Lady is a pretty one

Anon.

My lady is a pretty one,
As ever I saw.
She is gentle and also wise;
Of all other she beareth the prize,
That ever I saw.

My lady is a pretty one
As ever I saw.

To hear her sing, to see her dance!
She will the best herself advance,
That ever I saw.

To see her fingers that be so small!
In my conceit she passeth all
That ever I saw.

Nature in her hath wonderly wrought,
Christ never such another bought,
That ever I saw.

I have seen many that have beauty,
Yet is there none like to my lady
That ever I saw.

Therefore I dare this boldly say,
I shall have the best and fairest may
That ever I saw.

8 My little sweet darling

Anon.

My little sweet darling, my comfort and joy,
(Sing lullaby, lulla!)

In beauty surpassing the princes of Troy,
(Sing lullaby, lulla!)

Now suck, child, and sleep, child, thy mother's sweet boy,
(Sing lullaby, lulla!)

The gods bless and keep thee from cruel annoy.
(Sing lullaby, lulla!)

Sweet baby, lulla, lulla, lulla, lulla!

9 Sleep

John Fletcher (1579-1625)

Come, Sleep, and with thy sweet deceiving
Lock me in delight awhile;
Let some pleasing dreams beguile
All my fancies; that from thence
I may feel an influence
All my powers of care bereaving!

Though but a shadow, but a sliding,
Let me know some little joy!
We that suffer long annoy
Are contented with a thought
Through an idle fancy wrought:
O let my joys have some abiding!

10 Sorrow's Lullaby

Thomas Lovell Beddoes (1803-49)

Who is the baby, that doth lie
Beneath the silken canopy
Of thy blue eye?

It is young Sorrow, laid asleep
In the crystal-deep.

Let us sing his lullaby,
Heigh ho, a sob and a sigh.

What sound is that, so soft, so clear,
Harmonious as a bubbled tear
Bursting, we hear?

It is young Sorrow, slumber breaking,
Suddenly awaking.

Let us sing his lullaby,
Heigh ho, a sob and a sigh.

[11] Take, O take those lips away

Anon.

Take, o take those lips away,
That so sweetly were forsworn;
And those eyes, the break of day,
Lights that do mislead the morn:
But my kisses bring again;
Seals of love, but seal'd in vain.

SAMUEL BARBER (1910-81)

[12] Dover Beach

Matthew Arnold (1822-88)

The sea is calm to-night,
The tide is full, the moon lies fair
Upon the straights; on the French coast the light
Gleams and is gone; the cliffs of England stand,
Glimm'ring and vast, out in the tranquil bay.
Come to the window, sweet is the night-air!
Only, from the long line of spray

Where the sea meets the moon-blanch'd land,
Listen! you hear the grating roar
Of pebbles which the waves draw back, and fling,
At their return, up the high strand,
Begin, and cease, and then again begin,
With tremulous cadence slow, and bring
The eternal note of sadness in.

Sophocles long ago
Heard it on the Aegean, and it brought
Into his mind the turbid ebb and flow
Of human misery; we
Find also in the sound a thought,
Hearing it by this distant northern sea.

The sea of faith
Was once, too, at the full, and round earth's shore
Lay like the folds of a bright girdle furled.
But now I only hear
Its melancholy, long, withdrawing roar,
Retreating, to the breath
Of the night-wind, down the vast edges drear
And naked shingles of the world.

Ah, love, let us be true
To one another! for the world, which seems
To lie before us like a land of dreams,
So various, so beautiful, so new,
Hath really neither joy, nor love, nor light,
Nor certitude, nor peace, nor help for pain;
And we are here as on a darkling plain
Swept with confused alarms of struggle and flight,
Where ignorant armies clash by night.

13 Sleep now (arr. Roderick Williams)

James Joyce (1882-1941)

Sleep now, O sleep now,
O you unquiet heart!
A voice crying "Sleep now"
Is heard in my heart.

The voice of the winter
Is heard at the door.
O sleep, for the winter
Is crying "Sleep no more".

My kiss will give peace now
And quiet to your heart –
Sleep on in peace now,
O you unquiet heart!

14 Sure on this shining night (arr. Roderick Williams)

James Agee (1909-55)

Sure on this shining night
Of star-made shadows round,
Kindness must watch for me
This side the ground.

The late year lies down the north.
All is healed, all is health.
High summer holds the earth.
Hearts all whole.

Sure on this shining night
I weep for wonder
Wandering far alone
Of shadows on the stars.

