

PROGRAMME

SERGEI PROKOFIEV (1891 – 1953)	Overture on Hebrew Themes Op 34	9'
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COLIN MCPHEE (1900 – 1964)	Lagoe Sesoeloelingan Ardja	3'
KOSAKU YAMADA (1886 – 1965)	Akatombo	3'
JONATHAN DOVE (1959 –)	The Tree of Many Names from Minterne	3'
MICHIO MIYAGI (1894 – 1956)	Haru no Umi	6'
~ ~ ~		
JOHANNES BRAHMS (1833 – 1897)	Neun Lieder und Gesänge Op 32 (i) Wie rafft ich mich auf in der Nacht (ii) Nicht mehr zu dir zu gehen (iii) Ich schleich umher (iv) Der Strom, der neben mir verrauschte (v) Wehe, so willst du mich wieder (vi) Du sprichst, dass ich mich täuschte (vii) Bitteres zu sagen denkst du (viii) So stehn wir, ich und meine Weide (ix) Wie bist du, meine Königin	22'

INTERVAL

WOLFGANG AMADEUS MOZART (1756 – 1791)	Rondo ‘alla Turca’ From Sonata No 11 in A major K331	4’
~ ~ ~		
JUDITH WEIR (1954 –)	Natural History (i) Horse (ii) Singer (iii) Swimmer (iv) Fish/Bird	14’
~ ~ ~		
ERIC WHITACRE (1970 –)	Temuna from Five Hebrew Love Songs	2’
ERNEST BLOCH (1880 – 1959)	Prayer from From Jewish Life	4’
NIKOLAI RIMSKY-KORSAKOV (1844 – 1908) arr. FRITZ KREISLER (1875 – 1962)	Chanson Arabe (The Young Prince and the Young Princess) from Scheherazade Danse Orientale (The Story of the Kalendar Prince) from Scheherazade	7’
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CLAUDE DEBUSSY (1862 – 1918) arr. BENNO SACHS (1882 – 1968)	Prélude à l’après-midi d’un faune	10’

Texts & translations for sung works may be found below

ARTISTS

Aoife Miskelly	<i>soprano</i>	Simon Tandree	<i>viola</i>
Johnny Herford	<i>baritone</i>	Cara Berridge †	<i>cello</i>
Fiona Slominska	<i>flute</i>	Torun Stavseng ††	<i>cello</i>
James Turnbull	<i>oboe</i>	John Tattersdill	<i>double bass</i>
John Slack	<i>clarinet</i>	Richard Pinel	<i>harmonium</i>
Jamie Campbell *	<i>violin</i>	James Baillieu ‡	<i>piano</i>
Hannah Dawson **	<i>violin</i>	Libby Burgess ‡‡	<i>piano</i>
Maria Włoszczowska ***	<i>violin</i>		

* Dove, Miyagi, Whitacre

** Prokofiev, Rimsky-Korsakov, Debussy

*** Prokofiev, Debussy

† Prokofiev, Dove, Bloch

†† Debussy

‡ Mozart, Whitacre, Bloch, Rimsky-Korsakov, Debussy

‡‡ Prokofiev, McPhee, Yamada, Miyagi, Brahms, Weir

ABOUT THE MUSIC

Since time immemorial people from all starting points across the globe have looked to the East for inspiration, with the daily rising of the sun. Edward Said, in his classic study *Orientalism*, writes, 'The Orient is ... the source of [Europe's] civilizations and languages, its cultural contestant, and one of its deepest and most recurring images of the Other.'

Appropriately for this festival context, Prokofiev's *Overture on Hebrew Themes* grew out of the collaboration of friendship – exactly a century ago. After the Revolution of 1917, Prokofiev left Russia – believing that Russia 'had no use for music at this time' – and moved to the United States. Here he gave initial piano performances, but then concentrated his efforts on his opera, *The Love for Three Oranges*, commissioned by the Chicago opera; the premiere of the opera was delayed, however, owing to the music director's illness, and by this time Prokofiev had also ceased working on his solo career. His ensuing financial difficulties cut short his time in America, and he moved to Paris to try his luck there (a veritable artistic melting pot at the time, where he went on to work with Stravinsky, and many others). Prokofiev's residence in the US may have been short-lived, but it's from this time that this *Overture* stems. Early in 1919, he was commissioned by the Russian sextet, the Zimro Ensemble, to write a new piece. They had just arrived in America from the Far East, on a world tour sponsored by the Russian Zionist Organisation, and gave Prokofiev a notebook of Jewish folksongs on which to base the new work. It has since been suggested that the melodies Prokofiev chose may in fact have been composed by members of the group, as they have never been traced to any authentic sources – but nonetheless they are deeply evocative of the Jewish musical language. The clarinet features particularly prominently (the Zimro Ensemble clarinetist was Simeon Bellison, trained in Moscow and former principal clarinetist of the Mariinsky Theatre), and through stomping rhythms, sharp dynamics, and pitch bends, a veritable klezmer band is conjured up. The *Overture on Hebrew Themes* was premiered at the Bohemian Club in New York in 1920, with Prokofiev as guest pianist, and was

subsequently repeated at Carnegie Hall; although Prokofiev himself didn't much like the work, and remarked, 'I don't understand what sort of obtuse people could have found it necessary to reorchestrate it', he was subsequently persuaded to make a version for chamber orchestra in 1934, in which version the piece is often also performed.

