



FILLING THE  
CITY WITH  
SONG

# LEEDS LIEDER

“...a compact triumph of  
outstanding art song”

Sunday Times

**Benson Wilson *baritone***

**Ella O'Neill *piano***

Ferrier Awards Winner's Recital

---

THE KATHLEEN  
FERRIER

A W A R D S

PATRON: HRH THE DUCHESS OF KENT GCVO

---

**Sunday 25 April 2021**

**3.00pm**

**Leeds Town Hall**

**Ferrier Awards Winner's Recital**

**Maumahara / Remembrance**

**Mahler**

**from *Des Knaben Wunderhorn***

Wo die schönen Trompeten blasen  
Revelge

**Butterworth**

**Six Songs from *A Shropshire Lad***

Loveliest of trees  
When I was one-and-twenty  
Look not in my eyes  
Think no more, Lad  
The lads in their hundreds  
Is my team ploughing?

**Kurt Weill**

**Four Walt Whitman Songs**

Beat! Beat! Drums!  
O Captain! My Captain!  
Dirge for two veterans.

**Robert Wiremu**

Oriori O Nohomaiterangi

Victory and Glory, Ake ake kia kahe e!

# Leeds Lieder Concert Season 2020-21

## Ferrier Awards Winner's Recital

Benson Wilson - *baritone*  
Ella O'Neill - *piano*

**Gustav Mahler** (1860-1911)

from: *Des Knaben Wunderhorn*

### ***Wo die schönen Trompeten blasen***

Wer ist denn draußen und wer klopft an,  
Der mich so leise, so leise wecken kann?  
Das ist der Herzallerliebste dein,  
Steh auf und laß mich zu dir ein!

Was soll ich hier nun länger stehn?  
Ich seh die Morgenröt aufgehn,  
Die Morgenröt, zwei helle Stern,  
Bei meinem Schatz, da wär ich gern,  
Bei meiner Herzallerliebsten.

Das Mädchen stand auf und ließ ihn ein;  
Sie heißt ihn auch willkommen sein.  
Willkommen, lieber Knabe mein,  
So lang hast du gestanden!

Sie reicht ihm auch die schneeweiße Hand.  
Von ferne sang die Nachtigall  
Das Mädchen fing zu weinen an.

Ach weine nicht, du Liebste mein,  
Aufs Jahr sollst du mein eigen sein.  
Mein Eigen sollst du werden gewiß,  
Wie's keine sonst auf Erden ist.  
O Lieb auf grüner Erden.

Ich zieh in Krieg auf grüner Heid,  
Die grüne Heide, die ist so weit.  
Allwo dort die schönen Trompeten blasen,  
Da ist mein Haus, von grünem Rasen.

### ***Where the beautiful trumpets blow***

Who is outside, and who is knocking,  
Who can so softly, softly waken me?  
It is your heart's darling  
Get up and let me come in to you!

Why should I stand here any longer?  
I see the sky begin to turn pink,  
The dawn, two bright stars,  
I would like to be with my beloved,  
With my heart's darling.

The girl got up and let him in;  
In fact she welcomed him;  
Welcome, my beloved boy,  
You've been standing outside so long!

She stretched out her snow-white hand to him.  
In the distance a nightingale sang.  
The girl began to weep.

Oh, do not cry, my darling,  
Next year you will be my own!  
You will certainly be my own  
As no one else on earth is.  
O Love on the green earth!

I go to war on the green heath,  
The green heath that is so broad!  
It is there where the beautiful trumpets blow,  
There is my house of green grass!

## **Revelge**

Des Morgens zwischen drein und vieren,  
Da müssen wir Soldaten marschieren  
Das Gäßlein auf und ab;  
Tralali, tralaley, tralalera,  
Mein Schätzel sieht herab.

