

J&P MUSIC BUILDING

Friday 26 May 2017, 7:30pm



Simon Wallfisch

baritone voice and cello

Edward Rushton

piano



St Hilda's College
UNIVERSITY OF OXFORD

Pre-Concert Talk - 6.45pm with Professor Martyn Harry

Concert - 7.30pm

Arthur Honegger (1892-1955) *Trois poèmes de Paul Fort*

Le chasseur perdu en forêt

Cloche du soir

Chanson de fol

André Caplet (1878-1925)

Nuit d'automne (Henri de Régnier)

“Quand reverrai-je, hélas!” (Joachim du Bellay)

La croix douloureuse (R.P. Lacordaire)

Claude Debussy (1862-1918)

Beau Soir (Paul Bourget)

Les cloches (Paul Bourget)

Romance (Paul Bourget)

Les angelus (Grégoire Le Roy)

Claude Debussy

Sonata for cello and piano

Prologue: Lent, sostenuto e molto risoluto

Sérénade: Modérément animé

Finale: Animé, léger et nerveux

INTERVAL

Arthur Honegger

Six poèmes de Guillaume Apollinaire (1915-1917)

À la Santé

Clotilde

Automne

Saltimbanques

L'Adieu

Les cloches

Maurice Ravel (1875-1937)

Don Quichotte à Dulcinée (Paul Morand)

Chanson Romanesque

Chanson épique

Chanson à boire

André Caplet

Trois Fables de Jean de La Fontaine

Le corbeau et le renard

La cigale et la fourmi

Le loup et l'agneau

Arthur Honegger (1892-1955)

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Honegger was born in Le Havre to Swiss parents. He studied at the Zürich and Paris Conservatoires, becoming a member of 'Les nouveaux jeunes', a group assembled by Erik Satie, forerunners of the better-known 'Les Six' (Auric, Durey, Honegger, Poulenc, Tailleferre, and Ivry). Honegger's aesthetic leaned more towards German Romantics (including Wagner) than the other members of Les Six, but nevertheless he enjoyed the group's aesthetic and conversational stimulation, even if he required complete solitude and peace in order to compose. Honegger's setting of six poems by Guillaume Apollinaire dates from 1915-1917, at the time when the poet was fighting and then wounded in World War I.

Apollinaire – the son of a Polish noblewoman from Belarus – was born Wilhelm Albert Włodzimierz Apolinary Kostrowicki in Rome. After settling in Paris, Apollinaire became a lynchpin of the city's *fin de siècle* artistic and literary community. Apollinaire was friends with Picasso and Gertrude Stein, and was an outspoken champion of artistic modernism. His poetry inspired settings by Honegger, Debussy, and Poulenc. Although Apollinaire was not a French citizen, he volunteered for the French army and in 1916 received a shrapnel wound in his temple. Despite this debilitation he continued to write, but died from Spanish flu in November 1918.

The Symbolist poet Paul Fort (1872-1918) founded Théâtre d' Art in 1890 while he was still a schoolboy in Paris. the Théâtre d' Art promoted the work of Paul Gauguin as well as the verse and drama of Verlaine and Maeterlinck. Later, Fort helped to introduce the plays of Ibsen and Strindberg to Paris. Fort also published and promoted the work of his fellow poets after founding the journal *Vers et Prose* in 1905; the work of Valéry, Apollinaire, and other writers of the twentieth-century French *avant garde* appeared in its pages. A prolific writer himself, Fort produced more than thirty volumes of poetry. His *Ballades Françaises* was the first in 1897. In these *Ballades*, Fort aimed to capture all aspects of French life. In 1914, an American critic noted that 'The sympathy of Paul Fort

... is all-embracing. The whole of humanity seems to find entrance in his heart: from the town-dweller to the Bohemian of the Latin Quarter, from the provincial tradesman to the tiller of the soil. And, what is of more importance, this sympathy springs from inner knowledge, for he has lived with them all, watched their doings and followed them in the insignificant acts of daily life ...' (*North American Review*, April 1914).

Honegger's setting of Fort's *Trois poèmes* (the verses taken from Fort's 'Complaintes et Dits') dates from 1916. Remy de Gourmont described Fort as 'une sensibilité toujours en éveil' (a sensibility always awake), and Honegger's setting captures particularly Fort's nuanced and mercurial emotions. Honegger also illustrates the text: the hunting-horn calls in 'Le chasseur perdu en forêt' and the bells in 'Cloche de soir' vividly set the scene for the singer and draw the listener into mysterious, enchanted regions. As the woods and churches of France were destroyed by shell-fire in 1916, these evocations of an unspoiled, peaceful time served to strengthen resolve through their affirmation of French art, poetry, and spirit.

André Caplet (1878-1925)

Nuit d'automne (Henri de Régnier)

"Quand reverrai-je, hélas!" (Joachim du Bellay)

La croix douloureuse (H.P. Lacordaire)

André Caplet

Trois Fables de Jean de La Fontaine

Le corbeau et le renard

La cigale et la fourmi

Le loup et l'agneau

Like Honegger, Caplet was born in Le Havre. From 1896 he studied at the Paris Conservatoire, his years there culminating in winning the Prix de Rome in 1901. Alongside composition, Caplet quickly developed a reputation as a conductor, launching his debut at the Théâtre de la Porte-St-Martin in 1896. He then became the musical director at the Théâtre de l'Odéon. A friendship with Debussy made Caplet a trusted interpreter of Debussy's music (and proof-reader of scores – Debussy called him 'l'ange de corrections'): when Caplet accepted an engagement with the Boston Opera Company, he conducted trailblazing performances of Debussy's *Pelléas et Mélisande*. In 1914, Caplet volunteered for the French Army and during his military service he was seriously wounded and gassed. As he recovered, and reflected upon what he had witnessed, Caplet became increasingly devout, immersing himself in 'esoteric Catholic mysticism'. As a result of permanent lung damage, he never regained his former physical vigour and devoted himself to composition.

