

Saturday 18 March 2023
West Road Concert Hall, Cambridge

Les Illuminations

Cambridge Philharmonic Orchestra and Chorus

Tom Primrose *conductor*

Ellie Laugharne *soprano*

Nicholas Mulroy *tenor*



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Cambridge Philharmonic presents

Boulanger

Vieille prière bouddhique

Ravel

Pavane pour une infante défunte

Armstrong

The alchemical kitchen (premiere)*

Britten

Les illuminations

Interval

Ravel

Ma mère l'oye suite

Poulenc

Gloria

Cambridge Philharmonic Orchestra and Chorus

Tom Primrose: Conductor

Freya Goldmark: Guest Leader

Ellie Laugharne: Soprano

Nicholas Mulroy: Tenor

**The alchemical kitchen* was co-commissioned by
Cambridge Philharmonic and Timothy Redmond

Mostly French, suffused with light and shade – and a kitchen!

J'ai seul la clef de cette parade sauvage! declaims the poet Rimbaud in his almost phantasmagoric collection of writings that feature in our programme tonight. But we also have a chopped cabbage, glimmers and illuminations, empresses being serenaded in a bath, a dead princess (except she isn't), a prayer for the universe and a great big *Gloria*. All human (human?) life is here!

There are connections too. The French composer Poulenc was taught by Ricardo Viñes, Maurice Ravel's good friend. His double piano concerto was premiered with his good friend Benjamin Britten at one of the pianos. Poulenc was taught by Gabriel Fauré, a family friend of the Boulangers and the man who first recognised Lilli's extraordinary musical gifts. Lucy Armstrong? Well she must speak for herself – as her music most emphatically does – but her *Alchemical kitchen*, referencing a poem by Rebecca Hurst, fits right into this evening of ravishing music, subtle orchestration and great entertainment. And so, as you make your own musical connections in the gorgeous variety of tonight's programme it will be you who has the key to this wild parade!

Programme notes by Jeremy Harmer except where otherwise stated.

Vieille prière bouddhique

Lilli Boulanger(1893-1918)

Any young life cut short has a special sadness attached to it and nowhere more so than for the child prodigy Lilli Boulanger, younger sister of the composer and composition teacher Nadia Boulanger. It's not that we should be surprised by young talent since it is so evident all around us if we just observe and listen. But Boulanger's claims to stand out even from a crowded field of juvenile specialness is exemplified by the facts of her brief life. A family friend, Gabriel Fauré, claimed she had perfect pitch at the age of only two. At five years old she went with ten-year-old Nadia to attend classes at the Paris Conservatoire with Louis Vierne. She sang and played



violin, cello, harp and piano and in 1913 at the age of nineteen she became the first female to win the Prix de Rome with her cantata *Faust et Hélène*. What did Ravel (see above) make of that, one wonders!

Lilli always had to depend on others, mostly because of her continuing ill health. After the death of her father in 1900, her mother seems to have encouraged Nadia to look after her little sister, not yet sure what she wanted to do. But at age sixteen she announced that she would win the Prix de Rome and, according to her biographer Léonie Rosenstiel, this decision “provided Lilli with the means to decide her own future as much as possible, and to show her family, and above all herself, that she was capable of being considered a contributing member of the artistic and intellectual community in which she lived.”

Lilli loved to travel and spent time in Italy, where she worked on composition after winning the Prix de Rome. But, as her internal tuberculosis (or possibly Crohn’s disease?) worsened, she was forced to return home, where she died at the age of twenty four.

Boulanger started work on her *Prière Bouddhique* in Rome in 1914. As the name suggests it is a setting of an old Buddhist prayer, introduced to her by her friend Suzanne Karpelès who was studying at the Sorbonne and who translated the prayer from Pali, the sacred Buddhist language. Subtitled ‘*prière quotidienne pour tout l’univers*’, the work reflects a theme of universal fellowship. It seems to mix western classical tradition with almost repetitive chant-like phrases. The choral line is simple (though most assuredly not simplistic) and often in octave unison. Watch out for the long flute solo, apparently evoking some entirely different culture.

Lilli loved word games and using sol-fa notation makes her name an alternating C-G-C-G pattern, prominently on display here. All of this makes the prayer both personal and at the same time unbound by place or time. If this is the first piece by Boulanger you have heard you’ll find yourself wondering what she might have given us if she had survived longer. But as the work draws to its passionate dense climax it is possible to hear it as well in the context of what is happening to our world over a hundred years later. We have to save this precious planet it seems to be saying – or is that just the wanderings of this writer’s mind? Hmm.

What else to listen to: *Les sirens* for soprano and three-part choir, settings of Psalms 24, 129 & 130, *D’un soir triste* (symphonic poem).

Text

Vieille prière bouddhique

*Que toute chose qui respire – que
toutes les créatures et partout,
tous les esprits et tous ceux qui sont
nés,
que toutes les femmes,
que tous les hommes,
les Aryens, et les non-Aryens,
tous les dieux et tous les humains
et ceux qui sont déçus,
en orient et en Occident, au Nord et
au Sud,
que tous les êtres qui existent –
sans ennemis, sans obstacles,
surmontant la douleur
et atteignant le bonheur, puisse se
mouvoir librement,
chacun dans la voie qui lui est
destinée.*

An old buddhist prayer

Let everything that breathes
-- let all creatures everywhere,
all the spirits and all those who are
born,
all the women,
all the men,
Aryans, and non-Aryans,
all the Gods and all the people
and those who are fallen,
in the East and in the West, of the
North and the South,
let all those beings which exist –
without enemies, without obstacles,
overcoming their grief
and attaining happiness, be able to
move freely,
each in the path destined for them.

