

Sir Hubert Parry (1848-1918)

English Lyrics

Volume III

SOMMCD 272

Sarah Fox *soprano**Roderick Williams *baritone*+Andrew West *piano*

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| | | | Total duration: 58:46 |

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Sir Hubert PARRY

TWELVE SETS of ENGLISH LYRICS

Volume III

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soprano

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Sir Hubert Parry

English Lyrics

Volume III

HUBERT PARRY'S 12 sets of *English Lyrics* were written between about 1874 and the year of his death in 1918, though the last two were compiled posthumously. A substantial corpus of work, the songs belong to a period of new artistic consciousness, when Britain was undergoing a process of cultural re-evaluation. Throughout the 19th century, British musicians had lived in awe of their German counterparts. Handel and Mendelssohn were the icons of the choral society and provincial festival, while Leipzig – the centre of European musical pedagogy – was the Mecca of the aspiring composer.

But political events were to mark a change, notably with German Unification and the Franco-Prussian War of 1870-71, events that signalled across a mutating Europe a new and menacing advance in German industrial might and national sentiment. This awakened a real sense of competition in which Britain, aware of its musical inferiority, strove to equal Germany's cultural dominance. Although happy to absorb the musical precepts of German symphonic ideology, composers and scholars sought to rediscover their own heritage, and for many, the inherent national components of language were the most potent of agencies to enunciate a sense of cultural difference.

For Parry, this meant the assertion of English as a language to be *sung*. Hence, the generic title of *English Lyrics* symbolized more than purely the setting of English

poetry (although vital, of course, in itself): it was also an artistic manifesto and advocacy of the English tongue as a force for musical creativity, shaped by the language's inherent accent, syntax, scansion and assonance; features potentially generative of an English art, distinctive from those of the German lied and the French *mélodie*. What also gave life to the *English Lyrics* was the growing popularity of the song at chamber concerts in such places as London's Aeolian, Bechstein and Conway Halls, particularly after the 1890s when the Irish baritone Harry Plunket Greene did much to pioneer the solo song recital. Parry was close to Plunket Greene and wrote many of his songs with his voice in mind. It was a relationship later cemented by the marriage of Parry's daughter to Plunket Greene in 1899.

Besides being drawn to lyrical poetry of the Elizabethan and Jacobean eras and the classics of the 19th century, Parry was also attracted to poetry which struck a personal note for him. Often such poetry, even if it was not of the highest quality, would perhaps remind him of an individual, private experience, or of sentiments which he himself understood or felt profoundly such as lost love, loneliness and lack of sympathy from others, or the poet might be well known to him in some way where experiences might be mutually shared. Sets III-XII of his *English Lyrics* contain many settings of this kind and many of them are amongst the composer's finest (gainsaying the oft-quoted maxim that great songs are only possible with great poetry).

One of Parry's most famous songs was his only published setting of Christina Rossetti. Her poem 'A Birthday' first appeared in *Macmillan's Magazine* in 1861,

though Parry probably found it in its more popular source, *Goblin Market and Other Poems*, which appeared in 1862. Written and dedicated to the soprano Agnes Hamilton Harty (née Nicholls) and titled ‘**My heart is like a singing bird**’, it was conceived for her large, Wagnerian voice and the accompaniment for her brilliant husband-accompanist, Hamilton Harty. Although this highly effusive song was not included in their recital of Parry’s Set X on November 16, 1909, it was the one that Agnes Hamilton Harty chose categorically as the first of the set when asked about the final order by the composer. Another demonstrative song, ‘**When the Sun’s Great Orb**’ by Herbert Warner, was left in manuscript at Parry’s death in 1918. Written for Miss Alice Elleson (later to become Warner’s wife), the poem’s original title, ‘Resurrection’, alludes more directly to the end of the world when, at the trumpet’s blast, the dead will be raised up. Parry’s response, operatic and orchestral in conception, is thoroughly Wagnerian in its use of declamation and imagery.