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SALLY BEAMISH (b. 1956)

Tree Carols

Fiona Sampson (b.1963)

15 The Miracle Tree

The true Rood
is in the tree –

white
as rising sap,
the Christ-white blood

The true tree
is in the Rood –

red
as the breaking bark
where the yew bleeds

The Rood
holds up life

in blood-red apple
and bruised pear,
sweet fruit

The tree
holds up death –

ransacked body,
hunger and juice
The graveyard miracle

16 The trees are troubled

The trees are troubled by a wind
that blows from the heart
of each tree, a troubled wind
speaking the word Loss,

taking a breath to speak the word
again, speaking Loss
as if it were the only word –
and at its heart

the swaying O of the heartwood
where death opens
Strange birth, when living wood
is forced open

by this world
as it changes into world

17 Vigil

God – crush this
stem of anger,
crumple my neck
like paper

Lord of Envy –
Vinegar King –
refuse me
your unceasing heaven

but make me sleep –
hopeless, whole,
attended
by each nightly ghost –

to wake at last
in borrowed skin
clothing a shame
that Love let in

You whose daylight
thrills the nerves –
burn me now
as I deserve

18 The tree is a changing sky

The tree is a changing sky...
The tree is a changing sky
starred with light
Dizzy with apple picking
I place my ladder

so it rises
so its stiles go breaking
and entering this bright
constellation – built in air

as constellations are –
Among the sway and surge of leaves
I rise in a leaf-lather

Green is the colour of grief
but for one season
I have ascended to tree heaven

19 Bushes and Briars

*If I showed to him my boldness
He'd ne'er love me more.*

'Bushes and Briars' (Trad.)

Liquid voice
from the ash

a bird sings
Leaves gleam

Old voice
your sweet fall

tells over
an old story

A girl lost
in the copse

Her baby cries
Leaves lean down

Her baby cries
with the thrush's voice

from every bush
every tree

Sing lullaby
on the ash-branch

sing lullaby
your mother sleeps

The tears she weeps
are blood

FREDERICK DELIUS (1862-1934)

20 I-Brasil (arr. Roderick Williams)

Fiona Macleod (1855-1905)

There's sorrow on the wind, my grief,
There's sorrow on the wind,
Old and grey! Old and grey!
I hear it whispering, calling,
Where the last stars touch the sea,
Where the cloud creeps down the hill,
And the leaf shakes on the tree.
There's sorrow on the wind
And it's calling low to me
"Come away! Come away! Come away!"

There's sorrow in the world, O wind,
There's sorrow in my heart
Night and day, Night and day.
So why should I not listen
To the song you sing to me?
The hill cloud falls away in rain,
The leaf whirls from the tree,
And peace may live in I-Brasil
Where the last stars touch the sea,
Far away, far away.

21 Twilight Fancies (arr. Roderick Williams)

Bjørnstjerne Bjørnson (1832-1910) trans. FS Copeland

The Princess look'd forth from her maiden bow'r.

The horn of a herd-boy rang up from below.

"Oh, cease from thy playing, and haunt me no more,

Nor fetter my fancy that freely would soar,

When the sun goes down."

The Princess look'd forth from her maiden bow'r.

But mute was the horn that had call'd from below.

"Oh, why art thou silent? Beguile me once more.

Give wings to my fancy that freely would soar,

When the sun goes down."

The Princess look'd forth from her maiden bow'r.

The call of the horn rose again from below.

She wept in the twilight and bitterly sighed:

"What is it I long for? God help me!" she cried.

And the sun went down.

22 Young Venevil (arr. Roderick Williams)

Bjørnstjerne Bjørnson (1832-1910) trans. Peter Pears

Young Venevil ran with her heart on fire

To her lover so dear.

She sang till she made all the church bells ring:

"Good day, good day!"

And all the little songbirds

Made answer to her song:

"Midsummer Day's

for laughter and play.

Take care, little Venevil, your garland's going astray."

She wove him a garland of flowers blue:

"As my eyes so blue my love, for you."

He took it, and tossed it o'er the hill:

"Farewell, my sweet."

He laughed and ran like lightning,

You hear his laughter still:

"Midsummer Day's

For laughter and play.

Take care, little Venevil, your garland's gone astray."

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, Michael 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 Covent Garden, and productions with Cologne 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, London and New York Philharmonic Orchestras, Deutsches Symphonie-Orchester Berlin, Orchestre Philharmonique de Radio France, Ensemble Orchestral de Paris, Accademia Nazionale di Santa Cecilia in Rome, Cincinnati Symphony, London Symphony and Bach Collegium Japan amongst others. His many festival appearances include the BBC Proms (including the Last Night in 2014), Edinburgh, Cheltenham, Bath, Aldeburgh and Melbourne Festivals.




Photograph: Benjamin Ealovega

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.

He recently completed a three-year odyssey of the Schubert song cycles culminating in performances at the Wigmore Hall and has subsequently recorded them for Chandos. Future releases include more Schubert as well as works by Vaughan Williams.

He was Artistic Director of Leeds Lieder in April 2016, is Artist in Residence for the Royal Liverpool Philharmonic Orchestra from 2020/21 for two seasons and won the RPS Singer of the Year award in May 2016. He was awarded an OBE in June 2017.

grovesartists.com/artist/roderick-williams/  [@RGCWbaritone](https://twitter.com/RGCWbaritone)

Tenor **JAMES GILCHRIST** began his working life as a doctor, turning to a full-time music career in 1996. His musical interest was fired at a young age, singing in the choir of New College, Oxford and as a choral scholar at King's College, Cambridge.