Vocal music dominates Caplet's oeuvre, and he set poetic texts by Baudelaire, Silvestre, and Fort, among many others. His *Trois Fables de Jean de La Fontaine* date from 1919. The

texts of these songs – adaptations of Aesop by Fontaine – come from the first book of Fontaine's *Fables* (1668), which dedicated to Louis, the six-year-old son of Louis XIX.

The songs 'Nuit d'automne', "Quand reverrai-je, hélas!" and 'Le croix douloureuse' date from 1915, 1916, and 1916/17 respectively. The songs demonstrate how miraculously French vocal art still flourished, despite the ravages of war, but also show Caplet exploring older texts. Although Henri de Régnier (1864-1936) – a Symbolist poet and disciple of Mallarmé – was a contemporary of Debussy, spiritually he belonged to an earlier era than Caplet and Apollinaire. At a time of national crisis, Caplet's setting of 'Nuit d'automne' strikes the listener as particularly poignant, recollecting a time when warm autumn nights were for pleasure and love, and when trees were still leaf-covered rather than shell-blasted. Joachim du Bellay (c. 1522-1560) definitely came from an earlier era, but as a member of the group La Pléiade, and author of its manifesto, 'La Défense et illustration de la langue française', du Bellay had an important role in the development of French Renaissance poetry. Inspired by Petrarch, du Bellay urged his fellow French writers to cultivate the literary ideals of Greek and Roman antiquity.

Lacordaire (1802-1861), the author of 'La croix douloureuse', trained initially as a lawyer in Dijon and Paris, but in 1824, rediscovered his Catholic faith and found a vocation. He entered the seminary of St-Sulpice, and in 1827 was ordained a priest, embarking upon a controversial career in the church. Becoming famous as a preacher, he eventually entered the Dominican Order, and began its resurrection in France, including founding new convents and a Dominican novitiate. Lacordaire opposed the July Monarchy, supported the 1848 Revolutions, and then opposed Louis Napoleon and the Second Empire. His strong political stance, born of legal and religious training, put him at odds with the religious establishment, but as he declared, 'J'espère mourir un religieux pénitent et un libéral impénitent.' ('I wish to die a penitent religious and unpenitent liberal.') The subtitle of Caplet's setting of 'La croix douloureuse' – Prière des âmes en deuil (Prayer of souls in mourning) – shows the explicit intention of the song as a personal elegy to the war dead, made by a mourning friend. The piano part evokes funerary bells tolling, overlaid with stark gestures suggesting desolation. However, despite his desolation, the supplicant finds whatever comfort he can in the knowledge that life and death are in God's hands, and he resolves to submit to God's will.

Claude Debussy (1862-1918)

Beau Soir (Paul Bourget)

Les cloches (Paul Bourget)

Romance (Paul Bourget)

Les angélus (Grégoire Le Roy)

Debussy set many texts by the poet and novelist Paul Bourget (1852-1935), of which 'Beau Soir' (1891), 'Les cloches' (1885) and 'Romance' (1885) are three of the best known. Bourget forms a connection between tonight's programme of songs and Oxford

itself: in 1891 he spent some time in Oxford, later writing a book of reminiscence about his impressions of the city, the University, and its students' habits and customs:

'...the Cherwell, the smaller of the two arms of the river seemed to me still more delightful. It winds, narrow and shallow, through the meadows of Christ Church after passing around Magdalen Park. The pale foliage of the willows rustles above its torturous sleepy waters. There are neither sailing nor racing boats here, only light craft filled with friends or a lonely rower here and there, and in places where the branches of trees bend over and form a kind of natural cradle, one of these boats is moored.'

As he describes the river, it is enticing to think of Bourget traversing the Cherwell in a punt or rowing boat, passing the site of what would become St Hilda's College, where – more than a century later – settings of his poems would be sung.

Grégoire Le Roy (1862-1914), a Belgian symbolist poet was, a peer and former school-mate of Maeterlinck. Debussy, who in the wake of 'Les cloches' still wanted to explore bell sonorities in his piano music, set 'Les angélus' in 1892. He marked the score 'avec un douceur triste' (with a sad sweetness), reflecting the elegiac quality of the verse. The accompaniment suggests timelessness: a paradox, when the poet himself feels a complete lack of any future.

Claude Debussy (1862-1918)

Sonata for Cello and Piano

1. Prologue: Lent, sostenuto e molto risoluto
2. Sérénade: Modérément animé
3. Finale: Animé, léger et nerveux

The last years of Debussy's life were dominated by a preoccupation with the unprecedented violence of the First World War. At first, Debussy was keen to enlist in the French army, but his age and physical condition disqualified him; for a time he sank into melancholy at how France was being physically and spiritually crushed. Much of Debussy's compositional thought grew from his desire to establish a viable musical language that formed an alternative to the hegemonic might exerted by the Austro-German symphonic tradition.