Pavane pour une infante défunte

Maurice Ravel (1875-1937)

Poor Ravel! Not only did he fail to win France's prestigious composition competition, the Prix de Rome, five times, the last time causing a scandal that became known as 'L'affaire Ravel', all mixed up with one of the judge's promotion of his own students' work, but he had to put up with the discomfort of having one of his compositions – one among very many and not, by any means, anything special in his eyes – becoming his 'signature' piece. This was his *Pavane for a dead princess*.



He was not the first composer this had happened to. Who knows anything by George Dukas apart from *The Sorcerer's Apprentice*? How are you on the

works of Pachelbel or Samuel Barber apart from the *Canon* and the *Adagio for strings*, respectively? Even Tchaikovsky got irritated by the popularity of his *Andante Cantabile*. Like Barber's *Adagio* this was originally the second movement of a string quartet but of all his extraordinary output this was the one most asked for.

Maurice Ravel, short of stature – and apparently self-conscious about it – was a bit of a dandy, meticulous about his appearance. He never married, a fact that caused some comment, with people speculating on the reasons. True, there were reports of his passion for this pianist or that violinist and a less than salubrious life on the town. Who knows? Maybe he was a bit like Beethoven in this respect. Mostly his private life was and remains a mystery.

Not so his musical journey. Ravel was a composer, musically gifted from an early age, with a wide-ranging interest in varied music genres. His works include, at various times, elements of modernism, of the Baroque and neo-classicism and even of jazz.

He was devoted to his mother Marie, a woman of Basque-Spanish heritage, who was illegitimate and barely literate, factors which meant that his engineer father had married 'beneath him' (how absurd that concept appears, or should appear today!). Early in his career he was a member of a loose grouping called Les Apaches (the hooligans) which included people like the pianist Ricardo Viñes, a lifelong friend, Manuel de Falla and Claude Debussy with whom he is often compared. And his musical style? Vaughan Williams said Ravel helped him escape from "the heavy contrapuntal Teutonic manner...complexe mai pas compliqué."

Commissioned as a salon piece for piano, the whimsical pavane was premiered in 1902 by Ricardo Viñes. It became instantly popular. It reflects the composer's love for Renaissance musical forms, and though the title suggests some kind of sad eulogy (because, Ravel said, he liked the actual sound of *infante défunte*), what Ravel was really imagining, channelling Velazquez perhaps (think of *Las Meninas*), was a young Spanish princess (*infanta*) enjoying a stately dance. It could have been pastiche, but this is Ravel so instead we get a beautiful melody and sublime orchestration. The pizzicato (plucked strings) might suggest shuffling feet while the tune evokes the graceful upper body movements of the young girl. Nobody's really dead after all, just young and contentedly meditative.

The alchemical kitchen

Lucy Armstrong (born 1991)

Text: Rebecca Hurst

The alchemical kitchen is a poetic and musical reflection on the creative process, and the connection of that process — sometimes mystical, sometimes mundane — to the minutiae of everyday life.

Drawn to the idea of ‘glimmers’ (small moments that spark joy or peace, which can help cue our nervous system to feel safe or calm), Rebecca Hurst took as her creative spark for this new work the opening lines of a poem she wrote in 2015 called *Cabbage*.

Based on the gesture that opens the poem, of chopping a red cabbage in half, and inspired by the glimmers shared by members of the Cambridge Philharmonic, Rebecca and Lucy had long conversations about these small, often domestic moments. They talked about the glimmers that enrich our lives, inform our creativity, and connect us to others, such as braising a cabbage, running a stick along iron railings, or cradling a grandchild.

The final text that emerged from this process takes a personal gesture and experience that is probably familiar to most humans (preparing food) and gives it transcendental resonance, inspiring music that celebrates the belief that our individual lives are of universal significance. *The alchemical kitchen* is a domestic-mystical, raucous, embodied, hopeful, and ultimately joyful celebration of life.

Programme note by Lucy Armstrong

Text

***Cabbage* by Rebecca Hurst**

Slung from a trug it rumbles
across the kitchen table:
a flabby magenta fist of stalk and leaf,
a bundle of pages that flop loose from their binding,
a globe cleaved with a grunt,
look down on this labyrinth,
look down on this universe, halved in my hand,
shout, ‘I can believe in the cabbage!’

And yes, lean close to sniff iron and damp earth.
Prod the pleats packed with butterfly eggs —
constellations that bloom.
A dish of galaxies, a bloody alchemical rose.
I lean hard on the blade,
a globe cleaved with a grunt.
I clamp the lid down on the cauldron and wait
for stellar dust, for gas and dark matter to spiral and bloom.
From calcination through rubedo — my magnum opus.
Shout louder, 'I believe in the cabbage!'

Les illuminations

Benjamin Britten (1913-1976)

Text: selections from *Les illuminations* by Arthur Rimbaud (1854-91)

Poetry was a constant source of inspiration to Britten. He had a breadth of knowledge and was a master at choosing and setting words to music. But choosing Rimbaud's *Les Illuminations* is something completely apart.

