

A Marvellous Party!

Saturday 4 March 2023, 7.30pm
The Venue, Leeds Conservatoire

Mary Bevan soprano
Nicky Spence tenor
Joseph Middleton piano

Join Mary Bevan, Nicky Spence and Joseph Middleton in the imaginary salon of Noël Coward for a party thrown by him for his friends. This party is startling for its variety and Coward is shown to be a master of a myriad of styles. His lover Rorem is heard, Parisian glamour is on display from Poulenc and Satie, Edwardian sentimentality of the best kind is served up by Quilter, with operetta from Messenger. We then enjoy a hop and a skip to the Great American Songbook with Gershwin (Coward was the first person to play *Rhapsody in Blue* in London) followed by crisp dance rhythms offered up by Brits Walton and Britten. Our melting pot shows Coward as one of the finest tunesmiths of any time, able to turn his hand to achingly beautiful songs full of pathos, and wit worn lightly. Welcome to the most marvellous party!

Noël Coward (1899-1973)	MEDLEY I'll See You Again / Dance Little Lady / Poor Little Rich Girl / A Room with a View / Someday I'll Find You / I'll Follow My Secret Heart / If Love were All / Play Orchestra Play	<i>Mary and Nicky</i>
Noël Coward	Mad About the Boy	<i>Mary</i>
Ned Rorem (1923-2022)	Early in the Morning	<i>Nicky</i>
Ned Rorem	For Poulenc	<i>Nicky</i>
Francis Poulenc (1899-1963)	Pastorale Calme et Mystérieux	<i>Joseph</i>
Francis Poulenc	Hôtel	<i>Mary</i>
Francis Poulenc	Pierrot	<i>Nicky</i>
Noël Coward	Parisienne Pierrot	<i>Nicky</i>
Kurt Weill (1900-1950)	Complainte de la Seine	<i>Mary</i>
Liza Lehmann (1862-1918)	Love, if you knew the light	<i>Mary</i>
André Messager (1853-1929)	De-ci, de là	<i>Mary and Nicky</i>
INTERVAL		
Erik Satie (1866-1925)	Gnossienne No. 1	<i>Joseph</i>
Noël Coward	Any Little Fish	<i>Nicky (and Mary)</i>
Igor Stravinsky (1882-1971)	Valse pour les enfants	<i>Joseph</i>
Roger Quilter (1877-1953)	Love Calls through the Summer	<i>Mary and Nicky</i>
Noël Coward	Something to do with Spring	<i>Mary and Nicky</i>
Ned Rorem	Now Sleeps the Crimson Petal	<i>Mary</i>
Roger Quilter	Now Sleeps the Crimson Petal	<i>Nicky</i>
George Gershwin (1898-1937)	The Man I Love	<i>Joseph</i>
George Gershwin	By Strauss	<i>Mary</i>
Noël Coward	If Love were All	<i>Nicky</i>
Benjamin Britten (1913-76)	When You're Feeling Like Expressing your Affection	<i>Mary</i>
William Walton (1902-83)	Popular Song	<i>Nicky</i>
Benjamin Britten	As it is, plenty	<i>Mary</i>
Noël Coward	Don't put your daughter on the stage, Mrs Worthington	<i>Nicky</i>
Noël Coward	The party's over now	<i>Mary and Nicky</i>

Mary Bevan soprano

Praised by 'Opera' magazine for her "dramatic with and vocal control", British soprano Mary Bevan is internationally renowned in baroque, classical and contemporary repertoire, and appears regularly with leading conductors, orchestras and ensembles around the world. She is a winner of the Royal Philharmonic Society's Young Artist Award and UK Critics' Circle Award for Exceptional Young Talent in music and was awarded an MBE in the Queen's birthday honours list in 2019.

Bevan's engagements for the 2022/23 season include a return to the Royal Opera House, Covent Garden as Morgana in a new Richard Jones production of *Alcina* conducted by Christian Curnyn, *LIGHT: Bach Dances* with the Hofesh Shechter Company at the Philharmonie de Paris, her debut with the Bayerische Staatsoper singing the title role of *La Calisto*, and a return to La Fenice, Venice as Eurydice in Gluck's *Orfeo and Eurydice*. Further ahead she will make her debut with the Zurich Opera House.

Last season, Bevan's many concert appearances included Haydn's *The Creation* at the Barbican Hall with the Academy of Ancient Music, Belinda and First Witch *Dido and Aeneas* with the Early Opera Company at St John's Smith Square, a European tour of Handel's *Messiah* with the Kammerorchester Basel, Handel's *Theresienmesse* with the Handel and Haydn Society and Bach *Mass in B minor* with the Philharmonia Baroque Orchestra. Further highlights include recitals at Wigmore Hall and the Lammermuir, Osafestivalen and Oxford Lieder festivals. During the 2020/21 season she returned to Royal Danish Opera for her role debut as Marzelline *Fidelio* and for the production *LIGHT: Bach Dances* with director John Fuljames and conductor Lars Ulrik Mortensen and made her debut at the Bolshoi Theatre in David Alden's production of *Ariodante* as Dalinda; in concert she sang the world premiere of Sir James MacMillan *Christmas Oratorio* at the Amsterdam Concertgebouw and *Rout* by Arthur Bliss with the London Philharmonic Orchestra.