It was almost certainly through Parry’s interaction with London’s literary and critical world that he became acquainted with Alfred Perceval Graves, poet, linguist and folklorist. Indeed, it may have been through his brother, Charles Larcom, an editor of *Punch* magazine and a well-known music critic (including the first biography of Parry in 1926), that they got to know each other. In addition to Graves’ work for *Punch*, the *Gentleman’s Magazine* and other periodicals, he was a prolific writer of verse, much of it for folk tunes such as Stanford’s *Songs of Old Ireland* (1882) and, in his capacity as a Schools Inspector, a role he held for much of his professional career, *The National Song Book* (1906) which he brought out with Stanford under the aegis of the Board of Education in 1908. This remained a standard text in the classroom for over 40 years.

Parry’s first settings of Graves, which were translations from the Greek, were ‘A Lover’s garland’ and ‘At the hour the long day ends’, both destined for Set VI of the *English Lyrics* published in 1903. Completed in February 1902, ‘**A Lover’s garland**’ is a gentle lyric in modified strophic form, simple in rhythm and transparently diatonic in its harmony to suit the weaving of Heliodora’s garland. ‘**At the hour the long day ends**’ encapsulates the thrill of being kissed (in this instance by Moeris) and the unhappiness of wondering whether it really happened, two experiences which Parry conveys in the two varied verses of his song.

Four other settings of Graves were left unpublished at Parry’s death but were chosen by the editors – Emily Daymond (Parry’s amanuensis), Charles Wood and Harry Plunket Greene – for the posthumously published Set XI. Two of the songs, ‘**The Spirit of the Spring**’ and ‘**The Blackbird**’ communicate the same message: one of a troubled subject whose sorrows are cured by nature. The latter of the two (which makes reference to the location of Graves’ family home in Taunton, Somerset) is especially fine in its use of buoyant melody. Much more personal, however, are ‘**The Faithful Lover**’ and ‘**She is my love beyond all thought**’ (which is prophetic of the later neo-baroque assimilation of Bach in Finzi’s music). Both songs disclose a sense of lost, even unrequited love, one which, as Parry’s son-in-law Arthur Ponsonby maintained, the composer felt keenly in his wife’s failure to return the same ardour for him (and his art) that he had retained for her since their youthful days of passion.

The poems of Julia Chatterton, now little known, were evidently appealing in the composer’s last years. Her poetry gave rise to three posthumously published

songs, the first of which, ‘**One golden thread**’ (Set XI), must rank among his shortest. A gentle, restrained aphorism of only 13 bars, the song speaks of “one gleam of boundless ecstasy” sent down from heaven: a moment of intense love perhaps, or a glimpse of intense truth Parry experienced in the process of creativity. Expressed in simple yet concise terms, this little through-composed gem encapsulates the genius of Parry’s art as a songwriter in its subtle use of form, key and tessitura. The slightly more expansive ‘**When the dew is falling**’, which heads Set XII, is equally tranquil in its easy lyricism, though behind the simplicity lurks a sense of uncertainty and loneliness (surely conveyed by the intrusive flattened seventh towards the end of each verse) which haunted him for much of his later life as his wife, Maude, became more distant.

‘**The sound of hidden music**’, possibly his last complete song, was signed on his 70th birthday, February 27, 1918. Thomas Chatterton’s poem must have touched Parry acutely, for he marked the song at the beginning “Slowly, with deep feeling”. Highly introspective, it imparts the pain and joy in old age of “friendship’s memory”, but it must have held an autobiographical significance for the composer too. According to Herbert Howells (Parry’s pupil at the Royal College of Music), Parry believed he would not live beyond 70, nor did he, for in September 1918 he developed blood-poisoning from a protuberant cyst and, together with the pandemic Spanish flu, he died on October 7 only weeks before the Armistice. Although this was not foreseen, Parry almost certainly believed that he had reached an important milestone in his life (something he had also attempted to express in his motet cycle *The Songs of Farewell*) and one that caused him to reflect on his past.