Rimbaud was a wild child, rebelling against family, school, and social and religious convention. He ran away from home at the age of sixteen heading for the turbulent political events in Paris. By the age of eighteen he had met the poet Verlaine, who abandoned his family, and together they led a vagabond life in France, Belgium and England, with Rimbaud writing his poetry by fits and starts. Rebellious in all respects, wanting to experience the extremes of living and feeling, these rootless young men abused both opium and alcohol. But then Verlaine shot his friend, wounding him, and that was that. Rimbaud ceased to write poetry after 1875. He had done with adolescence and was moving on though still travelling, now beyond Europe to Java and the horn of Africa, where he was involved in commercial enterprises. Suffering from a tumour on his leg, he returned to Paris, underwent an amputation, but died not long after in 1891.



Rimbaud was influenced to a certain extent by the poetry of Baudelaire, thirty years his senior, but his literary output was idiosyncratic and revolutionary.

His poetry – poets should be visionaries, he thought – is not easy to come to terms with: Is anything real? What senses are being evoked? A century later it might have been called psychedelic.

Les illuminations comprises prose poems, sporadic outpourings that are described as hallucinatory visions. There are strange concepts, classical and other references, and odd combinations of ideas and imagery.

The title of the collection is meant to suggest pages of an illuminated manuscript, each one separate, and most of the poems are brief.

When Britten discovered these ‘poems’, thanks to his friend WH Auden, he was so struck by them that he immediately determined to set them to music. He started composing while in England, but he and his partner Peter Pears left for the New World in May 1939 and he completed *Les Illuminations* the following year, selecting nine of the poems, setting them for high voice and string orchestra. They were first performed by the soprano Sophie Wyss, although they are frequently performed by a tenor, as in tonight’s performance. Naturally, they figured in the repertoire of Peter Pears. Number 7 (*Being Beauteous*) and Number 5 (*Marine*) were performed in Birmingham and at the Proms in 1939, and the full cycle had its first performance in London in January 1940, although Britten and Pears did not return to the UK until 1942.

The work begins with **Fanfare**, a single sentence, which comes at three points during the performance: *J’ai seul la clef de cette parade sauvage*. This is usually translated as “I alone have the key to this savage parade”. In fact ‘sauvage’ should not just be understood in the sense of ‘fierce’; in French it has more the sense of wild, untamed, even primitive. Fanfare would normally suggest a loud proclamation on brass instruments, but here the violins and violas strike up with vigorous arpeggios, before the soloist declaims the vocal line.

Villes: The frantic sawing quaver and semi-quaver rhythm of the strings suggests the bustle of cities, but it is a fabulous and mythical world, referring to ancient peoples of the old world and the new, gods and goddesses, cities straight from a dreamworld.

Phrase: This short episode of one sentence suggests what Rimbaud is doing in his poetry, a sort of ecstasy of creation, and a dance. To a minimal pianissimo accompaniment, the soloist floats this ethereal phrase, ending with a glorious glissando on *et je danse*.

Antique: This portrayal of the androgynous offspring of Pan takes us to a strange and mythical being. Britten introduces a violin obbligato, which suggests an elegant dance in triple time.

Royauté: this scene portrays a pageant where two people play at being king and queen for the day. Britten sets this to jolly playful music.

Marine: Vessels set forth on a journey, but are they actually at sea or on land? This was one of the two poems given a first performance in 1939. Britten cleverly suggests the rhythm of a boat making its way through a choppy sea.

Interlude: The strings have an extended passage of descending semi-quaver phrases that interweave, and when the words of the fanfare are repeated, they have a more contemplative air.

Being beaux: Rimbaud gave this, one of the most opaque poems, an English title. Beauty is compromised by wounds, threatening sounds and threats of death, though the orchestration is generally gentle and soothing. The plethora of strange effects and imagery have a definite eroticism.

Parade: A parade of grotesque characters pass by, with Rimbaud cataloguing them, as the pace and accompaniment become quite frenetic. At the close the phrase *J'ai seul la clef de cette parade sauvage* is proclaimed on a note of triumph.

Départ: time to go. Rimbaud, only just entering his twenties, expresses a world-weariness or more likely a hunger to explore something new. The strings are muted and plod quietly on, fading away to nothing after the soloist has finished.

Programme note: Jennifer Day

What else to listen to: *Peter Grimes* (opera), *The War Requiem* (Oratorio), *Young person's guide to the orchestra*.

Text

Fanfare

*J'ai seul la clef de cette parade
sauvage.*

I alone have the key to this savage
parade.

Villes

*Ce sont des villes! C'est un peuple
pour qui se sont montés ces
Alleghany et ces Libans de rêve!*

Cities

These are cities! This is a people for
whom arose these Alleghenies and
Lebanons from dreams!

Ce sont des villes! Des chalets de cristal et de bois se meuvent sur des rails et des poulies invisibles. Les vieux cratères ceints de colosses et de palmiers de cuivre rugissent mélodieusement dans les feux.

Ce sont des villes! Des cortèges de Mabs en robes rousses, opalines, montent des ravines. Là-haut, les pieds dans la cascade et les ronces, les cerfs tettent Diane. Les Bacchantes des banlieues sanglotent et la lune brûle et hurle. Vénus entre dans les cavernes des forgerons et des ermites. Des groupes de beffrois chantent les idées des peuples. Des châteaux bâtis en os sort la musique inconnue.

Ce sont des villes! Ce sont des villes!

Le paradis des orages s'effondre. Les sauvages dansent sans cesse la fête de la nuit. Ce sont des villes!

Quels bons bras, quelle belle heure me rendront cette région d'où viennent mes sommeils et mes moindres mouvements?

Phrase

J'ai tendu des cordes de clocher à clocher; des guirlandes de fenêtre à fenêtre; des chaînes d'or d'étoile à étoile, et je danse.