„Ach Bruder, jetzt bin ich geschossen,  
Die Kugel hat mich schwer getroffen,  
Trag mich in mein Quartier.  
Tralali, tralaley, tralalera,  
Es ist nicht weit von hier.“

„Ach Bruder, ich kann dich nicht tragen,  
Die Feinde haben uns geschlagen,  
Helf dir der liebe Gott;  
Tralali, tralaley, tralalera,  
Ich muß marschieren bis in Tod.“

„Ach, Brüder, ihr geht ja mir vorüber,  
Als wärs mit mir vorbei,  
Tralali, tralaley, tralalera,  
Ihr tretet mir zu nah.“

„Ich muß wohl meine Trommel rühren,  
Tralali, tralaley, tralali, tralaley,  
Sonst werd' ich mich verlieren,  
Tralali, tralaley, tralala,  
Die Brüder dick gesät,  
Sie liegen wie gemäht.“

Er schlägt die Trommel auf und nieder,  
Er wecket seine stillen Brüder,  
Tralali, tralaley, tralali, tralaley,  
Sie schlagen ihren Feind,  
Tralali, tralaley, tralalera,  
Ein Schrecken schlägt den Feind.

Er schlägt die Trommel auf und nieder,  
Da sind sie vor dem Nachtquartier schon wieder,  
Tralali, tralaley, tralali, tralaley,  
Ins Gäßlein hell hinaus,  
Sie ziehn vor Schätzleins Haus,  
Tralali, tralaley, tralali, tralaley, tralalera,  
Sie ziehn vor Schätzleins Haus.

Des Morgens stehen da die Gebeine,  
In Reih und Glied, sie stehn wie Leichensteine,  
Die Trommel steht voran,  
Daß sie ihn sehen kann.  
Tralali, tralaley, tralali, tralaley, tralalera,  
Daß sie ihn sehen kann

## **Reveille**

Of a morning between three and four  
We soldiers have to march  
Up and down the lane,  
Tralali, tralaley, tralalera,  
My sweetheart looks down on us.

“Oh comrade, I've been shot,  
The bullet has wounded me badly,  
Carry my back to my camp,  
Tralali, tralaley, tralalera,  
It's not far from here”.

“Oh comrade, I can't carry you,  
Our enemies have beaten us,  
May dear God help you,  
Tralali, tralaley, tralalera,  
I have to march on to meet my death”.

“Oh brother, you walk past me  
As if it was all up with me,  
Tralali, tralaley, tralalera,  
You walk too close to where I lie”.

“I must now start to beat my drum,  
Tralali, tralaley, tralalera,  
Or I shall be lost for ever,  
Tralali, tralaley, tralalera,  
Our comrades strewn so thick  
Now lie as if mown down”.

Up and down he beats his drum  
He wakes it silent comrades,  
Tralali, tralaley, tralalera,  
They fall upon their enemies,  
Tralali, tralaley, tralalera,  
The enemy is stricken with fear.

Up and down he beats his drum  
Soon they are all back in camp  
Tralali, tralaley, tralalera,  
Out into the bright lane.  
They pass before his sweetheart's house,  
Tralali, tralaley, tralalera,  
They pass before his sweetheart's house.

In the morning there lie the bones,  
In rank and file like tombstones.  
At their head the drummer boy  
So that she can see him,  
Tralali, tralaley, tralalera,  
So that she can see him.

**George Butterworth** (1885-1916)

*Alfred Edward Housman (1859 - 1936)*

***Loveliest of Trees***

Loveliest of trees, the cherry now  
Is hung with bloom along the bough,  
And stands about the woodland ride  
Wearing white for Eastertide.

And since to look at things in bloom  
Fifty springs are little room,  
About the woodlands I will go To  
see the cherry hung with snow.

Now, of my threescore years and ten,  
Twenty will not come again,  
And take from seventy springs a score,  
It only leaves me fifty more.

***When I was one-and-twenty***

When I was one-and-twenty  
I heard a wise man say,  
"Give crowns and pounds and guineas  
But not your heart away;  
Give pearls away and rubies  
But keep your fancy free."  
But I was one-and-twenty,  
No use to talk to me.

When I was one-and-twenty  
I heard him say again,  
"The heart out of the bosom  
Was never given in vain;  
'Tis paid with sighs a plenty  
And sold for endless rue."  
And I am two-and-twenty,  
And oh, 'tis true, 'tis true.

