



SUPER AUDIO CD



CHANDOS
SUPER AUDIO CD



Sir Edward Elgar
THE STARLIGHT EXPRESS

Elin Manahan Thomas soprano · Roderick Williams baritone

Simon Callow narrator

Scottish Chamber Orchestra

Sir Andrew Davis



Sir Edward Elgar, right, with Algernon Henry Blackwood, February 1916

Sir Edward Elgar (1857 – 1934)

COMPACT DISC ONE

premiere recording in this version

The Starlight Express, Op. 78*

Incidental Music

Act I

20:29

- | | | | |
|---|---|---|------|
| 1 | 1 | Song (Organ-grinder) 'To the Children'. Allegro non troppo – Moderato – Tempo I – Più mosso – Moderato – Tempo I – Allegretto – Tempo I – Allegretto – Moderato | 5:55 |
|---|---|---|------|

Scene 1

- | | | | |
|----|----|--|------|
| 2 | | 'In the village of Bourcelles...'. [Moderato] | 1:37 |
| 3 | 2 | Allegretto | 0:30 |
| 4 | 3 | Lento | 0:42 |
| 5 | 4 | [] | 0:32 |
| 6 | 5 | Allegretto | 0:33 |
| 7 | 6 | Moderato – Molto animato – Allegro – A tempo allegro | 1:22 |
| 8 | 7 | Lento | 1:48 |
| 9 | 8 | Allegretto | 0:15 |
| 10 | 9 | Allegro | 0:37 |
| 11 | 10 | [] | 0:42 |
- Peter Thomas violin

12	11	Allegro molto	1:14
13	12	Lento	0:53
14	13a	[Andante]	0:38
15	13b	[Andante]	1:32
16	14	Andantino	1:33
		Act II	37:30
17	15	Song (Organ-grinder) 'The Blue-eyed Fairy'. Allegro	3:22
		Scene 1	
18	16	Allegro non troppo	1:06
19	17	Moderato – Lento – Allegro – Lento – Più lento –	1:18
20	18	Song (Organ-grinder) 'The sun <i>has</i> gone'. Allegretto – Lento – Allegro – Allargando	4:38
21	19	Andantino	2:01
22	20a	Lento – Quasi recitative – Lento Peter Thomas violin	1:15
23	20b	Allegro Peter Thomas violin	0:21
24	21	Lento	1:01
25	22	Allegro	0:33
26	23	Allegro molto	0:19
27	24	[]	0:12
28	25	[]	0:15
29	26	Song (Laughter) 'I'm ev'rywhere'. Presto	0:48
30	27	Allegro	0:13

31	28 []	0:27
32	29 Song (Organ-grinder) 'Wake up, you little Night Winds!' Allegro non troppo	1:29
33	30 Dance of the Winds. Moderato – Lento – Brillante – Lento	2:20
34	31 Moderato	0:43
35	32 Lento Peter Thomas violin	1:06
36	33 Sun Dance. Presto	2:45
Scene 2		
37	34 Adagio Peter Thomas violin	1:06
38	34a Song (Gardener) 'Dandelions, Daffodils'. []	0:52
39	35 Andante –	1:14
40	36 Allegretto	1:04
Scene 3		
41	37 Più lento David Watkin cello	1:18
42	38 Song (Laughter) 'O, Stars Shine Brightly'. Allegro moderato – Andante Peter Thomas violin	3:16
43	39 Adagio – Peter Thomas violin	0:48
44	40 Allegro	0:18
45	41 Song (Laughter) 'Dawn Song'. Allegro	1:09
		TT 58:03

COMPACT DISC TWO

Act III

28:47

- [1] 42 Song (Organ-grinder) 'My old tunes'. Allegro - [Più lento] -
Poco più lento - Tempo I - [Più lento] 4:14

Scene 1

- [2] 43 Song (Jane Anne) 'Dandelions, Daffodils'. [] 1:15
[3] 44 [] 1:11
[4] 45 Lento - Più mosso - Più lento - Più lento - 1:09
[5] 46a [] - 0:34
[6] 46b Tempo di valse 3:34

Scene 2

- [7] 47 Lento - Allegro - Poco sostenuto - Moderato e grazioso -
Moderato - Moderato - Moderato - Allegretto - 7:45
David Watkin cello
[8] 48 Andante - Allegretto 2:37
[9] 49 Moderato - Animato - Moderato - 2:08
[10] 50 Finale. Duet (Laugher and Organ-grinder) 'Hearts must be
soft-shiny dressed'. [] - L'istesso tempo - 2:44
[11] ['The First Nowell'.] Grandioso 1:33