No less than nine poems of Julian Sturgis figure among the *English Lyrics*. Almost exactly the same age as Parry (they were both born in 1848), Sturgis was a close friend of Parry’s at Eton College in the first half of the 1860s and their friendship continued at Oxford University. Though a qualified barrister and a capable sportsman, Sturgis enjoyed above all the challenges of writing, and by dint of inherited wealth, which enabled him to build a large house, ‘Wancote’, at Compton in Surrey, he was able to pursue a life as a novelist and librettist until his death in 1904. He successfully produced libretti for Goring Thomas’s *Nadeshda* (1885), Sullivan’s *Ivanhoe* (1891) and Stanford’s *Much Ado About Nothing* (1901) and also tried his hand at poetry with *A Book of Song* in 1894. Parry clearly soon acquired a copy since the first of his settings of Sturgis, ‘**Through the Ivory Gate**’, appeared in Set III of *English Lyrics* in 1895. A dialogue between voice and piano in the form a miniature scena, this song is among Parry’s most original. Friendship, once again, lies at the heart of the poem, though here it is about young death and the visitation in a dream of that young deceased friend. Much of the song is defined by declamation on the part of the singer, and by lyrical reflection from the accompanist, though at the climax both performers engage in a duet of expressive rapture (“Then answer had I made, But that the rapture deep did hold me”) whose spell is broken only by awakening and the coming of morning.

Parry continued to dip into Sturgis’ *A Book of Song* as the years passed. For Set V, published in 1902, he produced two more settings. Heading the set was ‘**A stray nymph of Dian**’, a charming little narrative in which Dian, the virgin huntress, is overcome by passion as she kisses a sleeping boy and can hunt no more. The second, ‘**A girl to her glass**’, is a delightfully light, flirtatious caprice. ‘**Sleep**’,

published in Set VII of 1907, may well have been intended as a tribute to his old, now deceased friend. Somewhat Brahmsian in its drowsy figurations and unexpected harmonic turns, this song conceals an inner agitation calmed only by a return to the song's lullaby character ("To kiss the feet of sleep").

Set VIII, which also appeared in 1907, contained three further settings: '**Whence**' embodies a prophetic vision of freedom; '**Looking backward**' imparts a heartbreaking sense of lost love, Parry's own perhaps; while '**Grapes**' luxuriates in an excess of the Bacchian fruit. A single setting of Sturgis appeared in Set X. In '**A moment of farewell**', Parry attempts to capture for one moment the thrill of a bird's flight to the ocean in a lengthy self-developing, athletic melody, one which would have suited Nicholls' substantial vocal capacity. '**If I might ride on puissant wing**' may also have been intended for Set X for it was revised in October 1909 before Nicholls' recital. However, it was probably rejected given the presence of two other songs with a similar theme. Left unpublished at his death, it was included in Set XI. An exquisite through-composed 'intermezzo' of 34 bars, the intensity of this love song can be measured by the climax in distant C sharp minor (having embarked from G major) and the effortless recovery to the tonic.

Sturgis was born in America but took British citizenship in 1877. Other American authors held a fascination for Parry such as Walt Whitman, though he never chose to set his words. However, in Set IV of the *English Lyrics* (1896) he included a setting of Ralph Waldo Emerson's *Poems* of 1847. Typically transcendentalist in spirit, '**Thine eyes still shined for me**', dedicated to his elder daughter, Dorothea

('Dolly'), links the soul to nature. Parry's emotional response to the words can be summarised by the somewhat melancholy tangential progressions of the postlude which are repeated with even greater pathos at the close. The verse of one other American author, Langdon Elwyn Mitchell (the pseudonym of John Philip Varley), evidently expressed ideas which were personal to Parry. After the publication of Mitchell's *Poems* in 1894, Parry set '**When lovers meet again**', a cheerful, uncomplicated effusion. By contrast, '**Nightfall in Winter**' of Set VIII, an evocation of a winter's evening, is a darker, atmospheric song in which Parry's accompaniment is uncharacteristically austere in texture.