Debussy – who explored non-diatonic scale systems, the music of the Far East (including the music of the gamelan), and ideas adopted from the 'morbid Romanticism' of French symbolist art and poetry to create an inimitable musical language – has now come to define our perceptions of *fin de siècle* French music. Debussy is inextricably associated with the Impressionist Movement, and to an extent this association is correct: just as the Impressionist artists sought to take their painting into what Odilon Redon called 'the ambiguous world of the indeterminate', Debussy moved away from 'direct representation of form' by crafting new formal structures and instrumental colours.

Debussy's music communicates a great sweep of sound impressions, evoking strange and exotic worlds, but equally, to place too much emphasis on these aspects of his work detracts from the meticulous craft required to infuse coherence into his music. That he held J.M.W. Turner in the highest regard reveals more about Debussy's aesthetics than many of the more obvious (but equally valid) associations with Gauguin and Toulouse Lautrec – although these names (like those of Mallarmé and Verlaine) are important in our attempts to gain an impression of the world in which Debussy was working.

The extraordinary world of *fin de siècle Paris* was changed forever by the outbreak of war in 1914, and Debussy's final years were blighted not only by his terminal cancer but also by the crushing presence of the enemy forces just outside Paris. Having spent his life resisting the musical manifestation of these forces, to see the 'same' people seemingly try to subsume his country must have been agonising. His last compositions were a form of the most passionate yet rarefied patriotism: 'I want to work not so much for myself, but to give proof, however small it may be, that not even 30 million "boches" can destroy French thought.' The set of three works that comprise the uncompleted 'Six sonates pour divers instruments' – the Cello Sonata, the Violin Sonata (1917), and the Sonata for Flute, Viola and Harp (1915) – reflect a rich heritage of French musical life, stretching back to the seventeenth century.

The Cello Sonata was one of two Sonatas written in the summer of 1915 while staying in a villa in coastal Pourville. He described the work as a piece whose 'proportions are almost classical in form, [and] that in the best sense of the word'. The Prologue is symmetrical, with three main themes, and has its roots in the *commedia dell'arte* with the cello taking the multi-faceted role of Pierrot. With this in mind, it is easy to imagine a theatrical narrative for this movement. The Sérénade is representative of the inner self of the Pierrot figure. Pierrot's tortured psychology is akin to the tragically conflicted Petrouchka in Stravinsky's ballet. The Finale, which has four main theme groups is more disjointed and virtuosic than the previous movements, but is a profound and noble statement of the 'French thought' which Debussy sought to preserve. It becomes clear to see how Debussy used his music as an intellectual and emotional weapon against everything that threatened his country and culture – and this music has continued to animate his world for musicians and audiences nearly a century after Debussy's death.

Maurice Ravel (1875-1937)

Don Quichotte à Dulcinée (Paul Morand)

Chanson Romanesque

Chanson épique

Chanson à boire

Ravel's short song cycle originated from a commission to write music for a film of the Don Quixote story. The commission came from the film's director, the Austro-Bohemian Georg Wilhelm Pabst. Unfortunately, the head injury that Ravel suffered in

a taxi accident in 1932 interrupted his work on the score. Although the injury did not immediately appear serious, it resulted in ongoing and disturbing neurological symptoms. Pabst realised that Ravel would not fulfil the commission – and in fact, Pabst had already commissioned music from other composers, so he could select what he wanted – so eventually Jacques Ibert provided the music for the film. Ravel completed three songs for baritone voice and piano, or orchestra, and published the cycle as *Don Quichotte à Dulcinée*. Sensual and witty, this beguiling bouquet of songs uses Spanish dance rhythms to animate the text: in ‘Chanson Romanesque’, the *quajira* (alternating between 6/8 and 3/4 metres, in a continuous hemiola effect), in ‘Chanson épique’ the *zortzico* (a Basque rhythm in 5/8), and in ‘Chanson à boire’ the *jota* (a quick dance, here an extrovert, bibulous waltz). Don Quixote’s ardent longing for his Dulcinea, his grandiose and lurching attempts at courtly chivalry, and his congenial optimism all radiate from Ravel’s seductive music.

Programme note © Corrina Connor 2017

Arthur Honegger

Trois poèmes de Paul Fort

Le chasseur perdu en forêt

Quand le son du cor s'endort,
gai chasseur ne tarde! –
Déjà les sentiers regardent
avec l'oeil creux de la mort
passer l'avalanche
des hauts chevaux sous les branches.

Cavalier,
Quel beau squelette
enfourche ta bête ?
Adieu chasse, adieu galops! –
Alors s'éveille indistincte
puis s'enfle la plainte
de l'étang rouge aux oiseaux.

Cloche du soir

Ah! ce soir là vraiment tout était si paisible
que le Champ du Repos était sur le chemin,
et l'Angélus du soir d'une cloche invisible,
croisait deux beaux sons clairs sur le front des
humains.

La lumière de l'ombre et ce halo de lune,
les sons de l'Angélus et leur mystique appel
versaient des charites dans l'âme
O crépuscule, un petit cimetière ouvre une
heure éternelle

L'angélus va mourir que dis-je il est encore
c'est lui qui tremble aubord de ce nuage d'or
c'est lui qui tremble aussi dans le signe de
croix que
font ces deux rayons d'argent croisant leurs voies

Ah! ce soir là mourut de l'éternel bonheur
que le champ du repos offre sur le chemin
et l'Angélus mourant vint planter sur mon coeur
sa blanche croix mystique et signa mon destin.