Clive Carey (1883–1968)

premiere recording

Three Songs from 'The Starlight Express'[†] 6:03 Orchestrated by Sir Andrew Davis

- | | | | |
|----|-----|---|------|
| 12 | I | The Organ-grinder's Song. Andante comodo | 3:07 |
| 13 | II | The Dustman's Song. Tranquillo e misterioso | 1:39 |
| 14 | III | The Gardener's Song. Allegretto fantastico | 1:17 |

Sir Edward Elgar

premiere recording

Suite from 'The Starlight Express'[†] 44:57 Arranged by Sir Andrew Davis

- | | | | |
|----|---|--|------|
| 15 | 1 | 1. Song (Organ-grinder) 'To the Children'. Allegro non troppo – Moderato – Tempo I – Più mosso – Moderato – Tempo I – Allegretto – Tempo I – Allegretto – Moderato | 6:16 |
| 16 | 2 | 14. Andantino | 1:33 |
| 17 | 3 | 15. Song (Organ-grinder) 'The Blue-eyed Fairy'. Allegro | 3:16 |
| 18 | 4 | 18. Song (Organ-grinder) 'The sun <i>has</i> gone'. Allegretto – Lento – Allegro – Allargando | 4:51 |
| 19 | 5 | 19. Andantino | 2:04 |

[20]	6	21. Lento	0:29
[21]	7	22. Allegro	0:23
[22]	8	26. Song (Laughter) 'I'm ev'rywhere'. Presto	0:45
[23]	9	29. Song (Organ-grinder) 'Wake up, you little Night Winds!' Allegro non troppo	1:20
[24]	10	30. Dance of the Winds. Moderato – Lento – Brillante – Lento	2:23
[25]	11	32. Lento Peter Thomas violin	0:50
[26]	12	33. Sun Dance. Presto	2:34
[27]	13	35. Andante –	1:14
[28]	14	36. Allegretto	1:05
[29]	15	38. Song (Laughter) 'O, Stars Shine Brightly'. Allegro moderato – Andante Peter Thomas violin	3:20
[30]	16	41. Song (Laughter) 'Dawn Song'. Allegro	1:04

³¹	17	42. Song (Organ-grinder) 'My old tunes'. Allegro - [Più lento] - Poco più lento - Tempo I - [Più lento]	4:02
³²	18	43. Song (Jane Anne) 'Dandelions, Daffodils'. []	0:55
³³	19	49. Moderato - Animato - Moderato -	2:04
³⁴	20	50. Finale. Duet (Laughter and Organ-grinder) 'Hearts must be soft-shiny dressed'. [] - L'istesso tempo -	2:46
³⁵		['The First Nowell'.] Grandioso	1:34
			TT 80:05

Elin Manahan Thomas soprano (Laughter / Jane Anne)**
Roderick Williams baritone (Organ-grinder / Gardener)**+
Simon Callow narrator*
Scottish Chamber Orchestra
Peter Thomas leader
Sir Andrew Davis



Elin Manahan Thomas

Elgar: The Starlight Express

Algernon Henry Blackwood (1869 – 1951) was a mass of contradictions: though counting among his forbears a Lord Mayor of London, a Governor of North Carolina, and various members of the Scottish, English, and Irish aristocracies, he was for a good deal of his life of no fixed abode and, in later years, had purportedly reduced his possessions to a change of clothes, a holdall, pyjamas, and his typewriter. While enjoying great popularity as a raconteur with his wide circle of friends (and later, through his broadcasts, with the British public), he was never happier than when off on one of his adventures – punting down the Danube, canoeing in the Canadian wilderness, climbing the Alps, exploring the Caucasus, wandering at night in the Egyptian desert, skiing in the Swiss Jura mountains.

If his charming social persona is reflected in the elegance and wit of much of his writing, it is his intimate relationship with nature, and his special gift for apprehending the powers that lie within and behind it, that gives so many of the 'supernatural' stories by Blackwood their authenticity. His other remarkable quality was his ability to identify and communicate with

children, who he felt had not yet lost access to, and capacity for wonder at, the spiritual world. This gave rise to a number of books for or about children, and foremost among these is *A Prisoner in Fairyland*. It was published in May 1913 and rapidly caught the attention of Violet Pearn (1890 – 1947). An aspiring playwright, she was convinced that it would make a marvellous play and, through her theatrical connections, seems to have secured one of the London theatres for performances some time in 1914. Early on it was realised that music would enhance the play enormously and the young composer, singer, and director Clive Carey (1883 – 1968) was asked to provide it. (Carey subsequently became one of London's most highly regarded singing teachers, working most notably with the young Joan Sutherland.)

