

KATHRYN STOTT

PIANO

 **Tuesday 16 July**  **3pm – 5pm**
 **St John's Church**

At the age of five I made friends with the upright piano in our living room. That was the beginning of my musical journey, one which continues today. Studies at the Yehudi Menuhin School and the Royal College of Music led me abruptly into the life of a professional musician via the Leeds International Piano Competition and onto a steep learning curve. After a rollercoaster three years, I realised that I needed to re-connect with chamber music in a bid to feel more connected to other musicians and when, quite by chance, I met Yo-Yo Ma in 1978, it turned out to be one of the most fortuitous moments of my life and led to a long-standing collaboration. There are too many highlights in my career to mention. Yes, it was a thrill to perform at the Last Night of the Proms, but equally a massive thrill to have lit up twenty small faces in an inner city school while they jumped up and down to energetic piano music! Working with young musicians is something I feel passionate about and I've also had some truly exciting music written for me by composers. What an unbelievable privilege it is to be immersed in a language which has no boundaries and has allowed me to share musical stories on a global scale; that little upright piano set me on quite a path!

Kathryn Stott

Prelude and Fugue No. 1 in C BWV 846

Johann Sebastian Bach (1685-1750)

Bach's two collections of keyboard preludes and fugues, *The Well-Tempered Clavier*, have long been revered as among his very greatest creations. Book 1 opens with probably the best-known Prelude of them all, followed by a sturdy four-part fugue.

Thème et Variations

Lili Boulanger (1893-1918)

Subtitled 'Morceau de piano' (Piano piece), this was written between 1911 and 1914. The theme, played unharmonised at the start, is followed by eight variations, mostly sombre in mood, though Boulanger lightens the textures and colours from time to time. For more on Lili Boulanger, see Fenella Humphreys and Martin Roscoe, 7 July.

Barcarolle No. 4 in A flat Op. 44

Gabriel Fauré (1845-1924)

'Barcarolle' is the name given to songs or instrumental pieces evoking Venetian gondoliers' songs and, by extension, suggesting water imagery in general. Fauré composed his thirteen Barcarolles between about 1881 and 1921; No. 4 dates from 1886. The subtlety with which Fauré transcends the genre's potential clichés – the theme's swaying rhythms, the rippling accompaniment figures – mark him out as a composer who takes nothing for granted.

Jeux d'eau (Fountains)

Maurice Ravel (1875-1937)

Written in 1901, *Jeux d'eau* was Ravel's first fully mature masterpiece. The music's sensuous delight in colour, light, movement and physical sensations conveyed as a result is neatly summed up by the quotation Ravel placed at the head of the score, from a poem by his friend Henri Régnier: 'The river god laughing as the water tickles him.'

Wedding Day at Troldhaugen, Op. 65, No. 6

Edvard Grieg (1843-1907)

Grieg composed this, from Book 8 of his *Lyric Pieces*, as a present to his wife, Nina, on their 25th wedding anniversary in June 1892. Troldhaugen (literally, 'The Troll-hill') is the name of their house just outside Bergen. The music includes suggestions of traditional Hardanger fiddle music, and the sound of distant bells, before the emphatic last chord.

Milonga del Ángel (The angel's milonga)

Astor Piazzolla (1921-1992), transcribed by Kyoko Yamamoto

As both composer and band-leader, Piazzolla was not well received in



Argentina at first, but eventually he became recognised as having halted tango's decline in popularity and cultural significance. Milonga is an early form of tango whose roots are variously claimed to be African, Spanish and/or Cuban. *Milonga del Ángel* is both a stand-alone piece and part of a series of works with 'Ángel' in the title.

Prelude and Fugue in D minor, Op. 87, No. 24

Dmitri Shostakovich (1906-1975)

Shostakovich composed his 24 Preludes and Fugues, Op. 87 in 1950, after being deeply impressed by hearing pianist Tatyana Nikolayeva play JS Bach's *The Well-tempered Clavier*. The cycle culminates in one of the longest pairings of Prelude and Fugue. The Prelude, with its stern rugged opening, is followed by the Fugue's quiet, thoughtful beginning, building to a powerful conclusion.

Scent

Graham Fitkin (born 1963)

Cornwall-born Graham Fitkin studied with Nigel Osborne at Nottingham University and Louis Andriessen at the Royal Conservatory in The Hague. Strongly influenced by the European version of minimalism represented by Andriessen and others, he first made his name with a number of works for multiple pianos, working particularly with the sextet Piano Circus. *Scent*, originally for solo harp, was written in 2007.

My Favourite Things

Richard Rodgers (1902-1979), arr. Stephen Hough

Stephen Hough is not only one of today's leading pianists; he is also a prolific composer and arranger. 'My favourite things', from *The Sound of Music*, is one of a set of four Rodgers and Hammerstein transcriptions published in 2003.

Gustave Le Gray

Caroline Shaw (born 1982)

This takes as its starting-point Chopin's haunting – 'exquisite', in Shaw's description – Mazurka in A minor, Op. 17 No. 4, which emerges in the middle section of Shaw's piece. Gustave le Gray (1820-1884) was a leading French painter, sculptor and photographer. The interaction between Shaw's music and Chopin's reflects Le Gray's innovative technique of layering more than one photographic negative when making prints. For more on Caroline Shaw, see Voces8, 11 July.

Mazurka in A minor, Op. 17 No. 4

Frédéric Chopin (1810-1847)

The mazurka is a traditional Polish dance which takes its name from the Mazovia region of central Poland, where Chopin grew up. Op. 17 No. 4, unlike his livelier mazurkas, is hauntingly withdrawn and poignant, with a somewhat less introverted, major-key middle section.

Molly on the Shore

Percy Grainger (1882-1961)

Australia-born Percy Grainger became involved in the English folk song revival of the early twentieth century after meeting the researcher Lucy Broadwood in 1905. *Molly on the Shore* is based, not on tunes he collected himself, but on two Irish reels from Cork, 'Molly on the Shore' and 'Temple Hill', from a published collection edited by Sir Charles Stanford.

Short Story, from The Anna Landa Preludes

Carl Vine (born 1954)

From one Australian composer to another. Born in Perth, Vine is one of the country's leading contemporary composers. 'Short Story' is the first of his twelve *Anna Landa Preludes*, written in 2006. as a salute to an eminent piano teacher who, in Vine's words, 'made an extraordinary and sustained contribution to the encouragement of young pianists in Australia.'

Rapid Unscheduled Disassembly

Graham Fitkin

This is Graham Fitkin's latest composition for Kathryn Stott. She gave the first performance in the Britten Studio, Snape Maltings, Suffolk, on 21 June, at the start of her current, and final, tour.