*When the sound of the horn falls asleep
Happy huntsman do not linger! –
Already, with the hollow eye of death
the paths watch the avalanche
of tall horses passing by beneath the branches.*

*Horseman, what handsome skeleton straddles
your beast? Farewell hunt, farewell gallops!
Then, the indistinct lament of the red pond of the birds
Awakes and swells.*

*Ah! truly that night, all was so calm, that the Field of Rest
was along the wayside,
And the evening Angelus, from an invisible bell
pealed two times, fine and clear,
Making an invisible sign of the cross on
humanity's brow.*

*The shadow's light, and the halo of the moon,
The chimes of the Angelus, and their mystical appeal
Brought the soul into grace.
O dusk! A small cemetery brings forward the hour of
eternity.*

*The Angelus will die, what do I say, it still exists.
It is that which trembles on the edge of that golden cloud.
It is that which trembles too, in the sign of the cross,
Made by the crossed paths of two silver rays.*

*Ah! That evening died of the eternal bliss which the
Field of Rest offers up along the wayside.
The dying Angelus placed its mystical white cross on my
heart,
And sealed my fate.*

Chanson de fol

Les sorciers et les fées dansent sur
le côteau. Leurs pas brûlants font des 8 noirs
sous les méteils. Ils dansent de la nuit venue au
jour nouveau pour honorer le saint qui nourrit
les abeilles.

Et sept nuits et sept jours ils font la ronde
encor, jusqu'au huitième soir où, géantes
cigales, les fées jouent de la flûte et les sorciers
du cor pour honorer le dieu qui nourrit
les étoiles.

*The sorcerers and the fairies are dancing on the hill.
Their burning steps make black 8
beneath the maslin. They dance from the coming of
night until the new day to pay homage to the saint who
feeds the bees.*

*And seven nights and seven days more they
dance, until the eighth evening when, like giant
cicadas, the fairies play the flute and the sorcerers the
horn to pay homage to the god who feeds
the stars.*

André Caplet (1878-1925)

Nuit d'automne (Henri de Régnier)

Le couchant est si beau, parmi
Les arbres d'or qu'il ensanglante
Que le jour qui meurt à demi,
Retarde sa mort grave et lente.

Le crépuscule, sur les roses,
Est si pur, si calme et si doux,
Que toutes ne se sont pas closes
Et que j'en cueille une pour vous.

Les feuilles chuchotent si bas,
Une à une ou toutes ensemble
D'arbre en arbre, qu'on ne sait pas,
Si tu ris, ou si le bois tremble.

La rivière coule si douce
Entre les roseaux bleus des prés
Si douce, si douce, si douce
Qu'on ne sait pas si vous pleurez.

La nuit d'ombre, de soie et d'or
Du fond du silence est venue,
Et l'automne est si tiède encor
Que tu pourras t'endormir nue.

*The sinking sun, so beautiful, among
The golden trees it bloodies,
That the half dying day
Delays its solemn, slow death.*

*Dusk on the roses
Is so pure, so calm, so soft
That all are not yet closed
And I gather one for you.*

*The leaves whisper so gently,
One by one, or together
From tree to tree, that one does not know
If you are laughing or the woods are trembling.*

*The river runs so softly
Between the blue reeds of the meadows,
So soft, so soft, so soft
That one cannot tell if you are crying.*

*The night of shadows, of silk and gold
Has come from the depth of silence,
And autumn is so warm
That you could sleep naked.*

Quand reverrai-je, hélas! (Joachim du Bellay)

Quand reverrai-je, hélas, de mon petit village
Fumer la cheminée, et en quelle saison
Reverrai-je le clos de ma pauvre maison,
Qui m'est une province, et beaucoup davantage?

*When, alas, will I see again, my little village
The smoke of the chimney, and in which season,
Will I see the walled garden of my poor house,
Which to me is a country and much more?*

La croix douloureuse

Hélas! si vous l'aviez voulu, Seigneur,
elles ne couleraient pas de mes yeux
ces larmes brûlantes que je répands
en Votre présence ;

si vous l'aviez voulu, ils vivraient
et seraient encore près de moi,
ces êtres tendrement aimés,
dont la mort a brisé mon cœur.

Mais j'adore Votre volonté,
dont les desseins sont impénétrables,
et qui est toujours miséricordieuse
jusque dans ses rigueurs apparentes ;

j'essaye de m'y soumettre sans murmure;
je courbe la tête et j'accepte,
ô mon Dieu, en l'unissant à la Vôtre,
la croix dont Vous m'accablez.

Je vous conjure seulement de m'aider à la porter.

*Alas! If you had willed it, Lord,
That my eyes would not flow with
These burning tears that I shed
In Your presence;*

*If you had willed it, they would live still
And would be near me,
These tenderly loved beings,
Whose death has broken my heart.*

*But I adore your will,
Whose designs are impenetrable,
And who is always merciful
Even in its apparent rigors;*

*I try to submit to it without murmuring;
I bend my head and I accept,
O my God, by uniting it to
The cross with which you overwhelm me.*

I beg you only to help me carry it.

Claude Debussy (1862-1918)

Beau Soir (Paul Bourget)

Lorsque au soleil couchant les rivières sont roses
Et qu'un tiède frisson court sur les champs de blé,
Un conseil d'être heureux semble sortir des
choses
Et monter vers le cœur troublé.