Canadian composer, ethnomusicologist, pianist and writer Colin McPhee is best known for being the first Western composer to make an ethnomusicological study of Bali, and also composed music influenced by that of Bali and Java decades before such compositions became widespread, the ostinato style of which in turn influenced American minimalist composition that followed. He studied with Edgar Varèse and was involved in the circle of experimental composers known as the 'ultra-modernists', led Henry Cowell, who were particularly interested in what would later become known as 'world music'. From first hearing cylinder recordings of Balinese music he was entranced; together with his anthropologist wife he lived in Bali in the 1930s, notating the melodies and rhythmic devices of every gamelan he heard. He also wrote transcriptions for Western instruments – including *Lagoe Sesoeloelingan Ardja* for flute and piano – and original compositions full of the sound, melodies, and rhythms of gamelan music. As part of the Dutch East Indies, Bali was subjected to Nazi witch-hunts, which included throwing foreigners into prison, so McPhee was forced to leave his beloved island; being gay, he also at this time divorced his wife. Thereafter he lived in a large brownstone in Brooklyn, shared with other artists and literary figures such as Leonard Bernstein, WH Auden, Benjamin Britten (who was in the US during the war), and various others (McPhee, Britten, and Bernstein are said to have fought frequently over who got to play the grand piano). It was McPhee who introduced Britten to the tantalising music and dance of Balinese culture, and it was through this connection that Britten came to cultivate his own interest and eventual study of Balinese materials, later integrating them into many of his works (from *The Prince of the Pagodas* to *Death in Venice*). The pair played one another's music, performed a few concerts together, and in 1941

recorded together five of McPhee's Balinese transcriptions for two pianos. On Britten's score of McPhee's *Balinese Ceremonial Music*, the composer's inscription reads: 'To Ben – hoping he will find something in this music, after all. Colin. April, 1940.'

At the same time as Prokofiev was in the US, and McPhee was studying at Peabody, the young Japanese composer Kosaku Yamada was also in America, basing himself in New York from 1918 to 1920, after completing his studies in Tokyo and Berlin (the latter with Bruch). In his life Yamada wrote over 1,600 pieces of music, including some 700 songs and one of the most famous Japanese operas in the repertoire, *Kurofune* (The Black Ships). As a conductor, Yamada introduced many orchestral works to Japan, giving the first performances in the country of Debussy's *Prélude à l'après-midi d'un faune*, Dvořák's ninth symphony and Shostakovich's first, Gershwin's *An American in Paris*, Sibelius' *Finlandia*, Strauss' *An der schönen blauen Donau*, and Wagner's *Siegfried Idyll*. Above all Yamada is remembered for his song ***Akatombo*** ('Red Dragonfly'), a children's song composed in 1927, and often voted as one of the most popular Japanese songs there is. Many respected composers and poets in the 1920s sought to create songs for children that were more beautiful and emotional than the standard children's songs of the time – especially the pedantic, moralistic songs prescribed by the Ministry of Education, Science and Culture; these new style of songs were called *dōyō*, and they are not merely children's songs but also art songs for adults. The 1921 poem *Akatombo* by Rofū Miki is a nostalgic memory of childhood, depicting a Japanese red dragonfly seen at sunset by an infant who is carried on an older sister's shoulder; at the time of telling this older sister – something of a mother figure – is no longer present, having married at the age of 15, and moved far away, no longer sending news back to the speaker's village. As well as a universal nostalgia for childhood, the song taps into the displacement of families with the rapid urbanization of modern Japan in the early twentieth century. Miki's own mother had indeed been married at the age of fifteen; his parents then divorced when he was five years old, and his mother moved away, never to return. The last lines of the poem were written when he was only twelve. His mother, Kata

Midorikawa, became a significant figure in the women's movement during Japan's Meiji period; she died aged 91 in 1962, and her gravestone was inscribed with the words 'At rest here, little dragonfly's mother'.

Amongst the many fans of Vikram Seth's writing, from the days of his first novel *Golden Gate* in 1980, was composer Jonathan Dove, who was 'musically very attracted by the deceptively simple eloquence and rhythmic clarity of his verse'. Dove subsequently set some of Seth's poems *All you who sleep tonight* in 1996, and the pair later had cause to collaborate in 2007. Veronica Stewart – a patron of the arts – commissioned Seth to write a set of poems, *Minterne*, for her close friend The Lady Dione Digby, to celebrate the 45th anniversary of the Summer Music Society of Dorset (which has since ceased to exist, but which was founded and run by Lady Digby and welcomed high calibre performers to Dorset). The poems celebrate the history of Minterne House (ancestral home of the Digby family for over 350 years) and the beauty of its gardens: amongst these is a large woodland-style Rhododendron garden, which is given shade by many mature trees, including more unusual specimens such as *Davidia involucrata* ('handkerchief tree') – a tree which originates from a remote region of China, and was introduced to Europe in the nineteenth century. Each flower head has a pair of large, pure white bracts at the base performing the function of petals: these hang in long rows beneath the level branches and, on a breezy day, flutter in the wind like white doves, ghosts or pinched handkerchiefs – hence this song's title, ***The Tree of Many Names***. The cycle was premiered by Patricia Rozario, Philippe Honoré and Steven Isserlis.