Opera highlights of previous seasons include Rose Maurrant in Weill's *Street Scene* for Opéra de Monte-Carlo and Eurydice in Offenbach's *Orpheus in the Underworld* for English National Opera, her Danish Opera debut as Bellezza in *Il Trionfo del tempo e del desinganno*, the title role in Turnage's new opera *Coraline* for The Royal Opera at the Barbican, her return to English National Opera as Zerlina *Don Giovanni*, and her debut as Merab *Saul* for the Adelaide Festival. For the Royal Opera House she created the role of Lila in David Bruce's *The Firework-Maker's Daughter*, performed the title role in Rossi's *Orpheus* at the Sam Wanamaker Playhouse, and sang Barbarina *Le nozze di Figaro* on the main stage. In concert she performed with Mirga Gražinytė-Tyla and the CBSO in the world première of Roxanna Panufnik's *Faithful Journey*, Mary in Sally Beamish's *The Judas Passion* with the Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment, Bach's *Christmas Oratorio* on tour in Australia with the Choir of London and Australian Chamber Orchestra, and *Messiah* with the Academy of Ancient Music. With The English Concert, she appeared in their tour of Asia (Harry Bicket) and made her Carnegie Hall debut as Dalinda in *Ariodante*, and she has also performed with both the BBC Concert (BBC Proms) and BBC Symphony orchestras.

Bevan's discography includes her art song album *Voyages* with pianist Joseph Middleton and *Handel's Queens* with London Early Opera, both released by Signum Records, *Mendelssohn songs* for Champs Hill Records, *Handel: The Triumph of Time and Truth* and *Handel: Ode for St Cecilia's Day* with Ludus Baroque, and Vaughan Williams' *Symphony No.3* and Schubert's *Rosamunde* with the BBC Philharmonic. In autumn 2019 Signum released her second disc with Joseph Middleton including Lieder by Schubert, Haydn and Wolf.

Nicky Spence tenor

Scottish-born Nicky Spence trained at the GSMD and the National Opera studio. Hailed by the Daily Telegraph as "a voice of real distinction", Nicky Spence is "one of our brightest young tenors". An artist of great integrity, Nicky's unique skills as a singing actor, and the rare honesty of his musicianship, have earned him a place at the top of the profession. In 2022, Nicky was awarded the BBC Music Magazine Personality of the Year Award.

The 2022/23 season sees him make his debut as Albert Gregor in *Věc Makropulos* for the Deutsche Staatsoper, and for the Welsh National Opera, and sing the title role in *The Nose* at La Monnaie. On the concert platform, he sings Janáček's *The Eternal Gospel* with Jakub Hrůša for the Orchestra e Coro dell'Accademia Nazionale di Santa Cecilia and Orchestre Philharmonique de Radio France. As a recitalist, he returns to the Wigmore Hall and makes his debut at the Brno Festival. Recent highlights include Laca in Claus Guth's new production of *Jenůfa* for The Royal Opera, Siegmund in Richard Jones' new production of *The Valkyrie* for English National Opera, Tichon in Damiano Michieletto's new production of *Káťa Kabanová* at Glyndebourne Festival Opera and Erik *Der fliegende Holländer* for Grange Park Opera. Future seasons see him return to The Metropolitan Opera, Opéra national de Paris and the Glyndebourne Festival.

Particularly noted as an exponent of Janáček's music, Nicky gave a series of recital performances of Janáček's *The Diary of One who Disappeared* to mark its centenary, and his recording of the work with Julius Drake for Hyperion won both Gamophone Magazine's Solo Vocal Award and the BBC Music Magazine's Vocal Award. Notably, he has appeared in *Jenůfa* at La Monnaie and for English National Opera; in *Káťa Kabanová* for Glyndebourne Festival Opera, Seattle Opera and Opera Holland Park; in *Věc Makropulos* for Oper Frankfurt and in *From the House of the Dead* for The Royal Opera, the Opéra national de Lyon and La Monnaie.