Un conseil de goûter le charme d'être au monde
Ce pendant qu'on est jeune et que le soir est
beau,
Car nous nous en allons, comme s'en va cette
onde:
Elle à la mer, nous au tombeau.

*When the rivers are pink in the setting sun,
And a warm trembling runs over the wheat fields,
Advice to be happy seems to rise up from things
And climb toward the troubled heart.*

*Advice to taste the charm of being in the world
While one is young and the evening is beautiful,
For we are going away, as this stream goes away:
The stream to the sea, we to the grave*

Les cloches (Paul Bourget)

Les feuilles s'ouvraient sur le bord des branches
Déliatement.
Les cloches tintaient, légères et franches,
Dans le ciel clément.

Rythmique et fervent comme une antienne,
Ce lointain appel
Me remémorait la blancheur chrétienne
Des fleurs de l'autel.

Ces cloches parlaient d'heureuses années,
Et, dans le grand bois,
Semblaient reverdir les feuilles fanées,
Des jours d'autrefois.

Romance (Paul Bourget)

L'âme évaporée et souffrante,
L'âme douce, l'âme odorante
Des lys divins que j'ai cueillis
Dans le jardin de ta pensée,
Où donc les vents l'ont-ils chassée,
Cette âme adorable des lys?

N'est-il plus un parfum qui reste
De la suavité céleste
Des jours où tu m'enveloppais
D'une vapeur surnaturelle,
Faites d'espoir, d'amour fidèle,
De béatitude et de paix?...

Les anges (Grégoire Le Roy)

Cloches chrétiennes pour les matines,
Sonnant au cœur d'espérer encore!
Angelus angelisés d'aurore!
Las! Où sont vos prières câlines?

Vous étiez de si douce folies!
Et chanterelles d'amours prochaines!
Aujourd'hui souveraine est ma peine.
Et toutes matines abolies.

Je ne vis plus que d'ombre et de soir;
Les las angelus pleurent la mort,
Et là, dans mon cœur résigné, dort
La seule veuve de tout espoir.

*The leaves were delicately opening
along the branches.
The bells were ringing, light and clear,
in the clement sky.*

*Rhythmic and fervent, like an ancient chant,
this distant call
reminded me of the Christian whiteness
of Alter flowers.*

*The bells spoke of happy years,
and in the great wood
the withered leaves of bygone days
seemed to grow green once again.*

*The soul, vanishing and suffering,
The sweet soul, the fragrant soul
Of divine lilies that I have picked
In the garden of your thoughts,
Where, then, have the winds chased it,
This charming soul of the lilies?*

*Is there no longer a perfume that remains
Of the celestial sweetness
Of the days when you enveloped me
In a supernatural haze,
Made of hope, of faithful love,
Of bliss and of peace? ...*

*Christian bells for Matins
Sounding in the heart to continue hope
Angelus, angelic in the dawn
Alas! Where are your caressing prayers?*

*You were full of such sweet follies
And lures of coming love.
My mistress is my suffering
And all Matins are abolished.*

*I could only see shadow and night anymore
Alas! The Angelus bell cries death
And there, in my resigned heart,
Sleeps the only widow of all hope.*

Arthur Honegger (1892-1955)

Six poèmes de Guillaume Apollinaire

À la Santé

Que lentement passent heures
Comme passe un enterrement

Tu pleureras l'heure où tu pleures
Qui passera trop vite
Comme passent toutes les heures.

*How slowly the hours pass
The way a funeral passes*

*You'll miss your tearful hour
It will go by too quickly
How all hours pass.*

Clotilde

L'anémone et l'ancolie
Ont, poussé dans le jardin
Où dort la mélancolie
Entre l'amour et le dédain

*Anemone and columbine
Where gloom has lain
Opened in gardens
Between love and disdain*

Il y vient aussi nos ombres
Que la nuit dissipera
Le soleil qui les rends sombres
Avec elles disparaîtra

*Made sombre by the sun
Our shadows meet
Until the sun
Is squandered by night*

Les déités des eaux vives
Laissent couler leurs cheveux
Passe, il faut que tu poursuives
Cette belle ombre que tu veux

*Gods of living water
Let down their hair
And now you must follow
A craving for shadows*

(transl. Donald Revell)

Automne

Dans le brouillard s'en vont un paysan cagneux
Et son bœuf lentement dans le brouillard
d'automne
Qui cache les hameaux pauvres et vergogneux

*In the fog a farmer with a hobbled leg
And his ox pass slowly by, in the autumn fog
That hides the villages, beggared and dumb.*

En s'en allant là-bas le paysan chantonne
Une chanson d'amour et d'infidélité
Qui parle d'une bague et d'un cœur que l'on
brise

*And as he passes you hear the farmer hum
A song about love and an unfaithful lover
It tells of a ring and a heart that is broken*

Oh! l'automne, l'automne à fait mourir l'été
Dans le brouillard s'en vont deux silhouettes
grises.