Antique

Gracieux fils de Pan! Autour de ton front couronné de fleurettes et de baies, tes yeux – des boules précieuses – remuent.

These are cities! Chalets of crystal and wood move on invisible rails and pulleys. Old craters encircled by colossuses and copper palm-trees, roar melodiously in the fires.

These are cities! Processions of Mabs in russet, opaline gowns climb the ravines. Farther up, with their feet in the waterfall and the brambles, stags suckle Diana. The Bacchantes of the suburbs sob, and the moon burns and howls. Venus enters into the caverns of blacksmiths and hermits. Groups of belfries sing the ideas of the people. Unknown music pours forth from castles built of bone.

These are cities! These are cities!

The paradise of storms collapses. Savages ceaselessly dance out the festival of the night. These are cities!

What lovely arms, what beautiful hour will give me back that region from where my sleep and my slightest movements come?

I stretched some cord from steeple to steeple; some garlands from window to window; some chains of gold from star to star, and I dance.

Gracious son of Pan! Around your forehead crowned with tiny flowers and berries, your eyes – precious globes – stir.

*Tachées de lies brunes, tes joues
se creusent. Tes crocs luisent. Ta
poitrine ressemble à une cithare, des
tintements circulent dans tes bras
blonds. Ton coeur bat dans ce ventre
où dort le double sexe. Promène-toi,
la nuit en mouvant doucement cette
cuisse, cette seconde cuisse et cette
jambe de gauche.*

Royauté

*Un beau matin, chez un peuple fort
doux, un homme et une femme su-
perbes criaient sur la place publique:
“Mes amis, je veux qu’elle soit
reine!” “Je veux être reine!” Elle riait
et tremblait. Il parlait aux amis de
révélation, d’épreuve terminée. Ils se
pâmaient l’un contre l’autre.*

*En effet ils furent rois toute une
matinée où les tentures carminées
se relevèrent sur les maisons, et tout
l’après-midi, où ils s’avancèrent du
côté des jardins de palmes.*

Marine

*Les chars d’argent et de cuivre.
Les proues d’acier et d’argent –
Battent l’écume –
Soulèvent les souches des ronces. Les
courants de la lande,
Et les ornières immenses du reflux,
Filent circulairement vers l’est,
Vers les piliers de la forêt –
Vers les fûts de la jetée,
Dont l’angle est heurté par des tour-
billons de lumière.*

*Stained by brown lees, your cheeks
grow gaunt. Your fangs gleam. Your
bosom resembles a zither, ringing
sounds circulate between your blond
arms. Your heart beats in that belly
where the double sex sleeps. Walk, the
night gently moving that thigh, that
second thigh, and that left leg.*

Royalty

*One beautiful morning, in the land of a
very gentle people, a superb man and
woman cried out in the public square,
“Friends, I want her to be queen!” “I
want to be queen!” She laughed and
trembled. He spoke to his friends of
revelation, of hard trials finished. They
swooned, one against the other.*

*In effect, they were kings for a whole
morning as crimson hangings were
raised on the houses, and all afternoon
as they advanced towards the gardens
of palms.*

Marine scene

*Chariots of silver and copper –
Prows of steel and silver –
Beat the foam –
Heave up the roots of bramble, The
currents of the heath,
And the immense ruts of the ebb-tide,
Flowing in circles towards the east,
Towards the pillars of the forest –
Towards the posts of the jetty,
Whose angle is struck by the turbulent
whirlpool of light.*

Interlude

*J'ai seul la clef de cette parade
sauvage.*

I alone have the key to this savage
parade.

Being beauteous

*Devant une neige un Être de Beauté
de haute taille. Des sifflements de
mort et des cercles de musique
sourde font monter, s'élargir et
trembler comme un spectre ce corps
adoré: des blessures écarlates et
noires éclatent dans les chaires
superbes. Les couleurs propres de
la vie se foncent, dansent, et se
dégagent autour de la Vision, sur
le chantier. Et les frissons s'élèvent
et grondent, et la saveur forcenée
de ces effets se chargeant avec les
sifflements mortels et les rauques
musiques que le monde, loin derrière
nous, lance sur notre mère de beau-
té – elle recule, elle se dresse. O! nos
os sont revêtus d'un nouveau corps
amoureux.*

Against snow, a Being of Beauty of
heightened size. The hissing of death
and circles of muted music make this
adored body rise, enlarge and tremble
like a spectre: wounds of scarlet and
black burst in the superb flesh. The
proper colors of life darken, dance,
and emerge around the Vision, on the
site. And shivers rise and rumble, and
the frenetic flavour of these effects,
charged with the mortal hissing and
raucous music that the world, far
behind us, hurls on our mother of
beauty – she recoils, she rises up. Oh!
Our bones are dressed once more in a
new loving body.

*Ô la face cendrée, l'écusson de crin,
les bras de cristal! le canon sur lequel
je dois m'abattre à travers la mêlée
des arbres et de l'air léger!*

Oh, the ashen face, the shield of
horsehair, the arms of crystal! the
cannon on which I must strike through
the melee of trees and the light air!

Parade

*Des drôles très solides. Plusieurs ont
exploité vos mondes. Sans besoins,
et peu pressés de mettre en oeuvre
leurs brillantes facultés et leur
expérience de vos consciences. Quels
hommes mûrs!*

Some very 'solid' jesters. Several
have exploited your worlds. Without
needs, and in no hurry to put to work
their brilliant faculties and their ex-
perience of your consciences. What
mature men!