(The tree's journey to Europe is a story worth telling in itself: French and Scottish naturalists found single trees – on mountainsides of over 6,000 feet, and in the Yangtse gorge – in the 1860s and 70s, and the tree became something of a holy grail for plant hunters. Sir Harry Veitch, later part of establishing the Chelsea Flower Show, sent plant collectors across the globe, including Ernest Wilson. With the help of one of the previous discoverers, he eventually located the site, just in time to find that the tree had in fact just been felled for timber. It took him two years to find another, hanging over a precarious cliff edge. He

managed to obtain specimens, but on the way back to England his boat was wrecked. Thankfully both he and the *Davidia* survived, and the tree lives – albeit rarely – in this country to this day.)

The national instrument of Japan is the koto: a stringed instrument made of kiri wood, it is almost two meters long, with thirteen strings strung over thirteen movable bridges along the width of the instrument, which are plucked using thumb, index finger, and middle finger. One of the most famous koto players of modern times was Michio Miyagi: by his untimely death, falling from a train, in 1956, he had written more than 500 pieces, improved Japanese string instruments, participated in one of the first radio presentations in Japan, and published more than ten books. Japanese music in the early-twentieth-century Meiji and Taishō eras – like wider Japanese culture of the same time – was considered ‘under threat’ from westernisation (ever since the government had opened the country for foreign trade), and Miyagi was key in forming a new style of Japanese music, *Shin Nihon Ongaku*, which adapted Western elements of music to Japanese instruments, in a style that retained a Japanese character. He achieved notability in this field, and in this vein wrote *Haru no Umi* (The Sea in Spring), his most famous piece, in 1929. It is inspired by his childhood image (from before he lost his sight at the age of eight) of the sea at Tomonoura, a beautiful historic port on the southern point of the Numakuma Peninsula, where he grew up. *Haru no Umi* was written for koto and shakuhachi (a Japanese longitudinal end-blown bamboo-flute), but when the French violinist Renée Chemet was touring Japan and heard Miyagi perform it, she arranged the shakuhachi part for violin; she and Miyagi then recorded it in this version and gained worldwide notability after the issuing of the albums in Japan, the US and the UK.

In the same way as Sunday’s Vaughan Williams songs are significant for being his first settings of Whitman – a poet he would return to time and again – Brahms’ *Lieder und Gesänge* Op 32 are his first settings of Daumer, whose words he would set more than any other poet (including in his popular *Liebeslieder-Walzer*). Georg Friedrich Daumer was an eclectic writer; he wrote much

original material, but also made many translations or adaptations of Persian, Spanish, and Indian poems – in particular of the great Persian poet Hafiz (see similarly Goethe and Rückert in Sunday’s *Myrthen*). Much of Daumer’s output leans towards the sensual or erotic, and – certainly seen in this set – there is often an ardent yearning that must somehow be suppressed without a certainty of fulfillment. Whilst it is insulting to any composer’s imagination to think that s/he can only set texts that mirror their own life experience, it is of course possible that Brahms was drawn to these texts because he found in them an expression of his own feelings. He was deeply insecure about his own self-worth and abilities – musically, physically, and personally. He was lifelong unable to commit to a close romantic relationship (perhaps in part owing to these deep-rooted insecurities – and, probably connected, perhaps in part owing to his childhood experience of what today would be termed sexual abuse at the hands of prostitutes and sailors in the brothels of Hamburg, where he played the piano). His only brief engagement was called off, and no further serious romantic relationships followed. And yet throughout their long lives he and Clara Schumann were exceptionally close – rarely did more than a couple of weeks go past without their seeing one another – and, both musicians of the highest order, they turned without fail to one another first for advice, comment or support. When Robert Schumann was taken into an asylum and subsequently died, it was Brahms who ran to Clara’s side to support her and the family – all the while probably tormented by the impossibility of being with his mentor’s widow. They were, in essence, lifelong platonic lovers (whether or not they were briefly more is one of the great unknowns of music history, but also hardly relevant). Certainly the sense running through some of these poems of ‘not being good enough’, and of the need to suppress how he truly felt, was deeply familiar to Brahms. The theme of impossibility was inescapable also for the other poet featured in this set, August von Platen: gay, in a world where homosexuality was heavily criminally persecuted and denial was the only permitted attitude of all, Platen spent his life swinging between disappointments and frustrations, repeatedly falling in love with heterosexual friends, and struggling to maintain a loving relationship; his diary describes in detail his

complex and unsatisfying love life. Von Platen's poetry was mocked by Heine for its *Orientsucht* – its obsession with the Orient – to which von Platen responded by criticising Heine for his Jewishness; Heine responded with an equally low blow and publically outed von Platen for his homosexuality, causing the young poet to flee Germany and live out his (short) years in Italy. Brahms' Op 32 songs are the composer's first mature group of works for solo voice, whose piano parts in particular are more developed than his earlier songs: it is often the rich textures and rhythmic complexity in the piano writing which captures the trapped, dark, bitter or hopeless feelings of the texts – and yet the set ends with one of the most simply beautiful of all Brahms' songs, melting as only he can – the love song *Wie bist du, meine Königin*.