*Oh, autumn, autumn has made summer die.
In the fog, pass by two grey silhouettes*

Saltimbanques

Dans la plaine les baladins
S'éloignent au long des jardins
Devant l'huis des auberges grises
Par les villages sans églises

Et les enfants s'en vont devant
Les autres suivent en rêvant
Chaque arbre fruitier se résigne
Quand de très loin il lui font signe

Ils ont des poids ronds ou carrés
Des tambours des cerceaux dorés
L'ours et le singe animaux sages
Quêtent des sous sur leurs passage

L'Adieu

J'ai cueilli ce brin de bruyère
L'automne est morte souviens-t'en
Nous ne nous verrons plus sur terre
Odeur du temps brin de bruyère
Et souviens-toi que je t'attends

Les cloches

Mon beau tzigane mon amant
Écoute les cloches qui sonnent
Nous nous aimions éperdûment
Croyant n'être vus de personne

Mais nous étions bien mal cachés
Toutes les cloches à la ronde
Nous ont vu du haut des clochers
Et le disent à tout le monde

Demain Cyprien et Henri, Marie,
Ursule et Catherine
La boulangère et son mari
Et puis Gertrude ma cousine

Souriront quand je passerai
Je ne saurai plus où me mettre
Tu seras loin je pleurerai
J'en mourrai peut-être.

*The strolling entertainers appear like smoke
And walk through the churchless village
Passing the door of the grey inn
And off like smoke across the plain*

*And the children run in front and mime
The others follow in a dream
Fruit trees resign themselves to pillage
Once the music wakes the village*

*They carry odd-shaped props
And noisy drums, and gilded hoops
And the wise animals, the bear and a monkey,
Seek pennies on their way.*

*I picked this sprig of heather.
Autumn is dead – remember.
We will never see each other again on this earth.
Odor of time, sprig of heather,
and remember that I am waiting for you.*

*My gipsy beau my lover
Hear the bells above us
We loved passionately
Thinking none could see us*

*But we so badly hidden
All the bells in their song
Saw from heights of heaven
And told it everyone*

*Tomorrow Cyprien Henry
Marie Ursule Catherine
The baker's wife her husband
and Gertrude that's my cousin*

*Will smile when I go by them
I won't know where to hide
You far and I'll be crying
Perhaps I shall be dying*

Maurice Ravel (1875-1937)

Don Quichotte à Dulcinée (Paul Morand)

Chanson Romanesque

Si vous me disiez que la terre
À tant tourner vous offensa,
Je lui dépêcherais Pança:
Vous la verriez fixe et se taire.

Si vous me disiez que l'ennui
Vous vient du ciel trop fleuri d'astres,
Déchirant les divins cadastres,
Je faucherais d'un coup la nuit.

Si vous me disiez que l'espace
Ainsi vidé ne vous plaît point,
Chevalier dieu, la lance au poing.
J'étoilerais le vent qui passe.

Mais si vous disiez que mon sang
Est plus à moi qu'à vous, ma Dame,
Je blêmirais dessous le blâme
Et je mourrais, vous bénissant.

Ô Dulcinée...

Chanson épique

Bon Saint Michel qui me donnez loisir
De voir ma Dame et de l'entendre,
Bon Saint Michel qui me daignez choisir
Pour lui complaire et la défendre,
Bon Saint Michel veuillez descendre
Avec Saint Georges sur l'autel
De la Madone au bleu mantel.

D'un rayon du ciel bénissez ma lame
Et son égale en pureté
Et son égale en piété
Comme en pudeur et chasteté:
Ma Dame,

(Ô grands Saint Georges et Saint Michel)
L'ange qui veille sur ma veille,
Ma douce Dame si pareille
À Vous, Madone au bleu mantel!
Amen.

*If you were to tell me that the earth
Offended you so much with its turning,
I would send Panza to deal with it.
You would see it still and silent.*

*If you were to tell me that you are wearied
By a sky too studded by stars –
Tearing aside the divine order,
I'd scythe the night with a single blow.*

*If you were to tell me that space itself,
Thus emptied, was not to your liking –
As a god-like knight, with lance in hand,
I'd sow the fleeting wind with stars.*

*If you were to tell me that my blood
Is more mine, my Lady, than yours,
I'd blanche at your admonishment,
And blessing you, would die.*

Oh, Dulcinea...

*Good Saint Michael, who gives me leave
To behold and hear my Lady,
Good Saint Michael, who deigns to elect me
To please her and defend her,
Good Saint Michael, descend, I pray
With St George on the altar
Of the blue-robed Madonna.*

*With heavenly beam, bless my blade,
And its equal in purity,
And its equal in piety
As in modesty and chastity,
My Lady.*

*(O great St Michael and St George)
Bless the angel watching my vigil,
My sweet Lady, so like unto thee,
O Madonna, robed in blue!
Amen.*

Chanson à boire

Foin du bâtard, illustre Dame,
Qui pour me perdre à vos doux yeux
Dit que l'amour et le vin vieux
Mettent en deuil mon coeur, mon âme!

Ah! Je bois à la joie!
La joie est le seul but
Où je vais droit...
Lorsque j'ai ... lorsque j'ai bu!

Foin du jaloux, brune maîtresse,
Qui geint, qui pleure et fait serment
D'être toujours ce pâle amant
Qui met de l'eau dans son ivresse!

Ah! Je bois à la joie!
La joie est le seul but
Où je vais droit...
Lorsque j'ai ... lorsque j'ai bu!