*Des yeux hébétés à la façon de la
nuit d'été, rouges et noirs, tri-coulores,
d'acier piqué d'étoiles d'or; des
faciès déformés, plombés, blêmis,
incendiés; des enrouements folâtres!
La démarche cruelle des oripeaux!
Il y a quelques jeunes.*

*Ô le plus violent Paradis de la gri-
mace enragée! Chinois, Hottentots,
bohémiens, niais, hyènes, Molochs,
vieilles démences, démons
sinistres, ils mêlent les tours
populaires, maternels, avec les
poses et les tendresses bestiales. Ils
interpréteraient des pièces nouvelles
et des chansons 'bonnes filles'.*

*Maîtres jongleurs, ils transforment le
lieu et les personnes, et usent de la
comédie magnétique.*

*J'ai seul la clef de cette parade
sauvage.*

Départ

*Assez vu. La vision s'est rencontrée à
tous les airs. Assez eu. Rumeurs des
Villes, le soir, et au soleil, et toujours.
Assez connu. Les arrêts de la vie. O
Rumeurs et Visions! Départ dans
l'affection et le bruit neufs!*

Eyes dazed, fashioned like a summer
night, red and black, tricolored, steel
studded with golden stars; features
deformed, leaden, pallid, incendiary;
hoarse-throated frolickers! The cruel
swagger of rags! There are a few
young ones.

Oh the most violent paradise of
the enraged grimace! Chinese,
Hottentots, bohemians, naive
deniers, hyenas, Molochs, old
insanities, sinister demons, they
mingle populist, maternal tricks with
bestial poses and tenderness. They
would interpret new pieces and 'nice
girl' songs.

Master jugglers, they transform places
and people and use magnetic comedy.

I alone have the key to this wild pa-
rade.

Departure

Enough seen. The vision has been
encountered under all skies. Enough
had. Sounds of cities, at evening, in
the sun, and always. Enough known.
The stopping of life. Oh Sounds and
Visions! Departure into new affection
and noise.

Translation: Julia Bullock

INTERVAL

Ma mère l'oye (Mother Goose)

Maurice Ravel (1875-1937)

Pavane of the sleeping beauty

Little Tom Thumb

Laideronette, Empress of the Pagodas

Conversations of Beauty and the Beast

The enchanted garden

The Mother Goose suite started life as 'Five children's pieces for four hands', that is, two players sitting at the same piano. It was premiered with child pianists Jeanne Leleu and Geneviève Durony in 1910. The pieces referenced French fairy stories from the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, in particular Charles Perrault's *Contes de ma Mère L'Oye* (Mother Goose Tales) published in 1697. It was written in a simplified form to cater for the pianists' small hands and relatively elementary technique. Ravel commented that "The idea of conjuring up the poetry of childhood in these pieces has naturally led me to simplify my style and clarify my writing."

Ravel's publisher Jacques Durand and the impresario Jacques Rouché recognised something special and affecting in this, leading to its orchestration and later to a full-length ballet. What makes this work so exquisite is its subtlety, the delicacy of the orchestration, and the intricate detail – all married to some beautiful melodies. Critic Roland-Manuel thought that Ravel in Mother Goose "reveals to us the secret of his profound nature and shows us the soul of a child who has never left the kingdom of Fairyland." It is quite difficult to reconcile this Ravel with the later weary cynicism of his *La Valse*, a kind of threnody to the decadence of society with its devastating conclusion.

The Prelude sets the mood for what is to come. Listen out for flutes, bassoons, bird calls, magic harp glissandos and – don't miss this! – a brief rumble from the contrabassoon. In the **Pavane of the sleeping beauty** Florine falls asleep after that spinning wheel incident, but the old woman throws off her filthy cloak to reveal that she is the good fairy, entrusting two other fairies with the task of giving Florine sweet dreams. **Tom Thumb** has crumbled a piece of bread leaving crumbs to guide him and the woodcutter's children home. It should work but then those pesky birds (three violins, a flute and a piccolo) turn up and eat all the crumbs. **Laidronette, Empress of the Pagodas** is in her Chinese-style pavilion. Her little attendants turn up and

dance. Laidronette gets into the bath while her pagodas entertain her with instruments made of nut shells, viols made of almond husks, all proportionate to their diminutive status. Hmm. During the **Conversations of Beauty and the Beast** you have a real chance to get to know the contrabassoon better since it represents the beast! Poor beast '*j'ai le couer bon, mais je suis un monstre*' (I have a good heart but I am a monster) he says but Beauty is appalled by him as he interrupts her self-contemplation in the mirror. She makes fun of him but when he faints in despair she takes pity and gives him her hand. Her kindness and touch have transformed him into a handsome prince. Finally in **The enchanted garden** it is dawn. The birds are singing and look, here's Prince Charming led by Cupid. He sees the sleeping princess who wakes as day breaks. Aaah.

What else to listen to: *Daphnis and Chloe* (ballet and orchestral suite), *Bolero*, *String Quartet*, *La Valse*, *Piano concerto in G minor*, *Piano concerto for the left hand in D major*.