Over the sixteenth, seventeenth and eighteenth centuries the Austrian Empire had seen repeated combat with the Ottoman Empire – two great empires, of military might and cultural riches, in a battle not just for land but for the survival and expansion of their respective religions, Christianity versus Islam. Perhaps counterintuitively, given the threat of invasion, all things Ottoman were very much in vogue in Vienna in Mozart's time, presenting Turks either as bloodythirsty and dangerous, or temptingly exotic, or just an object of scorn. Mozart's opera *Die Entführung aus dem Serail*, for example, is set in a seraglio, a type of Ottoman harem. The Ottoman janissary band – the oldest form of military marching band in the world, elite infantry fighters made up of the Sultan's household soldiers, strictly trained from childhood – was a very familiar sound from the streets of Vienna, with its cacophonous drums, bells and cymbals, and inspired Mozart's *Rondo alla Turca* (often played as a freestanding piece, but actually written as the third movement of his Sonata for Piano No 11, in 1783). It takes inspiration from the clipped rhythms of the marching bands – particularly the marching rhythm 'left – right – left right left', and also the snapped grace notes flourishing before the beat. Audiences of the day would have delighted in the frightening yet exciting exoticism of this Turkish music. Owing to the demand for imitating these military marching bands, piano builders began including pedals on their pianos by which clamorous snare and bass

drums, bells, cymbals, or the triangle could be played by the touch of a pedal while simultaneously playing the keyboard: these 'janissary pedals' were widely used in performing *Rondo alla Turca*.

Judith Weir (Master of the Queen's Music, in which role she succeeded Sir Peter Maxwell Davies, whose music can be heard tomorrow night) is best known for her operas and theatrical works, and this vivid spirit imbues *Natural History*. The work was commissioned by the Boston Symphony Orchestra, who gave the premiere with Dawn Upshaw and Sir Simon Rattle in 1999; in 2016 at Libby Burgess' suggestion a reduction was published for piano accompaniment, in which form the set is performed tonight. Weir's music often draws on sources from medieval history (as in *King Harald's Saga*, heard in 2018), or the traditional music of her parents' homeland, Scotland, but here she turns instead to *Chuang-tzu*, a Taoist collection of writings from the 4th – 2nd century BC, the oldest of which are known as *The Inner Chapters*, ascribed to Chuang-Tzu himself; from here the parables about natural life as lived by different species, human and animal, are selected ('a Taoist Carnival of the Animals', in the composer's words). She writes:

My interest in Chinese philosophical literature began in my teens, and was directly inspired by my enthusiasm for the writings of John Cage, in which ancient Chinese ideas are frequently connected to musical models. The texts of *Natural History* (which I have considerably compressed, from the translation by A. C. Graham) are typical of the qualities I most enjoy amongst this literature; concision, clarity, lightness and (hidden) wisdom. I am well aware that my own interpretations of these ancient wisdoms may be idiosyncratic, and spring from an avowedly Western sensibility. But nevertheless, these are ideas with which, in my own way, I have long been familiar; and I have for some time considered Taoism to be the most helpful of established philosophies in the conduct of modern life.

1. Horse. The text discriminates between the natural behaviour of wild

horses and the unfortunate consequences of training them. An analogy with the behaviour of people is unspoken but implied.

2. Singer. This is the story of a singer who lived (as many musicians do) in the most straitened, poverty-stricken circumstances; but he possessed a magnificent voice, and was therefore, in Taoist reality, richer and greater than anyone else.

3. Swimmer. At the opening of the song, a man is glimpsed swimming, and perhaps drowning, in the throes of a massive and rocky orchestral chasm. But in mid-song, he climbs out of the waters and sings to his interlocutor (who happens to be Confucius) a jaunty melody in which he explains his simple mastery of the waves.

4. Fish/Bird. A giant creature of incredible dimensions, which appears as both fish and bird, is described in a passage which seems to me to describe our uncomprehending perceptions of the infinite.

Known primarily as a composer and conductor of choral music, Eric Whitacre writes of his ***Five Hebrew Love Songs***:

In the spring of 1996, my great friend and brilliant violinist Friedemann Eichhorn invited me and my girlfriend-at-the-time Hila Plitmann (a soprano) to give a concert with him in his home city of Speyer, Germany. We had all met that year as students at the Juilliard School, and were inseparable. Because we were appearing as a band of traveling musicians, 'Friedy' asked me to write a set of troubadour songs for piano, violin and soprano. I asked Hila (who was born and raised in Jerusalem) to write me a few 'postcards' in her native tongue, and a few days later she presented me with these exquisite and delicate Hebrew poems. I set them while we vacationed in a small skiing village in the Swiss Alps, and we performed them for the first time a week later in Speyer.

The songs have since been adapted for choir, in which form they are frequently performed.

Ernest Bloch is often thought of as one of the major Swiss composers in history, yet spent much of his adult life in the US. Born to Jewish parents (in Geneva), Bloch had a strongly religious upbringing, his father at one stage intending to become a rabbi. As an adult he stated that writing music which expressed his Jewish identity was 'the only way in which I can produce music of vitality and significance', and much of his musical output – with Hebrew titles – draws heavily on his Jewish heritage. In 1920 he was appointed the first Musical Director of the newly formed Cleveland Institute of Music – one of numerous academic appointments during his career – and it was whilst here, probably in 1924, that he wrote the short set ***From Jewish Life***, dedicated to the Dutch-American cellist Hans Kindler (who studied with Casals, gave chamber music recitals with Rachmaninoff and Ravel, and played in the world premiere of Schoenberg's *Pierrot Lunaire*). Bloch wrote that in *From Jewish Life* his intent was not to reconstruct authentic Jewish music or melodies, but to capture the complex, ardent Jewish spirit and soul. The use of Eastern European Ashkenazi modality creates a distinctive atmosphere: Alexander Knapp writes that, in ***Prayer***, 'the key of F minor incorporates elements of the *Magen Avot* and *S'lichah* modes of the synagogue; but it is the *Ahava Rabba* mode (known more colloquially as *Freigish*) that predominates in the coda.'