*A pox on the bastard, renowned Lady,
Who, to defame me in your sweet eyes
Says that love and old wine
Are saddening my heart and soul!*

*I drink
To joy!
Joy is the only goal
To which I go straight ... when ...I am...drunk!*

*A pox on the jealous wretch, O dusky mistress,
Who whines and cries and vows
Always to be this querulous lover,
Who dilutes his drunkenness!*

*I drink
To joy!
Joy is the only goal
To which I go straight ... when ...I am...drunk!*

André Caplet

Trois Fables de Jean de La Fontaine

Le corbeau et le renard

Maître Corbeau, sur un arbre perché,
Tenait en son bec un fromage.
Maître Renard, par l'odeur alléché,
Lui tint à peu près ce langage:
Hé! Bonjour, Monsieur du Corbeau.
Que vous êtes joli! Que vous me semblez beau!
Sans mentir, si votre ramage
Se rapporte à votre plumage,
Vous êtes le phénix des hôtes de ces bois.
A ces mots le corbeau ne se sent pas de joie;
Et, pour montrer sa belle voix,
Il ouvre un large bec, laisse tomber sa proie.
Le renard s'en saisit, et dit: Mon bon monsieur,
Apprenez que tout flatteur
Vit aux dépens de celui qui l'écoute:
Cette leçon vaut bien un fromage, sans doute.
Le corbeau, honteux et confus,
Jura, mais un peu tard, qu'on ne l'y prendrait plus

*Mister Raven, perched on a tree,
Held a cheese in his beak.
Mister Fox, enticed by the smell,
Addressed him in language like this:
Oh! Good morning, Mr. Raven.
How pretty you are! How beautiful you seem to me!
In truth, if your song
is like your plumage,
You are the phoenix of the hosts of this wood.
At these words the raven becomes overjoyed;
And, to show off his beautiful voice,
He opens his beak wide and lets his prey fall.
The fox grabs it and says: My dear man,
Learn that every flatterer
Lives at the expense of the one who listens to him.
No doubt, that lesson is easily worth a cheese.
The raven, ashamed and confused,
Swore, though somewhat belatedly, that he would never be
taken again.*

La cigale et la fourmi

La cigale, ayant chanté
Tout l'été,
Se trouva fort dépourvue
Quand la bise fut venue.
Pas un seul petit morceau
De mouche ou de vermisseau.

*The grasshopper, having sung
All summer long,
Found herself most destitute,
When the North Wind came.
Not a morsel to her name
Of either fly or worm.*

Elle alla crier famine
 Chez la Fourmi sa voisine,
 La priant de lui prêter
 Quelque grain pour subsister
 Jusqu'à la saison nouvelle.
 «Je vous paierai, lui dit-elle,
 Avant l'août, foi d'animal,
 Intérêt et principal.»
 La Fourmi n'est pas prêteuse;
 C'est là son moindre défaut.
 «Que faisiez-vous au temps chaud?
 Dit-elle à cette emprunteuse.
 -- Nuit et jour à tout venant
 Je chantais, ne vous déplaie.
 -- Vous chantiez? j'en suis fort aise.
 Et bien! dansez maintenant.»

*She blurted out her tale of want
 To her neighbour Mistress Ant,
 And begged her for a loan
 Of grain to last her
 Till the coming spring.
 "I shall pay you", were her words,
 "On insect oath, before the fall,
 Interest and principal."
 That's the last thing to reproach her with!
 "Tell me how you spent the summer?"
 Was what she asked the borrower.
 "Night and day, to every comer,
 I sang, so please you ma'am."
 "You sang? I'm delighted.
 Now off you go and dance!"*

Le loup et l'agneau

La raison du plus fort est toujours la meilleure :
 Nous l'allons montrer tout à l'heure.

*The right of the stronger... is always better:
 We will prove it right now.*

Un agneau se désaltérait
 Dans le courant d'une onde pure.
 Un loup survint à jeun, qui cherchait aventure,
 Et que la faim en ces lieux attirait.
 Qui te rend si hardi de troubler mon breuvage ?
 Dit cet animal plein de rage :
 Tu seras châtié de ta témérité.
 Sire, répond l'agneau, que Votre Majesté
 Ne se mette pas en colère ;
 Mais plutôt qu'elle considère
 Que je me vas désaltérant
 Dans le courant,
 Plus de vingt pas au-dessous d'elle ;
 Et que, par conséquent, en aucune façon
 Je ne puis troubler sa boisson.
 Tu la troubles ! reprit cette bête cruelle ;
 Et je sais que de moi tu médis l'an passé.
 Comment l'aurais-je fait, si je n'étais pas né ?
 Reprit l'agneau : je tette encore ma mère. --
 Si ce n'est toi, c'est donc ton frère. --
 Je n'en ai point. -- C'est donc quelqu'un des
 tiens ;
 Car vous ne m'épargnez guère,
 Vous, vos bergers et vos chiens.
 On me l'a dit : il faut que je me venge.
 Là-dessus, au fond des forêts
 Le loup l'emporte, et puis le mange,
 Sans autre forme de procès.

*A lamb was quenching its thirst
 In the current of a pure flow.
 A wolf looking for adventure, and whom hunger has
 Attracted to these parts, suddenly appears on an empty
 stomach.
 "Who is so hardy as to muddy my waters?"
 Says this animal full of rage.
 You will be punished for your temerity.
 "Sire," the lamb responds, "May Your Majesty
 not get angry:
 But may he instead consider
 That I am quenching my thirst
 in the current,
 More than twenty paces below him;
 And that, therefore,
 in no way can I muddy his drink."
 "You are muddying it!" that cruel beast continued;
 "And I know that you spoke ill of me last year."
 "How could I have done so if I wasn't born yet?"
 Continued the lamb; I am still nursing."
 "If it wasn't you, then it was your brother."
 "I haven't any brother." -- "Then it's one of yours;
 For you hardly spare me,
 You, your shepherds, and your dogs.
 Others have been telling me that I must avenge myself."
 Up there, in the heart of the forest
 The wolf drags him off and then eats him,
 With no other form of process.*

Born in London into a musical family, **Simon Wallfisch** studied cello, voice and conducting at the Royal College of Music between 2000 and 2006.