Alas, various factors, not the least of which were the outbreak of war and Zeppelin raids over London, scuppered the project, but it was resurrected a year later. By then Carey seems to have been forgotten, and Elgar was approached. Like Blackwood, Elgar was much enamoured of the innocence and simplicity of

childhood – the Suites *The Wand of Youth*, based on some of his early compositions, had been published a few years earlier – and after a week's hesitation he agreed. He had in fact decided to use some of the music from *The Wand of Youth* – 'Sun Dance' is played in its entirety as an interlude in Act II – but found himself composing more original numbers as he went on, fired by his enthusiasm for the venture and his admiration for Blackwood, who, then and afterwards, became a welcome visitor to the Elgar household.

It is sad, then, that both author and composer should have become somewhat downhearted as rehearsals proceeded. The play is overlong and Violet Pearn had embraced the sentimentality to which the book comes dangerously close but which it somehow just manages to avoid. Even worse, however, were the set and costumes: the designer had chosen to depict the Sprites as Greek gods. Blackwood was horrified, writing to Elgar:

this suburban, Arts & Crafts pretentious
rubbish stitched on to your music is really too
painful for me to bear.

He contemplated vetoing the whole thing, but in the end the premiere went ahead as planned, on 29 December 1915. The critics were by and large inclined to ridicule the play, although the reviewer in *The Times* memorably closed his piece with the words, 'Whosoever is "wumbled", let him listen to Sir Edward Elgar'.

It seems that the younger members of the audience, at least, were more appreciative. The play closed after forty performances, which, in view of the wartime circumstances, is perhaps not so bad.

As I was contemplating this recording, it seemed to me that performing the play, even in a heavily cut version, was not an option, for the reasons outlined above. On the other hand, all the music, excepting the songs and interludes, was designed as melodrama, and in some cases, as in *The Crown of India* (1912), is meaningless on its own. I have therefore taken the bold step of writing a narrative which is based partly on the play and partly on *A Prisoner in Fairyland*. Its story line follows that of the play for the first two acts, but the second scene of Act III, rather than being set outside the Star Cave in the mountains, takes place in the Den at the Citadelle and is devoted to the reading by John Campden (Daddy) of his finished book. The very end is tricky. Perhaps because it was the Christmas season – who knows? – Violet Pearn superimposed the concept of the Star of Bethlehem as the source from which all other stars receive their light. Having grown up under a tyrannical evangelical father, Blackwood must have hated it. Elgar gave us a marvellous orchestration of 'The First Nowell', but, as all commentators have agreed, the moment grates. I have tried to find final lines that are truer to Blackwood.

Now, clearly, the effect of a narration read over the music is not the same as that of lines declaimed over it in the theatre. But I hope nonetheless that our solution on this recording will give a satisfactory framework for Elgar's wonderful and touching score.

And we have a bonus. As a result of a footnote in Mike Ashley's excellent biography of Blackwood, *Starlight Man* (2001), which I highly recommend, I learned that three songs that Clive Carey wrote for the play still survive; and, by dint of detective work on the internet and the discovery of a company which specialises in out-of-print music, I got my hands on them about a month before the recording sessions would take place.

Of the three, the first offers the most interesting contrast: Carey set 'To the Children' ('O children, open your arms to me') in a simple strophic manner over a drone bass, reminiscent of Schubert's 'Der Leiermann', from *Winterreise*; Elgar's setting is infinitely more elaborate and subtle. The text of the second was not set by Elgar but left to be spoken (in the scene in the forest that opens Act II). In his version of the third song, Elgar set the text as an unaccompanied quasi-folksong.

Carey's musical language looks forward to the twenties. I find the songs fresh and attractive and it was with pleasure that I orchestrated them for the orchestral forces

employed by Elgar in *The Starlight Express* – and hope thus to have compensated the young composer belatedly for the unjust treatment that he received!

In September 2011, I visited the village of Bôle in the Swiss Jura, the real Bourcelles. Blackwood, just like Henry Rogers in *Prisoner*, had spent several months there, in 1886 – 87, studying French in the company of *his* cousin, and he returned there often in later life to write and ski. Most of the places mentioned in the book still stand: the Pension, the church, the sentinel pine tree – though the Citadelle (indeed built by Lord Wemyss) burnt down, I discovered, in 1925. I also walked through the gorges of the river Areuse, and even stumbled on what could have been the entrance to a 'Star Cave' in the weirdly eroded cliffs. Blackwood's message – that the world badly needed to rediscover what Blackwood called Sympathy, but which is better rendered nowadays as empathy or fellow-feeling – was one that certainly resonated with many in those days before, during, and after the First World War. It is no less relevant today. *A Prisoner in Fairyland* is a wondrous, if flawed, book. Mike Ashley put it perfectly when he wrote that it 'benefits from a second reading if you can survive the first'.