***Look not in my Eyes***

Look not in my eyes, for fear  
They mirror true the sight I see,  
And there you find your face too clear  
And love it and be lost like me.  
One the long nights through must lie  
Spent in star-defeated sighs,  
But why should you as well as I  
Perish? Gaze not in my eyes.

A Grecian lad, as I hear tell,  
One that many loved in vain,  
Looked into a forest well  
And never looked away again.  
There, when the turf in springtime flowers,  
With downward eye and gazes sad,  
Stands amid the glancing showers  
A jonquil, not a Grecian lad.

***Think no more, Lad***

Think no more, lad; laugh, be jolly;  
Why should men make haste to die?  
Empty heads and tongues a-talking  
Make the rough road easy walking,  
And the feather pate of folly  
Bears the falling sky.

Oh, 'tis jesting, dancing, drinking  
Spins the heavy world around.  
If young hearts were not so clever,  
Oh, they would be young for ever;  
Think no more; 'tis only thinking  
Lays lads underground.

***The Lads in their Hundreds***

The lads in their hundreds to Ludlow come in for the fair,  
There's men from the barn and the forge and the mill and the fold,  
The lads for the girls and the lads for the liquor are there,  
And there with the rest are the lads that will never be old.

There's chaps from the town and the field and the till and the cart,  
And many to count are the stalwart, and many the brave,  
And many the handsome of face and the handsome of heart,  
And few that will carry their looks or their truth to the grave.

I wish one could know them, I wish there were tokens to tell  
The fortunate fellows that now you can never discern;  
And then one could talk with them friendly and wish them farewell  
And watch them depart on the way that they will not return.

But now you may stare as you like and there's nothing to scan;  
And brushing your elbow unguessed-at and not to be told  
They carry back bright to the coiner the mintage of man,  
The lads that will die in their glory and never be old.

### ***Is my Team Ploughing***

"Is my team ploughing,  
That I was used to drive  
And hear the harness jingle  
When I was man alive?"

Ay, the horses trample,  
The harness jingles now;  
No change though you lie under  
The land you used to plough.

"Is football playing  
Along the river-shore,  
With lads to chase the leather,  
Now I stand up no more?"

Ay, the ball is flying,  
The lads play heart and soul;  
The goal stands up, the keeper  
Stands up to keep the goal.

"Is my girl happy,  
That I thought hard to leave,  
And has she tired of weeping  
As she lies down at eve?"

Ay, she lies down lightly,  
She lies not down to weep:  
Your girl is well contented.  
Be still, my lad, and sleep.

"Is my friend hearty,  
Now I am thin and pine,  
And has he found to sleep in  
A better bed than mine?"

Yes, lad, I lie easy,  
I lie as lads would choose;  
I cheer a dead man's sweetheart,  
Never ask me whose.

**Kurt Weill** (1900-1950)

*Four Walt Whitman songs*

### ***Beat! Beat! Drums!***

Beat! beat! drums! – blow! bugles! blow!  
Through the windows – through doors – burst like a ruthless force  
Into the solemn church, and scatter the congregation  
Into the school where the scholar is studying;  
Leave not the bridegroom quiet – no happiness must he have now with his bride  
Nor the peaceful farmer any peace, ploughing his field or gathering his grain  
So fierce you whirr and pound, you drums – so shrill you bugles blow

Beat! beat! drums! – blow! bugles! blow!  
Over the traffic of cities – over the rumble of wheels in the streets;  
Are beds prepared for sleepers at night in the houses?  
No sleepers must sleep in those beds —  
No bargainers bargains by day – no brokers or speculators – would they continue?  
Would the talkers be talking? would the singer attempt to sing?  
Would the lawyer rise in the court to state his case before the judge?  
Then rattle quicker, heavier drums — you bugles wilder blow

Beat! beat! drums! – blow! bugles! blow!  
Make no parley – stop for no expostulation  
Mind not the timid – mind not the weeper or prayer  
Mind not the old man beseeching the young man  
Let not the child's voice be heard, nor the mother's entreaties  
Make even the trestles to shake the dead where they lie awaiting the hearses  
So strong you thump O terrible drums – so loud you bugles blow