Two further settings appeared in Set X. In emulation of a fairy tale, the impish '**The child and the twilight**' conveys the menace (emanating from a sinister "little man in gray") of being lost in a dark forest, only to be rescued by a benign "man in green". This is followed in the set by '**From a city window**', arguably one of Parry's very finest songs. Tonally equivocal in its fluctuation between D major and B minor, the song's theme is one of profound urban loneliness. Nocturnal birdsong revives memories of past happiness, pressed home by harmonies redolent of Hugo Wolf, but the most moving part of the song is in the reprise of the opening material. Here, as the onlooker's isolation intensifies, Parry's reworking of the music is magnificently handled in a climax (using Neapolitan harmony) on a high G for the singer ("Like a great *tide* ebbs and flows"), clearly intended to show off the capacious volume of Nicholls' voice and the brilliance of Harty's accompanimental skills.

1 XI. 1 My heart is like a singing bird

My heart is like a singing bird
Whose nest is in a water'd shoot;
My heart is like an apple tree
Whose boughs are bent with thickset fruit;
My heart is like a rainbow shell
That paddles in a halcyon sea;
My heart is gladder than all these
Because my love is come to me.

Raise me a dais of silk and down;
Hang it with vair* and purple dyes;
Carve it in doves and pomegranates,
And peacocks with a hundred eyes;
Work it in gold and silver grapes,
In leaves and silver fleurs-de-lys;
Because the birthday of my life
Is come, my love is come to me.

**Fur obtained from red squirrels*
Christina Rossetti (1830-94)

2 XI. 4 The Blackbird

As I went up a woodland walk
In Taunton Dene, when May was green,
I heard a bird so blithely talk,
The trembling sprays between,
That I stood still
With right goodwill
To know what he might mean.

No yellow horned honeysuckle
Hath e'er distilled the sweets he spilled
In one long dulcet dewy chuckle
That blackbird golden billed;
Aye piping plain,
"Hope, hope again!"
Till my heart's grief was stilled.

Alfred Perceval Graves (1846-1931)

3 XI. 6 If I might ride on puissant wing

If I might ride on puissant wing
The realms of air,
What joy were in the journeying,
Wert thou not there?

From star to little star I'd go
To seek for thee,
Till e'en the clouds that hold the snow
Would weep for me.

Julian Sturgis (1848-1904)

4 X. 3 A moment of farewell

O bird flying far to the ocean,
O bird flying far to the sea,
I ask for one buoyant emotion,
One thrill of thy rapture for me.

In the height of the heights were it given,
For a moment to hang like star,
To see and to know as in heav'n,
With sorrow and trouble afar!

To pause in the fullness of being,
On wings that are spread for my flight
To see without trouble of seeing,
And hie me away into night!

Julian Sturgis

5 XII. 7 The sound of hidden music

The sound of hidden music,
Soft and sad, and sweet.
The echo of departing steps
Along the silent street.
The message of a lovely voice
In rapture's melody.
Ah! The things of life that touch the heart
Are those we cannot see.

The whistle of the rude March wind,
Bleak, uncouth, and cold.
The whisper of the tired leaves
When summer groweth old.
The crunch of feet on Christmas snow,
They speak unceasingly,
And forge the links that bind the chain
Of friendship's memory.

Julia Chatterton

6 III. 5 Through the Ivory Gate

I had a dream last night,
Dream of a friend that is dead.
He came with dawn's first light
And stood beside my bed:
And as he there did stand,
With gesture fine and fair,
He passed a wan white hand
Over my tumbled hair,
Saying: "No friendship dieth
With death of any day,
No true friendship lieth
Cold with lifeless clay.