His extensive concert repertoire has seen him perform in the world's major concert halls with renowned conductors including Sir John Eliot Gardiner, Sir Roger Norrington, Harry Bicket, Harry Christophers and the late Richard Hickox. Considered a master of English music, he is equally at home in Baroque repertoire

– Bach's *St John* and *St Matthew Passions* feature prominently in his schedule.

Highlights have included Rev. Adams in Britten's *Peter Grimes* with Bergen Philharmonic and Edward Gardner in performances at the Edinburgh International Festival, Royal Festival Hall, Grieghallen and Den Norske Opera, as well as Haydn's *Creation* for a staged production with Garsington Opera and Ballet Rambert, Mendelssohn's *Elijah* with Gothenburg Symphony and Masaaki Suzuki, and a return

to King's College, Cambridge to perform *St Matthew Passion* as part of Stephen Cleobury's final Easter week as Director of Music.

James' impressive discography includes recordings of *Albert Herring* (title role), Vaughan Williams' *Songs of Travel*, and solo disc *Solitude* with pianist and long-time collaborator Anna Tilbrook, including a new work by Jonathan Dove, all for Chandos Records. For Linn Records, *St John Passion* with the AAM, Vaughan Williams' *On Wenlock Edge*, and Britten's *Winter Words*, and his critically-acclaimed recordings of Schubert's song cycles for Orchid Classics. For SOMM Recordings, he has sung Hubert Parry's *English Lyrics* and songs by Penelope Thwaites.

jamesgilchrist.co.uk

 @JamesTenorGilch



Photograph: Patrick Allen

SOPHIE BEVAN is recognised as one of the leading lyric sopranos of her generation. She studied at the Royal College of Music where she was awarded the Queen Mother Rose Bowl for excellence in performance. She was the recipient of the 2010 Critics' Circle award for Exceptional Young Talent, *The Times* Breakthrough Award at the 2012 South Bank Sky Arts Awards, and was made an MBE for services to music in the Queen's Birthday Honours in 2019.

She works regularly with leading orchestras and conductors worldwide with recent and future highlights including concerts with the London Philharmonic, Philharmonia, Bergen Philharmonic, BBC Philharmonic, Aurora, Finnish Radio Symphony, English Concert, the Netherlands Radio Philharmonic, Concertgebouw, OAE and Swedish Radio Orchestras and has appeared regularly at both the Edinburgh Festival and the BBC Proms Festival. An acclaimed recitalist, she performs regularly at prestigious venues including the Concertgebouw and Wigmore Hall in London.

Sought after for her work in opera, Sophie's recent and future engagements include Ilia *Idomeneo*, Sophie *Der Rosenkavalier*, Susanna *Le nozze di Figaro*, Dalinda *Ariodante* and Pamina *Die Zauberflöte* at the Royal Opera House, title role *The Cunning Little Vixen* for WNO, Hermione in Ryan Wigglesworth's *The Winter's*



Photograph: Sussie Ahlburg

Tale and *Télaire* *Castor and Pollux* for ENO, *Mélisande* *Pelléas et Mélisande* for Dresden Semperoper, *Freia Das Rheingold* at Teatro Real, Madrid and *Governess The Turn of the Screw* for Garsington Opera. She made her debut at Glyndebourne Festival Opera as *Michal Saul* and at the Salzburg Festival and Metropolitan Opera as *Beatriz* in Thomas Adès' *The Exterminating Angel*.

Sophie lives in Oxfordshire with her husband, children and two cocker spaniels.

🐦 @SophusBevanus

THE COULL QUARTET

Roger Coull, *violin*

Philip Gallaway, *violin*

Jonathan Barritt, *viola*

Nicholas Roberts, *cello*

Formed in 1974 by students at the Royal Academy of Music under the guidance of renowned quartet leader, Sidney Griller, the Coull Quartet rapidly achieved national recognition, and were appointed Quartet-in-Residence by the University of Warwick in 1977, a post which they held for over 40 years. The quartet, which includes two of its founder members, has performed and



Photograph: George Archer

broadcast extensively throughout the UK, and has made tours of Western Europe, the Americas, Australia, China, India and the Far East.

Since the mid-1980s, the Coull Quartet has made well over 30 recordings featuring a wide selection of the repertoire closest to their hearts, from the complete Mendelssohn and Schubert quartets to 20th-century and contemporary British chamber music. Their CD of quartets by Maw and Britten on SOMM Recordings received universal acclaim; in addition to being a *Gramophone* Editor's Choice, it was also described as the "Benchmark Recording" by *BBC Music Magazine*. Their recordings of music by Sibelius, Ian Venables and Alan Ridout have received excellent reviews in the major musical publications, as has their most recent SOMM recording, *Treasures from the New World*, with the pianist Clélia Iruzun.

Their impressive and wide-ranging list of commissions from Sally Beamish, Edward Cowie, Joe Cutler, David Matthews, Nicholas Maw, Robert Simpson and Howard Skempton includes string quartets, quintets with piano or wind instruments, works with solo voice or choir, and even a composition for quartet and table tennis players.

coullquartet.com

 The Coull Quartet

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