Nicky's concert repertoire ranges from the Baroque to contemporary works, with recent appearances including Handel's *Brockes-Passion* (Academy of Ancient Music/Richard Egarr); Bach's *Mass in B Minor* (Royal Northern Sinfonia/Paul McCreesh); Bruckner's *Te Deum* (Orchestra of La Monnaie/Hartmut Haenchen and Atlanta Symphony/Donald Runnicles); Steuermann *Der fliegender Holländer* (CBSO/Andris Nelsons); Dvorák's *Saint Ludmila*, Mime *Das Rheingold* and the title role in Wagner's *Parsifal* (Hallé Orchestra/Sir Mark Elder); Britten's *Les Illuminations* (Stavanger Symphony Orchestra/Yan Pascal Tortelier), *War Requiem* (Konzerthausorchester Berlin/Murray Hipkin) and *Serenade for Tenor, Horn and Strings* (L'Orchestre Nationale d'Ile de France/Gordan Nikolic); Finzi's *Dies Natalis* (BBC Concert Orchestra/David Hill) and Tippett's *A Child of Our Time* (Auckland Philharmonic Orchestra/Eckehard Stier). In demand on the recital platform, Nicky sings regularly with the Myrthen ensemble and enjoys collaboration with leading artists such as Malcolm Martineau, Julius Drake, Roger Vignoles, Graham Johnson, Sholto Kynoch, Iain Burnside, Simon Lepper and Joseph Middleton. His recital life brings him regularly to venues such as London's Wigmore Hall, Kings Place and Purcell Room; Amsterdam's Concertgebouw; the Tonhalle, Zürich and the Edinburgh and Oxford Lieder Festivals.

Nicky has recorded prolifically and his discography includes Janáček's *Diary of one who Disappeared* with Julius Drake and Strauss Lieder with Roger Vignoles (Hyperion), Brahms' *Liebeslieder-Walzer* with Joseph Middleton and Dylan Perez (Resonus Classics), the title role in *La clemenza di Tito* (Alpha), Handel's *Brockes-Passion* with the Academy of Ancient Music/Richard Egarr (AAM Records) and works by Britten, Jonathan Dove, Pavel Haas, Alun Hoddinott, Buxton Orr, Schumann, Wagner, Wolf, Mark-Anthony Turnage and Vaughan Williams.

Nicky is also a keen charity worker which encompasses his position as patron for both Blackheath Halls in London and Scottish Opera's Young Company, as an ambassador for Help Musicians UK, and proud president of Dumfries's own Musical Theatre Company. In 2019, Nicky joined the board of the Incorporated Society of Musicians.

Joseph Middleton piano

Pianist Joseph Middleton specializes in the art of song accompaniment and chamber music and has been highly acclaimed in this field. Described in Opera magazine as "the rightful heir to legendary accompanist Gerald Moore", by BBC Music Magazine as "one of the brightest stars in the world of song and Lieder", he has also been labeled "the cream of the new generation" by The Times. He is Director of Leeds Lieder, Musician in

Residence and a Bye-Fellow at Pembroke College, Cambridge and a Fellow of his alma mater, the Royal Academy of Music, where he is also a Professor. He was the first accompanist to win the Royal Philharmonic Society's Young Artist Award.

Joseph is a frequent guest at major music centres including London's Wigmore Hall (where he has been a featured artist), Royal Opera House and Royal Festival Hall, New York's Alice Tully Hall and Park Avenue Armory, Het Concertgebouw Amsterdam, Konzerthaus and Musikverein Vienna, Zürich Tonhalle, Hamburg Elbphilharmonie, Berlin BoulezSaal, Kölner Philharmonie, Strasbourg, Frankfurt, Lille and Gothenburg Opera Houses, Baden-Baden, Philharmonie Luxembourg, Musée d'Orsay Paris, Oji Hall Tokyo and Festivals in Aix-en-Provence, Aldeburgh, Barcelona, Schloss Elmau, Edinburgh, Munich, Ravinia, San Francisco, Schubertiade Hohenems and Schwarzenberg, deSingel, Seoul, Stuttgart, Toronto and Vancouver. He made his BBC Proms debut in 2016 alongside Iestyn Davies and Carolyn Sampson and returned in 2018 alongside Dame Sarah Connolly where they premièred recently discovered songs by Benjamin Britten.

Joseph enjoys recitals with internationally established singers including Sir Thomas Allen, Louise Alder, Mary Bevan, Ian Bostridge, Allan Clayton, Dame Sarah Connolly, Marianne Crebassa, Iestyn Davies, Fatma Said, Samuel Hasselhorn, Christiane Karg, Katarina Karnéus, Angelika Kirchschrager, Dame Felicity Lott, Christopher Maltman, John Mark Ainsley, Ann Murray DBE, James Newby, Mark Padmore, Mauro Peter, Miah Persson, Sophie Rennert, Ashley Riches, Dorothea Röschmann, Kate Royal, Carolyn Sampson, Nicky Spence and Roderick Williams.

He has a special relationship with BBC Radio 3, frequently curating his own series and performing alongside the BBC Radio 3 New Generation Artists. His critically acclaimed and fast-growing discography has seen him awarded a Diapason D'or, Edison Award and Priz Caecilia as well as receiving numerous nominations for Gramophone and BBC Music Magazines and International Classical Music Awards. His interest in the furthering of the song repertoire has led Gramophone Magazine to describe him as "*the absolute king of programming*".

The 2023 Leeds Lieder Festival will take place from 9 to 17 June. www.leedslieder.org.uk

Public booking opens on 13 March.