### ***O Captain! My Captain!***

O Captain! my Captain! our fearful trip is done;  
The ship has weather'd every rack, the prize we sought is won;  
The port is near, the bells I hear, the people all exulting  
While follow eyes the steady keel, the vessel grim and daring:  
But O heart! heart! heart!  
O the bleeding drops of red  
Where on the deck my Captain lies  
Fallen cold and dead

O Captain! my Captain! rise up and hear the bells;  
Rise up--for you the flag is flung--for you the bugle trills;  
For you bouquets and ribbon'd wreaths--for you the shores a-crowding;  
For you they call, the swaying mass, their eager faces turning;  
Here Captain! dear father!  
This arm beneath your head;  
It is some dream that on the deck  
You've fallen cold and dead

My Captain does not answer, his lips are pale and still;  
My father does not feel my arm, he has no pulse nor will;  
The ship is anchor'd safe and sound, its voyage closed and done;  
From fearful trip, the victor ship, comes in with object won;  
Exult, O shores, and ring, O bells!  
But I, with mournful tread  
Walk the deck my Captain lies  
Fallen cold and dead.

***Dirge for two veterans***

The last sunbeam  
Lightly falls from the finish'd Sabbath  
On the pavement here, and there beyond it is looking  
Down a new-made double grave

Lo, the moon ascending  
Up from the east the silvery round moon  
Beautiful over the house-tops, ghastly, phantom moon  
Immense and silent moon

I see a sad procession  
And I hear the sound of coming full-key'd bugles  
All the channels of the city streets they are flooding  
As with voices and with tears

I hear the great drums pounding  
And the small drums steady whirring  
And every blow of the great convulsive drums  
Strikes me through and through

For the son is brought with the father  
(In the foremost ranks of the fierce assault they fell  
Two veterans son and father dropt together  
And the double grave awaits them.)

And nearer blow the bugles  
And the drums strike more convulsive  
And the daylight o'er the pavement quite has faded  
And the strong dead-march enwraps me  
In the eastern sky up-buoying  
The sorrowful vast phantom moves illumin'd  
( 'Tis some mother's large transparent face  
In heaven brighter growing.)

O strong dead-march you please me!  
O moon immense with your silvery face you soothe me!  
O my soldiers twain! O my veterans passing to burial!  
What I have I also give you

The moon gives you light  
And the bugles and the drums give you music  
And my heart, O my soldiers, my veterans  
My heart gives you love

**Robert Wiremu**

***Oriori O Nohomaiterungi***

***Victory and Glory, Ake ake kia kahe e!***

## PROGRAMME NOTES

**Gustav Mahler**

**From *Des Knaben Wunderhorn***

*Des Knaben Wunderhorn* is a collection of folk poems published 1805-08 and edited (very freely) by Achim von Arnim and Clemens Brentano. It was very popular and was widely read throughout German-speaking countries. It was dedicated to Goethe, who responded in a review that it 'By rights ... this little book would find a place in every house where bright and vital people make their home ... Best of all, this volume might lie on the piano of the amateur or master of musical composition so that these songs might come into their own by being matched to familiar and traditional melodies, that they might have appropriate tunes fitted to them, or that, God willing, they will inspire new and significant melodies.'

Many composers, including Mendelssohn, Brahms, and Schoenberg, set songs from this collection but Mahler's settings are the most often performed. As was often the case, the editors freely adapted the poems and wrote some themselves, to create a romantic national myth of an ancient language and culture untouched by modernism. It was not a coincidence that in 1807-08 Prussia was defeated by Napoleon in the battle of Jena-Auerstedt which led to the capture of Berlin.

Mahler chanced upon this collection around 1887 while visiting friends. It is often claimed that this discovery was a major revelation to Mahler, but there is evidence that he was familiar with these poems from much earlier – the encounter with the book acted as an impetus to new composition but it did not come as a surprise.