Gloria

Francis Poulenc (1899 – 1963)

The general view of Francis Poulenc, one of the most successful French composers of the early twentieth century, friend of Igor Stravinsky (a kind of mutual admiration society before their closeness cooled) and Ravel, was that he was a “bit of a monk, a bit of rascal”. He certainly does seem to have been something of a contradiction all round: as one of ‘Les six’, a group determined to throw



off the shackles of the Germanic tradition and the influence of Debussy he developed a neo-classical style all of his own. But he was also troubled by intermittent spells of manic cheerfulness and debilitating depression. Like Tchaikovsky and Tippett, among others, he proposed marriage to a woman as he struggled with his sexuality and whereas Tchaikovsky famously did marry, disastrously, neither Poulenc nor Tippett did, but unlike them the French composer did father a daughter who grew up not knowing who her father was, so there's definitely a story there – but maybe for another time! How important these personal facts are in any understanding of a composer's output is debatable, of course, but Poulenc's musical work very definitely suggests contrasting sides to his personality and interests.

In his *Gloria* the many sides of Poulenc's character are enmeshed in a work of amazing freshness, lyricism and sensuousness intermingled with striking counterpoint, dynamic contrasts, and a kind of off-beat jazziness. It has always been extremely popular. "While writing it," he says, "I had in mind those Crozzoli frescoes with angels sticking out their tongues, and also some solemn-looking Benedictine monks that I saw playing football one day." Those angels and monks emerge in a joyous, but at the same time profoundly serious fashion, mixed with the composer's deep understanding and sympathy for the human voice.

***Gloria* (choir)**

After three orchestral 'fanfares' – declamatory propositions, really – the choir enters with a forceful statement above a rich orchestral accompaniment. But immediately you hear *Gloria in excelsis deo* seeming to cross over bar lines and being stressed where you might not expect. It's a really powerful start concluding with an almost Straussian (Ricard) horn punctuation and a final deliberate full stop.

***Laudamus te* (choir)**

Poulenc becomes a bit skittish and cheerful here – making his intentions clear with the heading 'fast and joyous'. Rapid orchestral playing and tricky time signatures bounce between short expressive choral interventions. Hold on tight. Once again words, stresses and rhythms cut across each other, but after some calm the movement ends, *Laudamus te* being emphatically summarised.

***Domine Deus* (soprano and choir)**

A beautifully calm woodwind introduction introduces the haunting tones of the soprano for the third movement – perhaps Górecki had this in mind when he wrote his *Symphony of sorrowful songs* – supported by the chorus. It's powerfully moving and ends on an unresolved chord, leaving us in suspense.

***Domine fili unigenite* (choir)**

Time for a short *amuse-bouche* of a movement. A lovely string tune is echoed by woodwind and brass. Here is the joyfulness of the second movement coupled with the first movement's declamatory style.

***Dominus Deus, Agnus Dei* (soprano and choir)**

Almost like a 'chanson', this movement finds the orchestra in somewhat mysterious almost filmic mood. Bassoons, horns and piccolos set the scene; there is whimsy here too and intimacy, but there is always something darker underneath, underlining everything, I suppose, that we have been saying about the composer. It's just wonderful.

Qui sedes ad dexteram Patris (soprano and choir)

We start the last movement in emphatic confidence. Unaccompanied unison choral singing is punctuated by typically Poulenc chords. A walking bass line takes over and the chorus goes along for the ride. 'Amen' the chorus and soloist sing to each other until finally, with the score marked 'extraordinairement calme', the soloist sings her last 'Amen' and the chorus echoes her. The music fades gently into silence.

What else to listen to: *Les Biches* (ballet), *Organ concerto*, *Concert champêtre* (for harpsichord and orchestra), *Flute sonata*, *Stabat Mater*.

Text

1 Gloria in excelsis Deo

Et in terra pax hominibus bonæ voluntatis.

2 Laudamus te, Benedicimus te, Adoramus te, Glorificamus te.

Gratias agimus tibi Propter magnam gloriam tuam.

3 Domine Deus, Rex cælestis, Deus Pater omnipotens.

4 Domine Fili unigenite, Jesu Christe.

5 Domine Deus, Agnus Dei, Filius Patris, Rex Celestis Deus

Qui tollis peccata mundi, Miserere nobis; suscipe deprecationem nostram.

6 Qui sedes ad dexteram Patris, miserere nobis.

Quoniam tu solus Sanctus, Tu solus Dominus, Tu solus Altissimus.

Jesu Christe, Cum Sancto Spiritu in gloria Dei Patris. Amen.

Glory to God in the highest

And on earth peace, goodwill to all people.

We praise you, We bless you, We worship you, We glorify you.

We give thanks to you for your great glory.

Lord God, heavenly King, Almighty Father.

Lord, the only-begotten Son, Jesus Christ.

Lord God, Lamb of God, Son of the Father, King in Heaven

Who takes away the sins of the world, Have mercy on us. Receive our prayers.

You who sit at the right hand of the Father, have mercy on us.

Only you are holy, only you are Lord. Only you are most high.

Jesus Christ, the Holy Spirit in the glory of God the Father. Amen.

Ellie Laugharne (soprano)



British soprano Ellie Laugharne is a graduate of the Guildhall School of Music and Drama and Birmingham University. She began her career as a Jerwood Young Artist at the Glyndebourne Festival and more recently was an Associate Artist for Opera North and a Company Artist for The Mozartists.

