



BETH TAYLOR AND MALCOLM MARTINEAU

MEZZO-SOPRANO AND PIANO

Tuesday 16 July **11:15am – 12:15pm**

St John's Church

Glaswegian mezzo-soprano **Beth Taylor**, lauded for her 'warm, caressing timbre' and 'sensational coloratura' has already made debuts across Europe and the UK and is an active arts accessibility advocate. She was a finalist at the 2023 BBC Cardiff Singer of the World competition and winner of the 2022 Elizabeth Connell Prize.

Recognised as one of the leading accompanists of his generation, **Malcolm Martineau** has performed with many of the world's greatest singers including Sir Thomas Allen, Dame Janet Baker, Dame Felicity Lott, Anna Netrebko, Anne Sofie von Otter, Bryn Terfel and Christopher Maltman. He read Music at St Catharine's College, Cambridge and studied at the Royal College of Music. He was given an honorary doctorate at the Royal Scottish Academy of Music and Drama in 2004, and appointed International Fellow of Accompaniment in 2009.

Lord, what is Man? (A Divine Hymn), Z192

Henry Purcell (1659-1695) realised by Benjamin Britten (1913-1976)
Britten's admiration for Purcell was one of the most potent influences on his own work. This is one of several songs by Purcell of which he made versions for voice and piano, based on Purcell's original instrumental parts.

Trois Chansons de la petite Sirène (Three songs from The Little Mermaid)

1. *Chansons de la Sirène (The Mermaid's songs)*; 2. *Berceuse de la Sirène (The Mermaid's lullaby)*; 3. *Chanson de la Poire (Song of the pear)*

Arthur Honegger (1892-1955)

Honegger was one of the group of French composers known as 'Les Six'. These three miniatures were written in 1926 for a puppet-theatre version of Hans Christian Andersen's story *The Little Mermaid*.

Le Plus Beau Présent (The loveliest present)

Reynaldo Hahn (1874-1947)

Venezuelan-born and Paris-based, Hahn was a fine singer himself, and vocal music dominates his output. Here, the poet thanks his lover for giving so many gifts, except for that one word which would have made all the difference.

Himmel und Erde (Heaven and earth), Op. 96 No. 5

Robert Schumann (1810-1856)

In the last song from Robert Schumann's fourth volume of *Lieder und Gesänge*, the poet meditates on how trees and mountains rising towards the sky show the union of Heaven and Mother Earth.

Drei Gedichte von Monique Thoné (Three poems by Monique Thoné)

1. *Vielleicht Kommt... (Perhaps someone will come...)*; 2. *Es ist unerträglich (It is unbearable)*; 3. *Ich bleibe allein (I remain alone)*
Wolfgang Rihm (b. 1952)

One of Germany's leading contemporary composers, Wolfgang Rihm has written a large number of songs. These three epigrammatic songs question, in their concentrated way, the meaning of existence.

Vocalise-étude pour voix élevées (Vocalise-study for high voices)

Germaine Tailleferre (1892-1983)

Like Honegger, Tailleferre was a member of Les Six. Vocalises are wordless songs, usually written as vocal exercises for singing students.

Dans la Nuit (In the night)

Reynaldo Hahn

Hahn composed his song-cycle *Les Feuilles Blessées* (The wounded leaves) between 1901 and 1906. In 'Dans la nuit', the poet speculates on a union between himself and the sea.

Lied eines Schiffers an die Dioskuren (A Boatman's Song to the Dioskuri), D360

Franz Schubert (1797-1828)

The *Dioskuri* – the twins Castor and Pollux of classical mythology – were regarded as the patrons of sailors. Schubert's setting of the poem by his friend Johann Mayrhofer has something of a hymn-like quality.

King David

Herbert Howells (1892-1983)

This sets a poem by Howells' favourite poet, Walter de la Mare (1873-1956), describing King David's melancholy, which is relieved by a nightingale's singing after a hundred harps have failed.

Creation, Op. 24, No. 8

Gustav Holst (1874-1934)

Holst's interest in Sanskrit literature led him to learn the language, in order to make his own translations for setting to music. His *Nine Hymns from the Rig Veda* (a Hindu sacred text) date from 1907-8.

Molitva (Prayer); The Soul Flew Quietly through the Celestial Skies

Modest Mussorgsky (1839-1881)

In his vocal music, Mussorgsky aimed to follow natural speech-rhythms as closely as possible. 'Molitva' sets a prayer for companionship by poet and dramatist Mikhail Lermontov. In 'The soul flew...', (text by Aleksei Tolstoy), the soul begs to return to earth to comfort those who are suffering.

I wha' aince in Heaven's Heicht (I, who once, in Heaven's height...)

Francis George Scott (1880-1958)

Scott was strongly influenced by Scottish speech rhythms, folk poetry and folk music. This song of spiritual disillusion is one of his many settings of words by leading Scottish poet Hugh MacDiarmid.

Nachtlied (Night song) Op. 96 No. 1

Robert Schumann (1810-1856)

From the same volume as 'Himmel und Erde', this sets a text by Goethe (also set by Schubert), promising a weary traveller that they they will share the peace now lying over the mountains and trees.

Trois Chansons de Jean Tardieu (Three Songs by Jean Tardieu), Op. 184

1. *Récatonpilu*; 2. *Petite Flamme (Little flame)*; 3. *L'Éternel Enfant (The eternal child)*

Germaine Tailleferre (1892-1983)

Composed in 1982 and 1983, these are the only songs Tailleferre completed from a projected set of twelve, originally for children's voices and piano, setting texts by French poet Jean Tardieu.

Lied Maritime (Sea song), Op. 43

Vincent D'Indy (1851-1931)

Vincent d'Indy was a more influential figure in French music than his current reputation might suggest. 'Lied Maritime', to his own words, is both a seascape, with a sunset and a brewing storm, and a love song.

'Sweet Little Red Feet' from *The Voice of Desire*

Dame Judith Weir (b. 1954)

The Voice of Desire was commissioned by the BBC for the 2003 Proms, for mezzo-soprano Alice Cootte, who gave the first performance with Julius Drake. With words by John Keats, this is the last of the four songs, all of which explore relationships between humans and birds.

'Annie Laurie'

Traditional, attributed to Alicia Ann Spottiswoode (1810-1900), arr. Liza Lehmann (1862-1918)

'Annie Laurie' has a complex history. The words are believed to date from the late 17th century, and to be, at least partly, by a soldier, William Douglas, about his affair with Annie, whose father opposed their relationship. Alicia Scott, née Spottiswoode, claimed to have written the tune in about 1834.