"Though our boyhood's playtime,
Be gone with summer's breath,
No friendship fades with Maytime
No friendship dies with death".
Then answer had I made
But that the rapture deep
Did hold me, half afraid
To mar that rose of sleep
So with closed eyes I lay,
Lord of the vision fair;
And when 'twas perfect day
Only the day was there.

Julian Sturgis

7 VIII. 2 Nightfall in Winter

Cold is the air,
The woods are bare
And brown; the herd
Stand in the yard.
The frost doth fall;
And round the hill
The hares move slow;
The homeward crow,
Alone and high,
Crosses the sky
All silently.

The quick streams freeze;
The moving trees
Are still; for now
No breeze will blow:
The wind has gone
With the day, down,
And clouds are come
Bearing the gloom.
The yellow grass
In the clear glass
Of the bright pool
Grows soft and dull.

The water's eye
That held the sky
Now glazes quite;
And now the light
On the cold hill
Fadeth, until
The giant mass
Doth seem to pass
From near to far;
The clouds obscure
The sky with gloom:
The night is come,
The night is come.

Langdon Elwyn Mitchell (1862-1935)

8 VII. 6 Sleep

Beautiful up from the deeps of the solemn sea
Cometh sweet Sleep to me,
From silent cool green deeps,
Where no one wakes and weeps,
Cometh, as one who dreameth,
With slowly waving hands,
And the sound of her garment seemeth
Like waves on the level sands;

So cometh Sleep.
There is rest for all mankind,
When her slow wings stir the wind;
With lullaby the drowsy waters creep
To kiss the feet of Sleep.

Julian Sturgis

9 XII. 1 When the dew is falling

When the dew is falling,
And the lights are low,
I can hear you calling
From the long ago.
Then my heart awakens
From its slumberland;
Silently I answer,
I know you understand.

When the morn is breaking
On the purple hills,
I, my grief forsaking,
Feel sweet memory's thrills.
I can see your shadow
Hovering near mine,
I can hear you breathing
Words of love divine.

Julia Chatterton

10 IV. 1 Thine eyes still shined for me

Thine eyes still shined for me, though far
I lonely roved the land or sea:
As I behold yon evening star,
Which yet beholds not me.

This morn I climbed the misty hill
And roamed the pastures through;
How danced thy form before my path
Amidst the deep-eyed dew!

When the redbird spread his sable wing,
And showed his side of flame;
When the rosebud ripened to the rose,
In both I read thy name.

Ralph Waldo Emerson (1803-82)

11 IV. 2 When lovers meet again

When lovers meet again,
Then obscure ways grow plain,
Then crooked paths are straight
And the rough places smooth,
Then weariness and weight
Have wings as wide as love.
For night is as the day;
Love smiles love's tears away
And all hard paths are smooth,
When lovers meet again.

When lovers kiss again
The dry bough blossoms then;
Then rolls away the stone;
Earth's bitterness is balm;
Light through the night is blown;
Peace rocks the world in calm;
And the ebbing tide is full:
For two souls are one soul,
And obscure ways grow plain,
When lovers meet again.

Langdon Elwyn Mitchell (1852-1935)

12 VI. 4 A Lover's Garland

I'm weaving sweet violets, sweet white violets,
Frail narcissus bedropt with dew,
And bright white buds of the glossy myrtle
And laughing lilies I'm weaving too.

I'm weaving the crocus, the yellow crocus,
I'm weaving the crimson hyacinth now;
And, last of my posies, the lover's roses
I'm weaving for Heliodora's brow.

Soon on her scented locks they shall settle,
Flash and flutter and fall away;
Blossom by blossom, petal by petal,
Into her bosom, O happy they!

Alfred Perceval Graves (from the Greek)

13 XI. 5 The Faithful Lover

She hath grown cold, whose kindness won me to her,
Wherefore is this?