It became one of his favourite books and he set its poems to music throughout much of his life. Between 1887 and 1901, he wrote two dozen settings of Wunderhorn texts, several of which were incorporated into some of his earlier symphonies, and in 1899 he published a collection of a dozen Wunderhorn settings.

'Wo die schönen Trompeten blasen' was composed in 1898, and first performed (with orchestral accompaniment) in Vienna in 1900. The opening evokes military rhythms and trumpet calls, but distantly, offstage. A leisurely waltz describes the lovers' embrace, and then the martial music returns.

'Revelge' was composed in July 1899. We hear the drums and trumpets as the soldiers march to war, but what begins as a relatively conventional use of military march references becomes increasingly a nightmare as the dead soldiers march on.

## **George Butterworth**

### ***Six Songs from A Shropshire Lad***

George Butterworth's obituary – he died at the Somme in 1916 – described him as one of English music's most promising composers and a 'stimulating force' in the 'national musical art'.

*Six Songs from A Shropshire Lad* was composed in 1911, using poems from Housman's collection of the same name. The poems were written in 1887 and published in 1896. In an article about settings of *A Shropshire Lad*, the critic Ernest Newman went to some pains to show that Butterworth's musical treatment of poetic rhythm was much finer than that of Vaughan Williams, whose Housman settings he severely criticised. It is now generally agreed that Butterworth's settings of these poems are the best of the many settings by English composers.

A review of the published songs praised 'Loveliest of Trees' as 'an instance of the remarkable effect produced by [Butterworth's] economy of material'. This song was the basis of Butterworth's only orchestral work, the 'Rhapsody: A Shropshire Lad', first performed at the Leeds Festival in 1913 conducted by Arthur Nikisch.

'When I was one-and-twenty' is set to a 'traditional tune'. Butterworth was a keen collector and editor of folksongs, but this tune has not been identified from any other source. However, the group as a whole shows how Butterworth had absorbed an English folk idiom; the case is rather similar to that of his contemporary Janáček, who did not quote Moravian folk songs but was able to write thoroughly idiomatically in that style.

'Look not into my eyes' is, unusually, 5/4 time, but flows so naturally that one is not really aware of it. In effect, the same is true of 'The lads in their hundreds', which creates a five-beat unit by alternating 6/8 and 9/8 bars (Ernest Newman singled out the latter song for mention in this respect).

'Is my team ploughing?' is probably Butterworth's most frequently performed song. The dead man's questions accompanied by bare descending chords are answered by his living friend's vigorous harmonies, but the song closes with the descending chords which finally reach the lowest note of the piece, a super-low C from the piano.

## **Kurt Weill**

### ***Four Walt Whitman Songs***

Kurt Weill became an American citizen in 1943 after fleeing Austria in 1935. He told the playwright Paul Green that he came to the USA for the same reasons as most people, 'fleeing from the hate, the oppression, the restlessness and troubles of the Old World to find freedom and happiness in a New World'.

Green marked Weill's American naturalisation by giving him Whitman's collection *Leaves of Grass* – poems by the most obviously 'American' poet. German readers, including Weill, were already familiar with Whitman, as he had been well translated into German. In 1926 Weill had welcomed a broadcast of Whitman's poetry: 'Walt Whitman was the first truly original poetic talent to grow out of American soil'. After the attack on Pearl Harbor in 1941, Weill composed three settings of Whitman's Civil

War poems, and hoped that Paul Robeson would sing them – unfortunately this never happened.

'Beat! Beat! Drums!' is martial and defiant, using repeated rhythms familiar from Weill's cabaret songs; 'O Captain! My Captain!' is lyrically relaxed and touching. 'Dirge for Two Veterans', is also bluesy but there are other 'wrong' notes as well. The bugle call 'Taps', played at military funerals and memorial services in the USA, is heard in the piano part.

**Robert Wiremu**      'Te Oriori o Nohomaiterangi' (Ngāti Kahungunu lullaby)

Victory and Glory, Ake ake kia kahe e!