In the late 1850s and early 1860s a group of composers in their twenties joined forces in St Petersburg, trying to create a school of nationalist and distinctly Russian music: just as nationalism at large sought to throw off the yoke of imperial power, allowing nations to become free to determine their own identity, culture and future prosperity, so this group eschewed European models of music (Italian opera and Germanic chamber music) in favour of Russian symphonic work. Balakirev, Cui, Borodin, Rimsky-Korsakov and Mussorgsky became known variously as 'The Five' or 'The Mighty Handful'. Much of Rimsky-Korsakov's music was inspired by fairy tale and folklore – often Russian, but in one famous case, Arabic: *One Thousand and One Nights* is a collection of Middle Eastern folk tales compiled in Arabic during the Islamic Golden Age, collected over many centuries by various authors, translators, and scholars across West, Central

and South Asia, and North Africa (with the roots of some tales tracing back to ancient and medieval Arabic, Persian, Indian, Greek, Jewish and Turkish folklore and literature). The East, and the study of it, featured greatly in the history of Imperial Russia, and was thus 'permissibly' foreign in the context of this growing nationalism – and so Rimsky-Korsakov began in 1887 to write his gloriously colourful symphonic suite *Scheherazade*, the name referring to the main character Shahrazad of *One Thousand and One Nights*. For the premiere the following year, which he conducted in St Petersburg (and which showed the work to be immediately hugely popular), Rimsky-Korsakov wrote the following introduction:

The Sultan Schariar, convinced that all women are false and faithless, vowed to put to death each of his wives after the first nuptial night. But the Sultana Scheherazade saved her life by entertaining her lord with fascinating tales, told *seriatim*, for a thousand and one nights. The Sultan, consumed with curiosity, postponed from day to day the execution of his wife, and finally repudiated his bloody vow entirely.

At the same time as *Scheherazade* was being written, the 12-year old Austrian violinist Friedrich-Max Kreisler was preparing for the Premier Grand Prix de Rome in Paris, at which he won the gold medal, competing against forty other players, all of whom were at least twenty years old. He of course became one of the great violinists of the twentieth century, and, in addition to touring and recording all the great works of the repertoire, 'Fritz' Kreisler also wrote a number of his own compositions, often solos for encores. In some cases they were pastiches ostensibly in the style of other composers, originally ascribed to earlier composers such as Tartini or Vivaldi (faced with criticism when in 1935 he revealed that it was he who wrote the pieces, Kreisler replied that those critics had in fact already deemed the compositions worthy, regardless of who wrote what: 'the name changes, the value remains'). The origins of his two arrangements of movements from *Scheherazade* however could never be disputed, as the original work was so well known. *Chanson Arabe* features the music of the original movement *The Young Prince*

and *the Young Princess*, whilst *Danse Orientale* is from *The Story of the Kalendar Prince*. It feels entirely apt to have arranged this music for violin: throughout the original orchestral work, it is a solo violin that represents Scheherazade bewitching the Sultan with her intoxicating tales.

Mallarmé's poem *L'après-midi d'un faune* (The Afternoon of the Faun) is often cited as one of the great texts in all French literature, but it took a decade of attempting to persuade publishers to take it on before it finally appeared in print in 1876. The poem describes in a dreamlike monologue the sensual experiences of a faun – half man, half goat, with perhaps a hint of deity – who has just woken up from his afternoon sleep, and silently contemplates cavorting nymphs and other forest creatures on a warm sunny afternoon. Mallarmé, the leading symbolist poet, was in many ways ahead of his time, and Debussy was similarly progressive with his impressionist orchestral response to this poem. For all that Stravinsky's 1913 *Rite of Spring* (see this afternoon) was completely game-changing in the history of music, there was much that was radical in this music of Debussy: the *Prélude* dates from 1894, and its prioritising of texture over melodic and harmonic development, its extended harmonic language and novel orchestral colour, and the sensual nature of its subject matter, made it one of the key forerunners of the more flamboyantly radical works by Stravinsky and Schoenberg. Debussy's music is highly chromatic, and littered with whole-tone scales, which create a sense of the exotic. Debussy had attended the Paris Exposition Universelle back in 1889, an extraordinary fair of exhibits from right across the globe (for which the Eiffel Tower was built, to mark the 100th anniversary of the French Revolution). He was enthralled by the gamelan music and the dancing which he witnessed in the Javanese pavilion, returning time and again to watch and listen, and influences from this experience found their way into much of the music he wrote after this – most explicitly in such pieces as *Pagodes*, but more subtly, with harmonic experimentations, with the layering of textures (a feature of Gamelan), and with the use of the delicate Antique Cymbals, in this prelude too. *Prélude à l'après-midi d'un faune* was extremely well received at its premiere (the only work of Debussy's to be

encored at its first hearing), and has remained at the heart of the orchestral repertoire since. Nijinsky's subsequent choreography to the work, however, was met with disapproval: again in parallel with *The Rite of Spring*, the dance moves were considered ugly and stilted – and what had remained suggestive in both poem and music, became openly erotic, particularly in the final scene, where the faun, frustrated and saddened by the inability to seduce his nymph playmates, appeared to be satisfying himself instead. Pierre Boulez considered the score to be the beginning of modern music, observing that 'the flute of the faun brought new breath to the art of music'. Mallarmé was unhappy that his poem was set to music, feeling the text alone should suffice; however, after attending the premiere performance at Debussy's invitation, he wrote to the composer:

I have just come out of the concert, deeply moved. The marvel! Your illustration of the Afternoon of a Faun, which presents no dissonance with my text, but goes much further, really, into nostalgia and into light, with finesse, with sensuality, with richness. I press your hand admiringly, Debussy. Yours, Mallarmé

In the autumn 1918, Arnold Schoenberg (from whom we heard on Thursday morning)

founded the Verein für musikalische Privataufführungen (Society for Private Musical Performances) in Vienna; for three years they gave about one concert a week, of music from 'Mahler to the present' – including works by Bartók, Berg, Busoni, Korngold, Mahler, Ravel, Reger, Satie, Strauss, Stravinsky, Webern, and of course Debussy. The players at these events were chosen from among the most gifted young musicians available, and each work was rehearsed intensively, usually under Schoenberg himself. Only those who had joined the organisation were admitted to the events, and the ethos of rigour and comprehensibility was strong: critics were excluded, an event's programme was not revealed in advance, applause was not permitted, and complex works were sometimes played more than once in the same concert (even five or six times) to allow its listeners properly to get to grips with them. Much of the music performed in these concerts inevitably was chamber music, but larger works were also arranged, ranging from Mahler's fourth symphony, to Debussy's *Prélude à l'après-midi d'un faune* – the latter in today's arrangement by Benno Sachs, student of Schoenberg.

Programme notes: Libby Burgess

TEXTS & TRANSLATIONS

あかとんぼ

Text: **Rofū Miki** (1889 – 1964)

夕焼、小焼の、
あかとんぼ、
負われて見たのは
いつの日か。
山の畑の、
桑の実を、
小籠（こかご）に、つんだは、
まぼろしか。
十五で、姐（ねえ）やは、
嫁にゆき、
お里の、たよりも、
たえはてた。
夕やけ、小やけの、
赤とんぼ。
とまっているよ、
竿の先。

AKATOMBO

Yuuyake koyake no
Akatombo...
Owarete mitano wa
Itsu no hi ka

Yama no hatake no
Kuwano mi wo
Kokago ni tsunda wa
Maboroshi ka

Juugo de neeya wa
Yome ni yuki...
Osato no tayori mo
Taehateta

Yuyake koyake no
Akatombo...
Tomatte iru yo
Sao no sakia

RED DRAGONFLIES

Red dragonflies are flying
in the sunset glow.
I wonder when it was
I saw them on someone's back.

We picked mulberries
in the mountain field,
and put them in a small basket.
Or was it just a dream?

The nursemaid who took care of
me married and left when she
was fifteen,
and after that no news about her
arrived from her hometown.

Red dragonflies are flying
in the sunset glow.
One of them is now resting
at the end of a pole.

THE TREE OF MANY NAMES

Text: **Vikram Seth** (1952 –)

One morning, one morning in May
As we strolled hand in hand beneath the tree
The sun rose. We could see
The fluttering doves emerge from out the mist.
There was no more to say.
We kissed.

One evening, one evening in May
As I strolled by myself beneath the tree
The moon rose. I could see
The handkerchiefs that shivered as they slept.
There was no more to say.
I wept.

One midnight, one midnight in May
As, old at last, I strolled beneath the tree
The starlight let me see
The trembling ghosts that wooed me as they cried.
There was no more to say.
I died.

~ ~ ~

WIE RAFFT ICH MICH AUF IN DER NACHT

Text: **August von Platen** (1796 – 1835)

Wie rafft ich mich auf in der Nacht, in der Nacht,
Und fühlte mich fürder gezogen,
Die Gassen verließ ich, vom Wächter bewacht,
Durchwandelte sacht
In der Nacht, in der Nacht,
Das Tor mit dem gotischen Bogen.

Der Mühlbach rauschte durch felsigen Schacht,
Ich lehnte mich über die Brücke,
Tief unter mir nahm ich der Wogen in Acht,
Die wallten so sacht
In der Nacht, in der Nacht,
Doch wallte nicht eine zurücke.

Es drehte sich oben, unzählig entfacht
Melodischer Wandel der Sterne,
Mit ihnen der Mond in beruhigter Pracht,
Sie funkelten sacht
In der Nacht, in der Nacht,
Durch täuschend entlegene Ferne.

Ich blickte hinauf in der Nacht, in der Nacht,
Und blickte hinunter aufs neue;
O wehe, wie hast du die Tage verbracht,
Nun stille du sacht,
In der Nacht, in der Nacht,
Im pochenden Herzen die Reue!

NICHT MEHR ZU DIR ZU GEHEN

Text: **Georg Friedrich Daumer**
(1800 – 1875)

Nicht mehr zu dir zu gehen,
Beschloß ich und beschwor ich,
Und gehe jeden Abend,
Denn jede Kraft und jeden Halt verlor ich.

Ich möchte nicht mehr leben,
Möcht' augenblicks verderben,
Und möchte doch auch leben
Für dich, mit dir, und nimmer, nimmer
sterben.