Wishing them more, I find her favours fewer.
What is amiss?

If, when she liked, to love my friendship flowered,
With too fond haste,
Say why should hers, to scorn injurious soured,
As sudden waste?

Shall I complain? O, no! true love complains not,
Being denied.

Shall I disdain? O, no! true love disdains not,
Only false pride.

Shall I less love her for her heart's denial?
Nay, year by year,
Since she is worthy, thou shalt find thy trial
Daily more dear;

Till, it may be, the faithful spirit in thee,
Fresh from love's fast,
Out of her eyes his look of looks shall win thee,
Lover, at last.

Alfred Perceval Graves

14 V. 1 A stray nymph of Dian

I went a-hunting with Queen Dian's maids;
Our sandals, bright with dew,
Swept through the grass, and down the list'ning glades
Our hounds beside us flew,
On swept the chase, but I stood gazing there
Poor wounded doe beside a thorn-tree fair.

For there, with fallen blossoms on his head,
I spied the sleeping boy.
The chase had left me breath, but now it fled,
For pain of too great joy,
I panted so, the throng; that crossed my breast
And held my quiver, hurt me where it pressed.

I could not tell if he did smile or frown
For shadow's fickle play
On brow and cheek, and on his lip like down
A loving shadow lay.
And there I set my lips
Ah, joy and woe!

For now no more a hunting may I go,
No more a hunting may I go.

Julian Sturgis

15 V. 6 A girl to her glass

Little face so near, so near,
Laughing lips and eyes that shine,
Can it be, my dearest dear,
All those pretty looks are mine?

Laughing eyes, be not too bold,
If a man shall praise your blue;
Men have said, as I've been told,
Many a thing that was not true.

When the sky is clear above,
And the earth is green below,
Better laughter is than love.
Love may come or love may go.

Little lambs are in the grass,
Little fleeces in the sky;
Ev'rything, where Spring doth pass,
Pretty is and so am I!

Julian Sturgis

16 XII. 4 When the Sun's Great Orb

When the sun's great orb
Shall refuse its heat and light to our poor world,
When the seas have turned to briny ice,
And everything,
Both beast and human,
Shall have perished
With the birds and flowers,
Then will the mighty thunders clash
In deaf'ning harmony
With earthquake's awful roar:
But far beyond the din
Of all hell's fury,
The trumpet's blast resounds
In clear and resonant tones,
The reveille for the resurrection of the dead.

Herbert Warner

17 XI. 1 One golden thread

One golden thread, unbroken
By the rust of gathering years;
One lovely theme unspoken,
Yet thought and felt in tears;

One message half awakened,
In mystic sweetness given,
One gleam of boundless ecstasy
Sent down to man from Heaven.

Julia Chatterton

18 VIII. 1 Whence

Will he come to us out of the west
With hair all blowing free?
Will he come, the last and best,
Over the flowing sea,
Prophet of days to be?

Aye, he will come; the unseen choir
Attend his steps with song,
And on his breast a deep-toned lyre,
And on his lips a word like fire
To burn the ancient wrong.

Bay crowned and goodlier than a king,
With voice both strong and sweet
The song of freedom he will sing
And I from out the crowd shall fling
My rose-wreath at his feet.

Julian Sturgis

19 VI. 5 At the hour the long day ends

At the hour the long day ends,
When our friends we wish good night,
Moeris kissed me, if ah me!
It was she or but her sprite.

For most clearly all the rest
Thrills my heart, through and through.
All she told me and besought,
When thought she kissed me too!

Yet, when golden link on link,
I would think remembrance out;
Now I trust she kissed me then,
Now again I am in doubt.

Since if into Paradise
In such wise I have been borne,
How is this that here below
Still I go with steps forlorn.

Alfred Perceval Graves

20 VIII. 5 Looking backward

O my child love, my love of long ago,
How great was life when thou and I were young!
The world was boundless,
For we did not know;
And life a poem,
For we had not sung.