Career highlights: Susanna *Le nozze di Figaro* (The Grange Festival); Eliza Doolittle *My Fair Lady* (The Grange Festival and Gran Teatro del Liceu, Barcelona); Frasquita *Carmen*, Cupid *Orpheus in the Underworld*, Phyllis *Iolanthe*, Barbarina *The Marriage of*

Figaro (English National Opera); Gianetta *The Gondoliers*, Princess Zara *Utopia Limited*, Adina *L'elisir d'amore*, Frasquita *Carmen*, Mabel *The Pirates of Penzance* (Scottish Opera); Pamina *The Magic Flute*, Despina *Così fan tutte*, Gretel *Hänsel und Gretel*, Susanna *Le nozze di Figaro* (Opera North); Polissena *Radamisto* (English Touring Opera); Lucia *The Rape of Lucretia* (Glyndebourne on Tour); Governess *The Turn of the Screw*, Tina *Flight*, Zerlina *Don Giovanni* (Opera Holland Park); Bastienne *Bastien & Bastienne*, Temperantia *Applausus*, Emirena *Adriano in Siria* (The Mozartists); Helene *La Belle Helene* (Blackheath Halls); Sandrina *La Finta Giardiniera*, Edna *Tobias and the Angel* (Buxton Festival); Valencienne *The Merry Widow* (International Gilbert and Sullivan Festival).

Recent engagements: Polissena *Radamisto* (Philharmonia Baroque, San Francisco); Elsie Maynard *The Yeomen of the Guard* (The Grange Festival); Asteria *Tamerlano* (English Touring Opera); Frasquita *Carmen* (English National Opera).

Concert engagements include: Mozart's *Requiem* (Royal Philharmonic Orchestra); *St John Passion* (Ulster and Bournemouth Symphony Orchestras); Beethoven's *Choral Fantasy* at the Edinburgh International Festival; a programme of music commemorating the Battle of the Somme for Brighton Festival; Aretta in Mozart's *L'oca del Cairo*, completed by Stephen Oliver (London Mozart Players).

Nicholas Mulroy (tenor)



Born in Liverpool, Nicholas sang with Philip Duffy at the Metropolitan Cathedral, and then read Modern Languages at Cambridge and completed postgraduate studies at the Royal Academy of Music. Since then, he has sung at some of the world's most prestigious venues: Monteverdi at New York's Carnegie Hall, Rameau at the Paris Opera, and Bach's Evangelist at the Sydney Opera House, the Royal Albert Hall (BBC Proms), and Boston Symphony Hall, as well as in Bach's own churches in Arnstadt, Weimar and Leipzig.

He has enjoyed prolonged collaborations with some of the world's leading

conductors: Sir John Eliot Gardiner, Lars-Ulrik Mortensen, Jordi Savall, John Butt, and Paul McCreesh. He has sung to critical acclaim with the Australian Chamber Orchestra, the St Paul Chamber Orchestra, the OAE, and orchestras in Liverpool, Melbourne, Auckland, Brussels, Antwerp, as well as the Hallé, BBC Philharmonic and the Britten Sinfonia (with whom he sang Britten's orchestral song cycles in China).

In recital, he has appeared many times at London's Wigmore Hall, including Schubert songs, Purcell dramas, and a performance of Britten's *Canticles* on the 100th anniversary of the composer's birth.

He has recorded extensively: Bach and Handel with the Dunedin Consort, Bach cantatas with Gardiner, several recordings of Monteverdi's *Vespers*, and Piazzolla's amazing *María de Buenos Aires* with Mr McFall's Chamber.

Highlights this season include concerts with the Royal Concertgebouw Orchestra, the Finnish Radio Symphony Orchestra, Philharmonia Baroque in the USA, and his own curated programme of Purcell, Bach, and Latin American songs, with the Aurora Orchestra.

Nicholas is a Musician in Residence at Girton College, Cambridge, a Visiting Professor at RAM, and Associate Director of the Dunedin Consort.

Tom Primrose (conductor)



Tom Primrose is a British conductor, accompanist and coach, particularly known for his work in the field of vocal music. He now works principally in opera, and his freelance work takes him all over the world, including the Palais Garnier and the Bastille with Opéra National de Paris, Opéra de Montecarlo, Det Kongelige Teater og Kapel in Copenhagen, Polish National Opera, Korea National Opera, and the Mariinsky in St Petersburg. In the UK he has also worked for the Royal Opera House, English National Opera, the

Grange Festival, Shadwell Opera, Opera Holland Park, and Opera South. He has assisted and chorumastered for a host of conductors including Susanna Mälkki, Richard Egarr, David Parry, Finnigan Downie Dear, Francesco Cilluffo, Yan Pascal Tortelier, Jean-Luc Tingaud, and most recently assisting Alexander Soddy preparing the music for Deborah Warner's acclaimed production of *Peter Grimes* at the Palais Garnier. He is on the music staff at Grange Festival Opera where he is currently chorumaster. He returns to Paris again in September.

Tom has strong connections with Norfolk where he is Artistic Co-Director of the Southrepps Music Festival, conducts choirs at the University of East Anglia, and acted for a time as Assistant Organist and Director of the Girls' Choir at Norwich Cathedral. Amongst a host of other freelance work, he is chorumaster of the Newbury Festival and the Cambridge Philharmonic. Tom is also an acclaimed piano accompanist, and has performed in many of the UK's principal concert halls and festivals, on BBC television and radio, and has collaborated with leading singers and instrumentalists, including Ben Johnson, Ellie Laugharne, Jonathan McGovern, Christina Gansch, Sophie Bevan, Mary Bevan, Susanna Hurrell, Ruby Hughes, Ema Nikolovska, Claire Barnett-Jones, Michael Chance, Jose Maria del Monaco, Katherine Jenkins, Javier Camerena, Corrine Winters, Jonathan Bloxham, Ben Baker, Eloise Fleur Thom, Jennifer Pike, amongst many others.