I believe that Elgar understood Blackwood's message, and that is the reason why he put so

much of himself into what others might have seen as an irrelevant or lightweight enterprise. At other times during the early years of war he wrote the kind of patriotic works that people expected of him; very fine many of them are too, and due for re-evaluation. But the fact that he chose music from *The Starlight Express* for one of his first recordings, in February 1916, is significant, as is the following letter which he received in October 1917 from an officer serving in Flanders:

Although unknown to you, I feel I must write to you tonight. We possess a fairly good gramophone in our mess, and I have bought your record *Starlight Express*: 'Hearts must be soft-shiny dressed', being played for the twelfth time over. The Gramophone was anathema to me before this war, because it was abused so much. But all is changed now, and it is the only means of bringing back to us the days that are gone, and helping us through the Ivory Gate that leads to Fairyland, or Heaven whatever one likes to call it... Music is all that we have to help us carry on.

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Born in Swansea, the soprano **Elin Manahan Thomas** read Anglo-Saxon, Norse, and Celtic at Clare College, Cambridge before embarking on a busy musical career. She first received great

acclaim for her performance in Bach's St Matthew Passion under Sir John Eliot Gardiner at the Thomaskirche in Leipzig, and for her soaring top line in Allegri's Miserere under Harry Christophers, and gave the world premiere of Sir John Tavener's Requiem under the late Richard Hickox in Liverpool Cathedral. She has appeared at the Edinburgh International Festival and Lufthansa Festival, as well as at the Wigmore Hall, London and Concertgebouw, Amsterdam. She has been heard on numerous radio programmes and on television has appeared in *Birth of British Music* (BBC 2), *Sacred Music* (BBC 4), *How Music Works* (Channel 4), and, on Christmas Day, *A Musical Nativity* (BBC 2). She was also the main performer in S4C's six-part documentary *Y Sopranos*, and as a presenter has twice been nominated for a Bafta. She released her debut album, *Eternal Light* with the Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment, in 2007, and is the first singer ever to record Bach's *Alles mit Gott*, a birthday ode written in 1713 and rediscovered in 2005. Her large discography now includes five solo albums. In 2012 Elin Manahan Thomas was made an Honorary Fellow of the Royal Welsh College of Music and Drama, which she considers her greatest honour and achievement so far – apart from having her baby boy!

Performing a wide repertoire, from baroque to contemporary music, the baritone **Roderick**

Williams has enjoyed close relationships with Opera North, where his latest role was Goryanchikov (*From the House of the Dead*), and Scottish Opera, where he recently appeared as the Count (*Le nozze di Figaro*). Particularly associated with the baritone roles of Mozart, he gave highly acclaimed performances of Papageno (*The Magic Flute*) at English National Opera in 2007 and 2009. He returned to the company to sing Pollux (Rameau's *Castor and Pollux*) in 2011. In 2008 he sang Schounard (*La bohème*) at The Royal Opera, Covent Garden, where he most recently appeared as Ned Keene (*Peter Grimes*). He has also sung the world premiere of operas by David Sawer, Sally Beamish, Michael van der Aa, Robert Saxton, and Alexander Knaifel, among others. He has worked with orchestras throughout Europe, including all the BBC orchestras in the UK, and has appeared at the BBC Proms as well as the Edinburgh, Cheltenham, and Aldeburgh festivals, among many others. An accomplished recital artist, he has performed at venues such as the Wigmore Hall, London, Perth Concert Hall, Howard Assembly Room, Leeds, and Wiener Musikverein. He may be heard regularly on BBC Radio 3, where he has participated on Iain Burnside's programme *Voices*. His extensive discography has received worldwide acclaim. Roderick Williams is also a composer, whose works have been premiered

at the Wigmore and Barbican halls, the Purcell Room, and live on national radio.