Now is the world grown small, and we thereon
Fill with mean care and toil each narrow day;
Elves from the wood,
Dreams from my heart are gone,
And heaven is bare, for God is far away.

Canst thou not come and touch my hand again,
And I look on thee with grave innocent eyes?
Thy God has many angels;
I would fain Woo for one hour
One angel from the skies

O my child love, come back, come back to me,
And laughing, lead me from the toil and din!
Lay on my heart those small hands tenderly
And let the whole world in.

Julian Sturgis

21 XI. 8 She is my love beyond all thought

She is my love beyond all thought,
Though she has wrought my deepest dole;
Yet dearer for the cruel pain
Than one who fain would make me whole.

She is my glittering gem of gems,
Who yet contemns my fortune bright;
Whose cheek but glows with redder scorn
Since mine has worn a stricken white.

She is my sun and moon and star,
Who yet so far and cold doth keep,
She would not even o'er my bier
One tender tear of pity weep.

Into my heart unsought she came,
A wasting flame, a haunting care;
Into my heart of hearts, ah! Why?
And left a sigh forever there.

Alfred Perceval Graves

22 X. 5 From a city window

I hear the feet below
In the dark street;
They hurry and shuffle by,
And go, on errands bitter or sweet
Whither I cannot know.
A bird troubles the night
From the green plane
And in my breast again
Vague memories of delight
Arise from the spirit's night,
And pass into it again.
And the hurrying, restless feet below
On errands I cannot know
Like a great tide ebb and flow.

Langdon Elwyn Mitchell

23 XI. 3 The Spirit of the Spring

As I went down to Taunton town,
Pondering thoughts of pain,
The very spirit of the Spring
Came glancing up the lane.

Violet eyes soft and wise,
A mien of matchless grace,
Fluttering feet that skimmed the street
Like swallows in the chase.

Upon her arm of moulded charm
A maund* of nodding flowers,
A radiant crew, all drenched with dew
From Quantock's breezy bowers.

Primroses, violets,
Into my heart they shone;
Till in their gleam of golden joy
All my grief was gone.

**A varying unit of weight*

Alfred Perceval Graves

24 X. 4 The child and the twilight

I walked into a little wood,
And there upon my way,
I met a little, little man,
A little man in grey.

I spoke to him: "Good day! Good day!"
He would not answer me;
He wore a cloak of silver braid,
As grey as grey could be.

And on the ground his cloak he spread,
He hung it on the tree;
And here and there, till all the air,
Was grey as grey could be.

"Where is the path in this dark wood?
I cannot find my way!"
Never a word said the little man,
The little man in grey.

"A light green wood!
Lend me a light, that I may look, and see!"
So quickly then a man in green
Stepped from behind a tree.

A lantern in his hand he had,
And not a word said he,
But he ran before to the green wood's door,
And opened it wide for me.

Oh little man, whoever you be
That wore the mantle grey,
The man in green has come to me,
And I'm out of your wood and away!

Langdon Elwyn Mitchell

25 VIII. 6 Grapes

Come, boy Bacchus, a bunch of grapes,
The bunch you dearest treasure!
'Twill fill my soul with exquisite shapes,
For well I know the pleasure
Of a rich, ripe grape slow pressed in the mouth
Bringing me dreams of the lusty South,
Of sun-brown youth
And sun-bright maiden
And all a-laughing,
And all a-laden with grapes, grapes, grapes, grapes,
beyond all measure!
And all a-laughing
And all a-laden
with grapes, grapes, grapes,
beyond all measure.

Julian Sturgis

SARAH FOX was educated at Giggleswick School, London University and the Royal College of Music. A former winner of the Kathleen Ferrier and John Christie awards, she is also an Honorary Fellow of Royal Holloway College, London University.