During his studies in London, he was awarded several prizes including The Georg Solti Foundation, Emmy Destinn Foundation, Giuseppe Di Stefano Competition Sicily, The DAAD, Countess of Munster Trust, The English Speaking Union and the Royal Overseas League “Young Singer of Promise” 2005.

In 2006 Wallfisch left London for studies in Berlin (Hanns Eisler Hochschule für Musik 2006-2007) and Leipzig (Hochschule für Musik und Theater Felix Mendelssohn-Bartholdy 2007-2009) During this time he appeared as guest artist at the Leipzig Opera (Nozze di Figaro), Magdeburg Opera, Dessau Opera (7 Todsünden), Altenburg-Gera Opera (Das Operschiff), Potsdam Sans Souci Schlosstheater (Una Festa Teatrale), and the Ludwigsberger Schloss Festspiele.

Subsequently he was engaged at the International Opera Studio of the Zurich Opera House (2009-2012) singing many supporting roles on the main stage.

Recent roles include FIERAMOSCA in Berlioz Benvenuto Cellini (Staatsoper Nürnberg 2016) MARCELLO Puccini La Bohème (Teatro Verdi Casciana Terme, Pisa 2016) ESCAMILLO La Tragedie de Carmen (National Reis Opera, Holland 2013). PELLEAS and ALBERT (English Touring Opera 2015).

In January 2015, Simon Wallfisch broadcast on BBC 2 Television, he is frequently invited to perform live on Radio 3's 'In Tune'. A documentary film about his family was made for ARTE. He has appeared on Bayerische Rundfunk/Fernsehen, Mittel Deutsche and Nord Deutsche Rundfunk and Schweizer Rundfunk SRF2. He was recently featured artist on Arte 'Geschichte Der Musik', broadcast in January 2016.

His growing number of recordings with regular duo partner Edward Rushton include *Songs of Geoffrey Bush* on Lyrita Records and *French Songs* on Nimbus Records.

In international demand as concert artist and recitalist, Simon has performed Lieder recitals in Denmark, Sweden, France, Italy, Germany, Switzerland, Israel, Australia and Canada. UK appearances include the Oxford Lieder Festival, London's Festival Hall, Purcell Room, King's Place, Conway Hall, London Song Festival, Allwyn Festival, Lichfield Festival, International Wimbledon Festival, Leamington Music Festival. In 2016, he was invited by Murray Perahia to give singing classes at the Jerusalem Music Centre in Israel. He gave a recital with Julius Drake in the 2016 Schwerin Verfaemte Musik Festival where he was also a jury member for the 2016 competition. He is a trustee of the International Centre for Suppressed Music (ICSM) dedicated to research and performance of suppressed composers. He has adjudicated at the Birmingham Conservatoire and is passionate about education and has a busy teaching studio.

Edward Rushton studied piano (with Renna Kellaway) and composition at Chetham's School of Music in Manchester, before going on to read Music at King's College, Cambridge. After graduation in 1994 he took the MMus degree in composition at the Royal Scottish Academy of Music and Drama, while being increasingly active as an accompanist, working with student singers and instrumentalists. In his second year in Glasgow, Edward held the post of Broadwood Junior Fellow in Accompaniment. In 2001 he graduated with distinction from Irwin Gage's masterclass in Lied interpretation at the Zurich University of Applied Arts. He has been teaching piano accompaniment at the Musikhochschule Luzern since 2000.

He has played numerous song recitals in the UK, Germany, Switzerland, France, Belgium, Italy and Greece with such singers as Juliane Banse, Sybille Diethelm, Jeannine Hirzel, Lena Kiepenheuer, Theresa Kronthaler, Yvonne Naef, Robin Adams, Richard Burkhard, Michael Mogl, René Perler, Jakob Pilgram, László Polgár, Jonathan Sells and Simon Wallfisch. He is a member of the Harry White Trio, and of the Miravia Duo, with pianist Alison Cullen.

His love for Lieder and song led him in 2015 to found, together with a group of like-minded singers and pianists, the company "Besuch der Lieder" ("The Company of Song") in order to further the performance of Lieder in private spaces in Switzerland.

His discography includes CDs for Guild, Musiques Suisses, Musicaphon, Bis, Lyrita and Nimbus with singers Jeannine Hirzel, Robin Adams, Sybille Diethelm, Valentin Gloor, Simon Wallfisch and Saxophonist Harry White.

Edward is also in demand as a composer, with recent works performed and commissioned by the Schubert Ensemble, Birmingham Contemporary Music Group, Tonhalle Orchestra Zurich, Leeds Lieder, Orchestra of the National Theatre Mannheim, London Symphony Orchestra, Counterpoise, The Choir of Gonville and Caius College, Cambridge, Harry White Trio, Gemischter Chor Zürich, Origen Festival, University of Zurich. His operas have been performed throughout Switzerland, Germany, the UK and in Philadelphia. Composing for voice and piano also forms a core part of his oeuvre, and he has already written over twenty song cycles and individual works in this, one of his favourite genres.

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