Ach, rede, sprich ein Wort nur,
Ein einziges, ein klares;
Gib Leben oder Tod mir,
Nur dein Gefühl enthülle mir, dein wahres!

HOW I LEAPT UP IN THE NIGHT

Translation: **Richard Stokes**

How I leapt up in the night, in the night,
And felt myself drawn onward,
I left the streets, patrolled by the watch,
Quietly walked on
In the night, in the night,
Through the gate with the Gothic arch.

The millstream rushed through the rocky gorge,
I leaned over the bridge,
Far below me I watched the waves
That flowed so quietly
In the night, in the night,
But not a single wave ever flowed back.

The countless, kindled stars above
Went on their melodious way,
With the moon in tranquil splendour—
They glittered quietly
In the night, in the night,
Through deceptively distant space.

I gazed aloft in the night, in the night,
And gazed down again once more;
Oh how have you spent your days, alas,
Now quietly silence
In the night, in the night,
The remorse that pounds in your heart!

NEVER TO GO TO YOU AGAIN

Translation: **Richard Stokes**

Never to go to you again,
So I decided and so I vowed,
And go each evening,
For I've lost all strength and all resolve.

I wish to live no more,
Would sooner die at once,
And yet would sooner live
For you, with you, and never, never die.

Ah! speak, say but a word,
A single one, a clear one;
Give me life or death,
But show me how you really feel!

ICH SCHLEICH UMHERText: **August von Platen** (1796 – 1835)

Ich schleich umher
 Betrübt und stumm,
 Du fragst, o frage
 Mich nicht, warum?
 Das Herz erschüttert
 So manche Pein!
 Und könnt ich je
 Zu düster sein?

Der Baum verdorrt,
 Der Duft vergeht,
 Die Blätter liegen
 So gelb im Beet,
 Es stürmt ein Schauer
 Mit Macht herein,
 Und könnt ich je
 Zu düster sein?

DER STROM, DER NEBEN MIR VERRAUSCHTEText: **August von Platen** (1796 – 1835)

Der Strom, der neben mir verrauschte, wo ist er nun?
 Der Vogel, dessen Lied ich lauschte, wo ist er nun?
 Wo ist die Rose, die die Freundin am Herzen trug,
 Und jener Kuß, der mich berauschte, wo ist er nun?
 Und jener Mensch, der ich gewesen, und den ich längst
 Mit einem andern ich vertauschte, wo ist er nun?

WEHE, SO WILLST DU MICH WIEDERText: **August von Platen** (1796 – 1835)

Wehe, so willst du mich wieder,
 Hemmende Fessel, umfassen?
 Auf, und hinaus in die Luft!
 Ströme der Seele Verlangen,
 Ström es in brausende Lieder,
 Saugend ätherischen Duft!

Strebe dem Wind nur entgegen,
 Daß er die Wange dir kühle,
 Grüße den Himmel mit Lust!
 Werden sich bange Gefühle
 Im Unermesslichen regen?
 Atme den Feind aus der Brust!

I CREEP ABOUTTranslation: **Richard Stokes**

I creep about,
 Troubled and silent,
 You ask me—oh, ask
 Me not—why?
 My heart is shaken
 By so much pain!
 And could I ever
 Be too gloomy?

The tree withers,
 Fragrance fades,
 Leaves lie so yellow
 In the flowerbed.
 A heavy shower
 Comes storming up,
 And could I ever
 Be too gloomy?

THE RIVER THAT RUSHED BY METranslation: **Richard Stokes**

The river that rushed by me, where is it now?
 The bird whose song I listened to, where is it now?
 Where is the rose my love wore on her heart,
 And that kiss which entranced me, where is it now?
 And that man I used to be, and whom I long ago
 Exchanged for another self, where is he now?

ALAS, WOULD YOU ONCE AGAINTranslation: **Richard Stokes**

Alas, would you once again
 Enchain me, restraining fetters?
 Up and out into the open!
 Pour out the soul's longing,
 Pour it into impassioned songs,
 Absorbing ethereal fragrance!

Struggle into the teeth of the wind,
 That it may cool your cheeks,
 Greet the heavens with joy!
 Can you feel anxiety,
 When confronted by the infinite universe?
 Breathe out the foe from your breast!

DU SPRICHT, DASS ICH MICH TÄUSCHTE
Text: **August von Platen** (1796 – 1835)

Du sprichst, dass ich mich täuschte,
Beschworst es hoch und hehr,
Ich weiß ja doch, du liebtest,
Allein du liebst nicht mehr!

Dein schönes Auge brannte,
Die Küsse brannten sehr,
Du liebtest mich, bekenn es,
Allein du liebst nicht mehr!

Ich zähle nicht auf neue,
Getreue Wiederkehr;
Gesteh nur, daß du liebtest,
Und liebe mich nicht mehr!

BITTERES ZU SAGEN DENKST DU
Text: **Georg Friedrich Daumer**
(1800 – 1875)

Bitteres zu sagen denkst du;
Aber nun und nimmer kränkst du,
Ob du noch so böse bist.
Deine herben Redetaten
Scheitern an korallner Klippe,
Werden all zu reinen Gnaden,
Denn sie müssen, um zu schaden,
Schiffen über eine Lippe,
Die die Süße selber ist.

SO STEHN WIR, ICH UND MEINE WEIDE
Text: **Georg Friedrich Daumer**
(1800 – 1875)

So stehn wir, ich und meine Weide,
So leider mit einander beide:

Nie kann ich ihr was tun zu Liebe,
Nie kann sie mir was tun zu Leide.