Roles at the Royal Opera House, Covent Garden have included Micaela (*Carmen*), Asteria (*Tamerlano*), Zerlina (*Don Giovanni*) and Woglinde (*Der Ring des Nibelungen*). Other highlights have included Susanna (*Le nozze di Figaro*) for Glyndebourne and the Royal Danish Opera, and Mimì (*La bohème*) for Opera North. Additional roles include Ellen Orford (*Peter Grimes*), the title role in *Servilia*, and Ilia (*Idomeneo*).

Her concert career has encompassed engagements in Denver, Minneapolis, New York, San Francisco, Tel Aviv and Tokyo as well as tours throughout the UK and Europe. She has worked with many of the world's leading orchestras including the Berlin Philharmonic, Colorado Symphony, Oslo Philharmonic and the Hallé. She has appeared several times at the BBC Proms, the Edinburgh Festival and the Three Choirs Festival, and is a regular guest with the Classical Opera Company



Photograph: Grahame Mellanby

and at London's Wigmore Hall. She performs frequently with John Wilson and his Orchestra; she is a regular guest on BBC Radio 2's *Friday Night is Music Night*, and has performed concerts with Rufus Wainwright in Europe and Hong Kong.

Her discography includes *Aminta (Il re pastore)*, Poulenc Songs, The Cole Porter Songbook and two recordings of Mahler's Symphony No. 4 with the Philharmonia Orchestra – conducted by Charles Mackerras and Lorin Maazel – for Signum Classics, *That's Entertainment* (John Wilson Orchestra) for EMI Classics and Mozart's Requiem with the London Mozart Players/Malcolm Archer for Convivium Records.

RODERICK WILLIAMS encompasses 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 roles in *Eugene Onegin* for Garsington Opera and *Billy*



Photograph: Benjamin Ealovega

Budd with Opera North, as well as Papageno (*Die Zauberflöte*) for the Royal Opera House, Covent Garden and productions with Dallas Opera and English National Opera.

He sings regularly with all the BBC orchestras and all the major UK orchestras, as well as the Berlin 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 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.

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 best choral composition prize in 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.

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.

ANDREW WEST appears regularly with many of Britain's leading singers, including Robert Murray, Christopher Purves, Hilary Summers and Mark Padmore, with whom he has performed throughout Europe, in New York and Washington DC (where they gave the opening recital in the 2016 concert series at the Library of Congress). In 2013, they gave the world premiere of Harrison Birtwistle's *Songs from the Same Earth* at the Aldeburgh Festival, and have since performed it at London's Wigmore Hall, the Amsterdam Concertgebouw and Cologne Philharmonie.



Concerts with Roderick Williams include Schubert's *Winterreise* at the Australian Festival of Chamber Music, and settings of poems by William Blake at the Pushkin Museum, Moscow.

He is Artistic Director of the Nuremberg Chamber Music Festival (now in its 17th year) and has a longstanding collaboration with flautist Emily Beynon, with whom he has recorded for Hyperion, and appeared at the BBC Chamber Music Proms, Edinburgh International Festival and Amsterdam Concertgebouw.

He was closely involved with the Michael Clark Dance Company's Stravinsky Project, performing the two-piano version of *The Rite of Spring* with Philip Moore in London, Seoul and New York.

He has recorded Strauss Lieder with Emma Bell (Linn); Schubert's *Die schöne Müllerin* with Robert Murray (Stone Records) and Stephen McNeff's *Madrigali dell'Estate* with Clare McCaldin (Champs Hill Records).

Andrew West read English at Clare College, Cambridge before studying with Christopher Elton and John Streets at the Royal Academy of Music. Second prize-winner at the 1990 Geneva International Piano Competition, he went on to give solo tours of South Africa, South America and the United States. He received the inaugural Gerald Moore Award for accompanists in 1992.

Currently Professor of Piano Accompaniment and Piano Ensemble at the RAM, he also teaches song repertoire at the Guildhall School of Music and Drama.



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