The actor, director, and writer **Simon Callow** CBE made his first West End appearance in 1975 in *The Plumber's Progress* at the Prince of Wales Theatre, since when he has appeared in theatres all over the UK and abroad. His many roles include Sir Toby Belch (*Twelfth Night* at the National Theatre), the title-roles in *Amadeus*, *Faust*, and *Titus Andronicus*, Orlando (*As You Like It*), Verlaine (*Total Eclipse*), Molina (*The Kiss of the Spider Woman*), Dysart (*Equus*), Falstaff (*Merry Wives: the Musical* with the Royal Shakespeare Company), Garry Essendine (*Present Laughter*), Pozzo (*Waiting for Godot*), and roles in *Aladdin* and *The Woman in White*. He has given a number of one-man shows, including *The Mystery of Charles Dickens*, *Dr Marigold and Mr Chops*, *A Christmas Carol*, and *Being Shakespeare* which he has recently performed in New York and Chicago. On the big screen he has appeared in *Amadeus*, *Four Weddings and a Funeral*, *Shakespeare in Love*, *The Phantom of the Opera*, *A Room with a View*, *Maurice*, *Postcards from the Edge*, and – in rhyming couplets – *Acts of Godfrey*, among others. He also appears regularly on UK television, and has presented and written programmes such as *Orson Welles over Europe* and *Acting in Restoration Comedy*. He has directed many plays, as well as the

operas *Così fan tutte* (in Lucerne), *Die Fledermaus* (for Scottish Opera), *Il trittico*, *Il turco in Italia*, *Calisto*, *The Consul*, *Le Roi malgré lui*, and *Die Zauberflöte*. Simon Callow has written many books, including most recently *Charles Dickens and the Great Theatre of the World*. He was appointed CBE in 1999.

Formed in 1974 with a commitment to serve the Scottish community, the **Scottish Chamber Orchestra** (SCO) is recognised as one of the finest chamber orchestras in the world and as one of Scotland's foremost cultural ambassadors, touring internationally and appearing regularly at the Edinburgh, St Magnus, and Aldeburgh festivals and the BBC Proms as well as performing throughout Scotland. Robin Ticciati took up the post of Principal Conductor at the beginning of the 2009/10 season; he and the Orchestra have been acclaimed as 'one of the great partnerships in British music' by *The Daily Telegraph*. Also appearing regularly with the Orchestra are Joseph Swensen (Conductor Emeritus), Richard Egarr (Associate Artist), Olari Elts, John Storgårds, Thierry Fischer, Louis Langrée, Oliver Knussen, Piotr Anderszewski, and Alexander Janiczek (Associate Artist). The Orchestra's long-standing relationship with the late Sir Charles Mackerras (Conductor Laureate) resulted in many exceptional performances and award-

winning recordings. Also enjoying close relationships with many leading composers, the Orchestra has commissioned more than a hundred new works from, among others, Sir Peter Maxwell Davies (Composer Laureate), Mark-Anthony Turnage, Judith Weir, Sally Beamish, Lyell Cresswell, and Hafliði Hallgrímsson. SCO Connect, the Orchestra's education and outreach department, provides a unique programme of projects for children and adults across Scotland. The Orchestra broadcasts regularly and its discography exceeds 150 recordings. The Scottish Chamber Orchestra receives funding from the Scottish Government.

Since 2000, **Sir Andrew Davis** has served as Music Director and Principal Conductor of Lyric Opera of Chicago. He is the former Principal Conductor, now Conductor Laureate, of the Toronto Symphony Orchestra, the Conductor Laureate of the BBC Symphony Orchestra – having served as the second longest running Chief Conductor since its founder, Sir Adrian Boult – and the former Music Director of the Glyndebourne Festival Opera. Born in 1944 in Hertfordshire, England, he studied at King's College, Cambridge, where he was an organ scholar before taking up the baton. His repertoire ranges from baroque to contemporary works, and his vast conducting credits span

the symphonic, operatic, and choral worlds. In addition to the core symphonic and operatic repertoire, he is a great proponent of twentieth-century works by composers such as Janáček, Messiaen, Boulez, Elgar, Tippett, and Britten. He has led the BBC Symphony Orchestra in concerts at the BBC Proms and on tour to Hong Kong, Japan, the USA, and Europe. He has conducted all the major orchestras of the world, and led productions at opera houses and festivals

throughout the world, including The Metropolitan Opera, New York, Teatro alla Scala, Milan, and the Bayreuth Festival. Maestro Davis is a prolific recording artist, currently under exclusive contract to Chandos. He received the Charles Heidsieck Music Award of the Royal Philharmonic Society in 1991, was created a Commander of the Order of the British Empire in 1992, and in 1999 was appointed Knight Bachelor in the New Year Honours List. www.sirandrewdavis.com



