

# London Concord Singers

MUSIC FOR CHORUS AND PIANO DUET

HARVEY DAGUL AND ISOBEL BEYER

Piano Duet

MALCOLM COTTLE

Conductor

WORKS BY BRAHMS, NIELSEN, ARNOLD AND CROSSE

ST GEORGE'S CHURCH, HANOVER SQUARE, W1

(by kind permission of the Vicar)

THURSDAY 16 JULY 1981

at 7.30pm

John Clare Cantata

Malcolm Arnold  
(1921-

- 1 Winter Snow Storm
- 2 March
- 3 Spring
- 4 Summer
- 5 Autumn
- 6 Epilogue

For this delightful cantata for mixed choir and piano duet, Northampton-born Arnold chose words by the early 19th century Northamptonshire poet, John Clare. Much of Clare's work reflects on aspects of rural life and landscape, as is the case with these seasonal poems.

Bilder aus Osten  
(Oriental Pictures)

Robert Schumann  
(1810-1856)

In 1844, Clara and Robert Schumann moved from Leipzig to Dresden, where, although there was not as much music as at Leipzig. Schumann's health, which had begun to deteriorate, improved considerably. 1848 was a particularly productive year and saw the composition of the opera 'Genoveva', the music to Byron's 'Manfred' and many other pieces including this charming set of 6 impromptus for Piano Duet.

Liebesliederwalzer  
(Love Song Waltzes)

Johannes Brahms  
(1833-1897)

Brahms' closest friends in his early days were Robert and Clara Schumann, and after Robert's death in 1856, he maintained his devotion to Clara, writing many pieces for her and playing duets with her in concerts. Indeed their performances of his Hungarian Dances aroused great enthusiasm from audiences. It is quite possible that the Liebesliederwalzer, composed in 1868, were written to be played by Clara and himself and sung by a quartet of friends.

Brahms' love of the Viennese Waltz is well known, and he often admitted that he would have given anything to have written the 'Blue Danube'.

The words of the Liebeslieder are from Daumer's 'Polydora', and are in fact, not so much love songs as songs about different aspects of love, ranging from ecstatic outpourings to violent diatribes against the ways of women.

## INTERVAL

Three Motets Op 55

Carl Nielsen  
(1865-1931)

1 *Afflictus Sum*

I am feeble and sore broken: I have roared by reason of the disquietness in my flesh.

2 *Dominus regit me*

The Lord is my shepherd, he makes me lie down in green pastures; he leads me beside the still waters.

3 *Benedictus Dominus*

Blessed be the Lord, for he hath shown me his loving kindness.

Carl Nielsen, the best-known Danish composer, is probably best known for his symphonies. He did, however, write several small choral works for special occasions, many of which are still unpublished. The finest of these is undoubtedly this set of three motets for unaccompanied choir written for Mogens Woldike and his Palestrina Choir. Composed in 1929 they follow a very Palestrinian contrapuntal style, but with 20th century harmonic progressions. No 1 is for ATTB; No 2 SATB; and No 3, which contains a quotation from Palestrina's motet 'Sicut cervus desiderat' for SSATB.

John Stafford – Organ

- 1 Agnus Dei
- 2 Interlude I (The Flood)
- 3 The Covenant
- 4 Interlude II (Rondo Marziale)
- 5 Epilogue

Gordon Crosse was born in Bury, Lancashire. He studied composition under Egon Wellesz at Oxford and later in Italy with Petrassi. He rapidly came to the fore as a composer of orchestral, chamber and choral pieces, sometimes with children in mind as participants. 'The Covenant of the Rainbow' was written in 1968 for the choir of St Matthew's Church, Northampton, (as indeed have many other pieces by well-known British composers from Britten down).

The composer writes:

The text is both a hope for peace and a promise of peace. The Agnus Dei is the hope and prayer, and it is always sung by soprano voices. God's promise of the new Christian testament, is sung, in words from the Chester play, by men's voices. Chorus and organ represent the 'ideal' world where peace is hoped for, promised, and attained. The piano duet part represents the 'actual' world of unrepentant, warlike mankind; the 'natural' world of flood and battle and disaster. Thus the piano is in every way alienated from the chorus and organ, playing independent rhythms and textures, often distorting its musical material, and – at the close – brutally contradicting the chorus's serene cadence.

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**Isabel Beyer and Harvey Dagul**

After many years research into the medium, this husband and wife duo have built a very comprehensive library of original duet music which is probably without equal, and through their many recitals have introduced many unknown and unjustly neglected works to the public. They consider they have proved duets on one piano to be the friendliest and most immediately satisfying form of chamber music.

They have given numerous recitals for the BBC on 1 and 2 pianos, and have performed at the Cheltenham Festival and at the Festival de Sceaux, Paris. Recitals have been given all over the country. In 1976 they played the complete Schubert duets at the Purcell Room and in 1978 a further series featured the romantic sonatas of Rubinstein, Moscheles, Goetz and Rheinberger as well as many other rare works from the 18th – 20th centuries.

### **The London Concord Singers**

The choir was started in its present form in 1966. It seeks to maintain a small, well-knit group of some thirty voices, practising and performing a wide range of choral music. Its members come from a great variety of backgrounds, none of them being full-time musicians. The choir's range of activities is equally varied; it has accepted cabaret engagements in and around London and has sung in all three South Bank concert halls, at the Royal Albert Hall and at St John's, Smith Square. The group has travelled widely and has won competitive prizes at home and abroad. Festival appearances include Montreux and Dubrovnik. The choir has enjoyed an enthusiastic reception from audiences and the Press and has recorded with the London Symphony Orchestra. In 1977, in recognition of their continuing support of Contemporary Music, particularly British compositions of the previous 25 years, London Concord Singers received a Jubilee Award from the Performing Rights Society.

### **Malcolm Cottle**

The Conductor sang for many years as a boy with the choir of St Paul's Cathedral, London, during which time he sang at the Coronation of the Queen and toured the United States of America. More recently, as well as conducting the London Concord Singers he has worked as repetiteur with the New Opera Company at Sadler's Wells and conducted for Orpheus Opera. He has appeared as Musical Director at the Sheffield Playhouse; the Swan Theatre, Worcester; Nottingham Playhouse and the Wyvern Theatre, Swindon.

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The National Federation of Music Societies, to whom this society is affiliated, supports these concerts with funds made available by the Arts Council of Great Britain.

London Concord Singers would welcome friends wishing to subscribe to increase the activities of the group. Anyone requiring further details or wishing to be placed on the mailing list please contact the Secretary:

**Mrs Penny Greenhalgh, 17E John Spencer Square, London N1**

We would like to remind members of the public that unauthorised recording of the Concert is not allowed.