Robert Wiremu is a vocal coach and Senior Music Tutor at the University of Auckland. He studied music at Victoria University of Wellington, the University of Auckland, and the Queensland Conservatory of Music. 'Te Oriori o Nohomaiterangi' is a Ngāti Kahungunu lullaby from the eastern coast of the North Island of New Zealand.

© Dr George Kennaway 2021

## BENSON WILSON

New Zealand-born Sāmoan baritone Benson Wilson is the winner of the prestigious 64th Kathleen Ferrier Award. That same year he was awarded the Most Outstanding Overseas Performer of the Royal Overseas League Competition, the Worshipful Company of Musicians Award, and was the 2018 winner of the Joan Sutherland & Richard Bonyngé Foundation Award and the People's Choice Award.

In 20/21 Benson joins English National Opera as a Harewood Artist, opening the season as Schaunard *La Bohème* for their Drive & Live production at Alexandra Palace.

On the concert platform he begins the season with a recital tour of New Zealand including for Auckland Chamber Concert Hall, Hawkes Bay Opera House and Auckland Opera Studio, and later gives UK recitals for Oxford Lieder and King's Lynn Festivals with pianists Sholto Kynoch and Lucy Colquhoun.

Future engagements include house debuts for New Zealand Opera and Queensland Opera, as well as further roles for ENO. Previous operatic roles include Marullo *Rigoletto* for Glyndebourne on Tour, John Shears *Paul Bunyan* (ENO), Mirza *Der Gesang der Zauberinsel* at the Salzburger Festspiele as a 2019 Salzburg Young Singer, cover John Sorel *The Consul* (Welsh National Opera), Guglielmo *Così fan tutte* and Count Almaviva *Le nozze di Figaro* (Bloomsbury Opera), Schabernack *Le Grand Macabre* with London Symphony Orchestra, Schaunard *La Bohème* (Festival Opera Napier), and Guglielmo *Così fan tutte*, Demetrius *A Midsummer Night's Dream* and Assan *The Consul* as a scholar on the Guildhall School of Music & Drama Opera Course.

Benson regularly appears in concert in repertoire including Handel *Messiah*, Mozart *Requiem*, Fauré *Requiem*, Duruflé *Requiem* and Brahms *Ein deutsches Requiem*, and in 2016 he joined the BBC Symphony Orchestra for a Total Immersion Concert featuring works by Richard Rodney Bennett.

Prior to relocating to the UK, he won New Zealand's première singing competition, the Lexus Song Quest, and graduated with a BMus from the University of Auckland.

Benson is a former young artist of the Georg Solti Accademia di Bel Canto, the Samling Young Artist Programme, the International Vocal Arts Institute, New Zealand Opera School and the National Opera Studio in London.

## ELLA O'NEILL

Ella O'Neill is increasingly in demand across the UK as a pianist for song, chamber music and opera. In April 2019, she won the Help Musicians UK Accompanist's Prize in the Kathleen Ferrier Awards at Wigmore Hall, where she has since returned to perform in the venue's International Song Competition and the finals of the Maureen Lehane Vocal Awards.

Other recent venues include Snape Maltings Concert Hall, the Royal Opera House Crush Room, Cadogan Hall and St Martin-in-the-Fields. Later this year Ella will join baritone Roderick Williams to perform Schubert's *Schwanengesang*, supported by Momentum. Ella is also excited to have been invited to Carnegie Hall next year to participate in their SongStudio with tenor Laurence Kilsby. Ella is a Samling Artist.

Away from the concert platform, Ella has worked as a répétiteur for companies including Grange Park Opera, Mid Wales Opera, Tête à Tête Festival and English Touring Opera. In Autumn 2020, she toured with English Touring Opera, accompanying baritone Julien Van Mellaerts in two staged productions for solo singer and pianist: Argento's one-man opera *A Water Bird Talk* and Britten's song cycle *Songs and Proverbs of William Blake*.

Ella graduated with distinction from the Royal College of Music in July 2019, where she studied postgraduate piano accompaniment with Simon Lepper, Kathryn Sturrock and Roger Vignoles. During her time there she won the Alasdair Graham Pianist Prize in the RCM Lieder Competition and second prize in the Brooks van der Pump English Song Competition.