Roderick Williams

Elgar: The Starlight Express

Algernon Henry Blackwood (1869 – 1951) war ein Mensch voller Widersprüche: Obwohl er einen Oberbürgermeister von London, einen Gouverneur von North Carolina und verschiedene Mitglieder der schottischen, englischen und irischen Aristokratie unter seine Vorfahren zählte, hatte er für einen beträchtlichen Teil seines Lebens keinen festen Wohnsitz und soll in seinem späteren Leben seinen Besitz auf einen Satz Kleidung zum Wechseln, eine Reisetasche, einen Schlafanzug und seine Schreibmaschine beschränkt haben. Während er als Geschichtenerzähler in seinem großen Freundeskreis (und später als Moderator von Rundfunksendungen bei der britischen Öffentlichkeit) überaus beliebt war, fühlte er sich am glücklichsten, wenn er eine seiner abenteuerlichen Touren unternahm – eine Kahnfahrt die Donau hinab, mit dem Kanu durch die kanadische Wildnis, eine Klettertour in den Alpen, eine Erkundungsreise im Kaukasus, nächtliche Wanderungen in der ägyptischen Wüste oder Skilaufen im Schweizer Jura.

Während diese charmante öffentliche Persönlichkeit sich in der Eleganz und dem

Esprit vieler seiner Schriften widerspiegelt, verleihen seine enge Beziehung zur Natur und seine besondere Gabe, die ihr innewohnenden und zugrundeliegenden Kräfte wahrzunehmen, vielen der "übernatürlichen" Geschichten Blackwoods ihre Authentizität. Eine weitere bemerkenswerte Qualität war seine Fähigkeit, sich mit Kindern zu identifizieren und mit ihnen zu kommunizieren, da sie seinem Empfinden nach noch nicht den Zugang zur Welt des Spirituellen verloren hatten und über ihre Wunder noch staunen konnten. So entstand eine Reihe von Büchern für und über Kinder, unter denen *A Prisoner in Fairyland* (Gefangener im Feenreich) eine herausragende Stellung einnimmt. Das Buch wurde im Mai 1913 veröffentlicht und erregte schon bald die Aufmerksamkeit von Violet Pearn (1890 – 1947). Die aufstrebende Dramatikerin war überzeugt, dass sich aus der Geschichte ein wunderbares Schauspiel machen ließe, und es gelang ihr anscheinend mit Hilfe ihrer Kontakte am Theater, 1914 eine der Londoner Bühnen für eine Reihe von Aufführungen zu reservieren. Schon früh wurde deutlich, dass Musik das Stück wesentlich bereichern würde, und der

junge Komponist, Sänger und Intendant Clive Carey (1883 – 1968) wurde gebeten, diese zu schreiben. (Carey wurde später einer der angesehensten Gesangslehrer Londons und arbeitete vor allem auch mit der jungen Joan Sutherland.)

Verschiedene Faktoren, darunter nicht zuletzt auch der Kriegsausbruch und die Zeppelinangriffe auf London, brachten das Projekt jedoch zunächst zum Scheitern; aber schon im folgenden Jahr wurde es wieder aufgegriffen. Zu diesem Zeitpunkt scheint Careys Name bereits nicht mehr im Gespräch gewesen zu sein und man wandte sich an Elgar. Wie Blackwood hegte auch Elgar eine große Vorliebe für die Unschuld und Einfachheit der Kindheit – einige Jahre zuvor waren die auf einigen seiner frühen Kompositionen basierenden Suiten *The Wand of Youth* im Druck erschienen – und nach einwöchigem Zögern stimmte er zu. Er hatte zunächst beschlossen, Teile der Musik von *The Wand of Youth* zu verwenden – "Sun Dance" wird vollständig als Zwischenspiel in Akt II übernommen –, schrieb dann jedoch eine größere Zahl neuer Nummern, angespornt von seiner Begeisterung für das Projekt und seiner Bewunderung für Blackwood, der seit dieser Zeit ein willkommener Gast im Elgarschen Haus war.

Es ist daher umso betrüblicher, dass Autor und Komponist im Verlauf der Proben

mehr und mehr verzagten. Das Schauspiel ist überlang und Violet Pearn akzentuierte besonders die sentimentale Stimmung, der das Buch gefährlich nahe kommt, die zu vermeiden ihm aber immer gerade noch gelingt. Schlimmer noch waren allerdings Bühnenbild und Kostüme: Der Bühnenbildner hatte beschlossen, die Elfen als griechische Gottheiten darzustellen. Voller Entsetzen schrieb Blackwood an Elgar:

Dieser vorstädtische kunstgewerbliche
anmaßende Mist, der Ihrer Musik da
übergestülpt wird, erscheint mir absolut
unerträglich.