Sie kränket es, wenn ich die Stirn ihr
Mit einem Diadem bekleide;

Ich danke selbst, wie für ein Lächeln
Der Huld, für ihre Zornbescheide.

YOU TELL ME I WAS MISTAKEN
Translation: **Richard Stokes**

You tell me I was mistaken,
You swore it by all you hold dear,
Yet I know you loved me once,
But no longer love me now!

Your beautiful eyes smouldered,
Your kisses even more,
You loved me once, confess it,
But no longer love me now!

I do not ever expect you
To love me faithfully again;
Just confess you loved me once
And no longer love me now!

YOU MEAN TO SAY BITTER THINGS
Translation: **Richard Stokes**

You mean to say bitter things;
But neither now nor ever do you hurt me,
However angry you may be.
Your bitter recriminations
Founder on a coral reef,
Become pure graciousness,
For, in order to inflict damage,
They must sail over lips
That are sweetness itself.

SO HERE WE STAND, I AND MY HEART'S DESIRE
Translation: **Richard Stokes**

So here we stand, I and my heart's desire,
At loggerheads with each other:

I can never please her,
She can never hurt me.

It offends her, when I set a diadem
On her brow;

I even thank her, as I would for a gracious
Smile, for her outbursts of anger.

WIE BIST DU, MEINE KÖNIGIN
Text: **Georg Friedrich Daumer**
(1800 – 1875)

Wie bist du, meine Königin,
Durch sanfte Güte wonnevoll!
Du lächle nur—Lenzdüfte wehn
Durch mein Gemüte wonnevoll!

Frisch aufgeblühter Rosen Glanz
Vergleich ich ihn dem deinigen?
Ach, über alles was da blüht,
Ist deine Blüte, wonnevoll!

Durch tote Wüsten wandle hin,
Und grüne Schatten breiten sich,
Ob fürchterliche Schwüle dort
Ohn Ende brüte, wonnevoll.

Laß mich vergehn in deinem Arm!
Es ist in ihm ja selbst der Tod,
Ob auch die herbste Todesqual
Die Brust durchwüte, wonnevoll.

HOW BLISSFUL, MY QUEEN, YOU ARE
Translation: **Richard Stokes**

How blissful, my queen, you are,
By reason of your gentle kindness!
You merely smile, and springtime fragrance
Wafts through my soul blissfully!

Shall I compare the radiance
Of freshly blown roses to yours?
Ah! more blissful than all that blooms
Is your blissful bloom!

Roam through desert wastes,
And green shade will spring up—
Though fearful sultriness broods
Endlessly there—blissfully.

Let me perish in your arms!
Death in your embrace will be—
Though bitterest mortal agony rage
Through my breast—blissful.

~ ~ ~

NATURAL HISTORY
Text: **Chuang Tzu** (4th century BCE)

HORSE

The horse has hooves to tread the frost and snow, a coat to chase away wind and cold. It champs the grass and drinks the stream, it lifts the knee and prances. Such is the nature of the horse; it needs no lofty halls, and no palaces.

There came a man who said, "My talent is ordering horses."

He clipped them, he shaved them, he singed them, branded them, tied them with bridle and rein; and in stable and stall, he starved them, he parched them, made them trot, made them gallop, in formation, neck to neck, tormented by bit and reins in front, by whip and goad behind, and the horses that thrived on it were two or three out of ten.

Is it the nature of wood to long for the carpenter's plane? Does clay yearn for the touch of the potter's hand? This is the error of order.

SINGER

When Tzeng Tzu lived, his gown was torn, his face was blotched, his hands were hard. He lit no fires, he had no coat, his elbows showed through torn-up cloth, his shoes were burst and down at heel; but when he sang the Hymns of Shang!...

...The Son of the Heavens could not touch him; the Lord of the States could not make him his friend; the sound filled sky and earth, as if from bells and chimes of stone:

"Forget body, forget profit", he sang. "To find perfection, forget the calculations of the heart".

SWIMMER

There was a rock where water fell, and foamed for forty miles; it was a place where fish and turtles could not swim, but in the waves, Confucius saw a man. He took him for someone in trouble who wanted to die; but the swimmer rose out of the water and climbed on the bank with a song on his lips:

"I was born in dry land, I grew up in the waves, I go out with the flow, I follow the Way of the water. That is how I stay afloat."

FISH/BIRD

In the Northern Ocean, there is a fish, its name is the K'un; it is a fish a thousand miles broad, no-one knows how long. It changes into a bird, its wings are like clouds that hang from the sky. It leaves a wake in the water, three thousand miles; it rides in the wind, nine thousand miles high; it is gone six months before it is out of breath.

All below looks the same as above; the haze of the heat, the dust storms, the sky at its back and a clear view ahead.

Is it true that the sky is azure? Or is it the infinite distance? Is it true?

~ ~ ~

TEMUNÁ

Text: **Hila Plitmann** (1973 –)

Temuná belibí charuntá;
Nodédet beyn ór uveyñ ófel:
Min dmamá shekazó et guféch kach otá,
Usaréch al paña'ich kach nófel.

A PICTURE

Translation: **Hila Plitmann**

A picture is engraved in my heart;
Moving between light and darkness:
A sort of silence envelopes your body,
And your hair falls upon your face just so.