Freya Goldmark (guest leader)



Freya Goldmark enjoys a busy career as a soloist, chamber musician and director.

Beginning violin lessons aged four, by her mid teens Freya had performed as a soloist across the UK, Europe and Asia, making her concerto debut aged 13 at the Rachmaninov Institute, Russia. Since then, she has enjoyed a burgeoning career performing as a soloist at many celebrated UK venues including Cadogan Hall, Elgar Room Albert Hall, St John's Waterloo and The Purcell Room.

As a chamber musician she has played at Wigmore Hall, Aldeburgh Festival, Cadogan Hall, Kings Place, West Road Concert Hall, The

Purcell Room and Elgar Room and is regularly invited to tour with and to join ensembles throughout the UK.

In Autumn 2022 Freya became the new first violinist of the Ligeti Quartet. The quartet have been at the forefront of modern and contemporary music since their formation in 2010, known for innovative programming and championing today's most exciting composers. The quartet's 2023 performances include Steve Reich's *Different Trains* at Kings Place, an autumn tour to Canada, and multiple performances at Aldeburgh Festival this June featuring fifteen world premieres co-commissioned by Britten Pears Arts, BBC Radio 3 and Bourgie Hall.

Freya is passionate not only about performing music but also bringing it to as many people as possible. Having begun organising concerts in her teens she now regularly directs and brings together groups of musicians. Aged 19 Freya founded Stamford International Music Festival, a chamber music festival which takes place in the town in which she grew up. From 2019-2021 Freya was also the director of Cambridge Summer Music Festival.

Cambridge Philharmonic Orchestra

Violin 1

Freya Goldmark (Guest leader)
Kate Clow (co leader)
Joyce Yu
David Favara
Margaret Scourse
Halyna Vakulenko
Talitha Kearey
Emilie van der Aa-Burton
Nichola Roe
Anne McAleer
Eleanor Winpenny
John Richards
Naomi Hilton

Violin 2

Chris Lin-Brandt
Hilary Crooks
Ariane Stoop
Sarah Ridley
Roz Chalmers
Abigail Tan
Sebastian Bechmann
Marian Holness
Emily Staszal

Viola

Ruth Donnelly
Mari O'Neill
Agata Richards
Anne-Cecile Dingwall
David Yadin
Edna Murphy
Peter Conlon
Jeremy Harmer
Hermione Blakiston
Emma McCaughan
Robyn Sorensen

Cello

Jessica Hiscock
Daniel Coldridge
Catherine Wilson
Isabel Groves
David Brown
Pete Smith
Angela Bennett
Helen Hills
Lucy O'Brien
Anna Edwards
Helen Davies

Double Bass

Sarah Sharrock
Tony Scholl
Susan Sparrow
Alan Blackwell

Flute

Adrienne Kelly-Jackson
Alison Townend
Cynthia Lalli

Piccolo

Alison Townend
Cynthia Lalli

Oboe

Rachael Dunlop
Katy Wyatt

Cor Anglais

Tom Gillam

Clarinet

David Hayton
Graham Dolby

Bass clarinet

Sue Pettitt

Bassoon

Neil Greenham
Kim Jenkins

Contrabassoon

Phil Evans

Horn

Caroline Prozesky
Tony Hawkins
Gareth Edwards
Chris Wykes

Trumpet

Colin Bloch
Laureen Hodge
Neil Thornton

Trombone

Denise Hayles
Georgia Orwell
Tom Yates

Bass Trombone

Gary Davison

Tuba

Robin Norman

Timpani

Dave Ellis

Percussion

Lizzie Brightwell
Engin Eskici

Harp

Lizzie Scora
Louisa Duggan

Celeste

Mark Fielding

Jeu de timbres

Andrew Black

Cambridge Philharmonic Chorus

Soprano 1

Jane Cook
Amélie Deblauwe
Susan Earnshaw
Clare Hatty
Agnes Heydtmann
Carole MacBrayne
Ros Mitchell
Jan Moore
Penny Mullock
Chessie Nour
Susan Randall
Mary Richards
Sheila Rushton
Anne Sales
Pat Sartori
Laura Simmons
Linda Stollwerck Boulton
Diana Sutton

Soprano 2

Steffi Campbell Smith
Christine Halstead
Gertrud Hill
Maggie Hook
Wren Khouri
Suzie McCave
Jo Pinfield
Ann Read
Pip Smith
Sheila Stephens
Catharine Warren

Alto 1

Alexandra Bolton
Caroline Courtney
Elaine Fulton
Jean Gulston
Elaine Kinsella
Jan Littlewood
Alice Parr
Alison Russell
Sarah Upjohn
Alison Vinnicombe
Helen Wheatley
Anne Willitts
Susan Wilson
Joanna Womack

Alto 2

Jane Bower
Margaret Cook
Helen Cross
Jane Fleming
Stephanie Gray
Hilary Jackson
Lynne McClure
Sue Purseglove
Kate Wootton

Tenor 1

Doug Addy
Pete Alexander
Florin Enuta
Aviva Grisby
Jean Harding
Sylvia Hearn
Chris Schaefer
Peter Scholten
John Williams

Tenor 2

Aidan Baker
Jeremy Baumberg
Clare Bolton
Gunnar Lange
Andy Pierce
Ben Womack

Bass 1

Peter Campbell Smith
Chris Coffin
Andrew Dobson
Chris Fisher
Patrick Hall
Roger McClure
Martin Scutt
Harrison Sherwood

Bass 2

Andrew Black
Richard Birkett
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