Er erwog, gegen die ganze Sache ein Veto einzulegen, doch schließlich fand die Uraufführung wie geplant am 29. Dezember 1915 statt. Die Kritiker kamen mehr oder weniger darin überein, das Stück zu verlachen, der Rezensent der *Times* allerdings schloss seine Besprechung bemerkenswerterweise mit den Worten: "Wer jedoch 'wumbled' [durcheinander] ist, der sollte Sir Edward Elgar lauschen." Zumindest die jüngeren Zuschauer scheinen das Stück aber gemocht zu haben. Das Werk wurde nach vierzig Aufführungen abgesetzt, was angesichts der Kriegsumstände vielleicht gar nicht so übel ist.

Als ich mir über diese Aufnahme Gedanken machte, schien mir aus den oben skizzierten Gründen eine Aufführung des Schauspiels

selbst in einer stark gekürzten Fassung keine Option zu sein. Andererseits ist die ganze Musik – mit Ausnahme der Songs und Zwischenspiele – als Melodram angelegt und in einigen Fällen, so wie in *The Crown of India* (1912), für sich genommen bedeutungslos. Ich habe daher den kühnen Schritt gewagt, eine erzählerische Handlung zu formulieren, die teils auf dem Bühnenstück basiert und teils auf *A Prisoner in Fairyland*. Die Geschichte folgt zunächst den beiden ersten Akten des Schauspiels, doch die zweite Szene des Dritten Akts spielt nicht vor der Sternengrotte in den Bergen, sondern in dem Unterschlupf an der Zitadelle und handelt davon, wie John Campden (Daddy) sein fertiges Buch liest. Das Ende ist problematisch. Vielleicht weil es Weihnachten war – wer weiß – stülpte Violet Pearn der Geschichte das Konzept des Sterns von Bethlehem über als die Quelle, aus der alle anderen Sterne ihr Licht beziehen. Blackwood, der unter einem tyrannischen evangelikalen Vater aufgewachsen war, muss das gehasst haben. Elgar lieferte eine wunderbare Orchesterfassung von "The First Nowell", doch sämtliche Kritiker sind der Meinung, dass dieser Augenblick nicht gelungen ist. Ich habe mich bemüht, Schlusszeilen zu finden, die Blackwood eher entsprechen.

Natürlich ist die Wirkung einer zur Musik gelesenen Erzählung nicht die gleiche, wie

wenn man den Text im Theater zur Musik deklamiert. Doch ich hoffe trotzdem, dass die von uns auf dieser Einspielung vorgestellte Lösung Elgars wunderbarer und anrührender Musik einen überzeugenden Rahmen verleiht.

Und wir haben noch eine Dreingabe. Einer Fußnote in Mike Ashleys ausgezeichnete Biographie von Blackwood, *Starlight Man* (2001), die ich wärmstens empfehle, habe ich entnommen, dass es noch drei Songs gibt, die Clive Carey für das Schauspiel geschrieben hat; und mit einiger detektivischer Arbeit im Internet sowie dank der Entdeckung einer Firma, die sich auf vergriffene Ausgaben spezialisiert hat, konnte ich sie etwa einen Monat vor Beginn der Aufnahmen aufspüren.

Das erste der drei Stücke bietet den interessantesten Kontrast: Carey vertonte "To the Children" ("O children, open your arms to me") als einfaches Strophenlied über einem Bordunbass, ähnlich wie "Der Leiermann" aus Schuberts *Winterreise*; Elgars Fassung ist unendlich komplexer und subtiler. Der Text des zweiten Stücks wurde von Elgar nicht zu Musik gesetzt, sondern wird nur gesprochen (in der Szene im Wald, mit der der Zweite Akt beginnt). In seiner Version des dritten Lieds vertonte Elgar den Text als eine Art unbegleitetes Volkslied.

Careys Musiksprache antizipiert die 1920er Jahre. Ich finde die Songs erfrischend

und reizvoll und es war mir ein Vergnügen, sie für die von Elgar in *The Starlight Express* verwendete Besetzung zu orchestrieren; auch hoffe ich, den jungen Komponisten für die ungerechte Behandlung, die ihm zuteilwurde, damit nachträglich entschädigt zu haben!

Im September 2011 besuchte ich das Dorf Bôle im Schweizer Jura, das eigentliche Bourcelles. Hier hatte Blackwood – genau wie Henry Rogers in *Prisoner – 1886 / 87* in Gesellschaft *seines* Cousins mehrere Monate verbracht, um Französisch zu lernen; später kehrte er oft an den Ort zurück, um zu schreiben und Ski zu fahren. Die meisten in dem Buch erwähnten Plätze stehen noch – die Pension, die Kirche, die markante Kiefer; nur die Zitadelle (die übrigens von Lord Wemyss erbaut wurde) ist, wie ich erfuhr, 1925 abgebrannt. Ich wanderte auch durch die Schluchten der Areuse und stieß in den seltsam erodierten Klippen sogar auf etwas, das der Eingang zu einer "Sternengrotte" hätte sein können. Blackwoods Botschaft – dass die Welt dringend das wiederentdecken müsse, was er selbst als Sympathie bezeichnete, was wir heute aber wohl eher mit dem Begriff Empathie oder Gemeinschaftssinn umreißen würden – sprach in der damaligen Zeit vor, während und nach dem Ersten Weltkrieg wohl viele Menschen an. Aber auch heute noch ist sie nicht weniger relevant. *A Prisoner in Fairyland*

ist ein erstaunliches wenn auch mit Mängeln behaftetes Buch. Mike Ashley hat dies perfekt ausgedrückt, als er schrieb, es "lohnt sich, [das Buch] ein zweites Mal zu lesen, wenn man das erste Mal überlebt hat".

Ich glaube, Elgar hat Blackwoods Botschaft verstanden und sich deshalb so stark eingesetzt für etwas, das andere für ein unbedeutendes oder oberflächliches Unterfangen gehalten haben würden. Zu anderen Zeiten in den ersten Kriegsjahren komponierte er die Art von patriotischer Musik, die von ihm erwartet wurde; darunter sind durchaus ausgezeichnete Werke, die einer Neubewertung harren. Doch der Umstand, dass er für eine seiner ersten Aufnahmen im Februar 1916 Musik aus *The Starlight Express* wählte, ist ebenso bedeutungsvoll wie der folgende Brief, den er im Oktober 1917 von einem in Flandern stationierten Offizier erhielt:

Obwohl Sie mich nicht kennen, spüre ich, dass ich Ihnen heute Abend schreiben muss. Wir haben ein recht gutes Grammophon in unserem Kasino und ich habe Ihre Platte *Starlight Express* gekauft: "Hearts must be soft-shiny dressed" [Herzen müssen sanft-glänzend gewandet sein] spielt gerade zum zwölften Mal. Vor dem Krieg war mir das Grammophon ein Gräuel, weil es zu häufig benutzt wurde. Doch jetzt ist alles anders und es ist das einzige Mittel, uns die

verflossenen Zeiten nahezubringen und uns zu helfen, das Elfenbeintor zu passieren, das ins Feenreich führt oder in den Himmel, wie immer man es auch nennen mag ... Musik ist das Einzige, das uns hilft durchzuhalten.

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Übersetzung: Stephanie Wollny

Die aus Swansea gebürtige Sopranistin **Elin Manahan Thomas** studierte am Clare College in Cambridge Angelsächsisch, Altnordisch und Keltisch, bevor sie eine erfolgreiche Laufbahn als Musikerin einschlug. Erste große Erfolge feierte sie in einer Aufführung von Bachs Matthäus-Passion unter Sir John Eliot Gardiner in der Leipziger Thomaskirche und mit ihrer makellosen stimmlichen Bewältigung der höchsten Lagen in Allegris Miserere unter Harry Christophers; außerdem sang sie unter dem verstorbenen Richard Hickox in der Kathedrale von Liverpool die Uraufführung von Sir John Taveners Requiem. Sie ist auf dem Edinburgh International Festival und dem Lufthansa Festival sowie in der Londoner Wigmore Hall und dem Concertgebouw Amsterdam aufgetreten. Darüber hinaus war sie in zahlreichen Radioprogrammen zu hören und ist im Fernsehen in *Birth of British Music* (BBC 2), *Sacred Music* (BBC 4), *How Music Works* (Channel 4) sowie am Weihnachtstag

in *A Musical Nativity* (BBC 2) aufgetreten. Sie war außerdem die Hauptdarstellerin in der sechsteiligen Dokumentation *Y Sopranos* auf S4C und wurde für ihre Leistung als Moderatorin zweimal für einen Bafta nominiert. Ihr Debüt-Album, *Eternal Light* mit dem Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment, veröffentlichte sie 2007; ferner nahm sie als erste Sängerin Bachs *Alles mit Gott* auf, eine Geburtstagsode aus dem Jahr 1713, die 2005 wiederentdeckt wurde. Ihre umfangreiche Diskographie umfasst inzwischen auch fünf Soloalben. 2012 wurde Elin Manahan Thomas zum Honorary Fellow des Royal Welsh College of Music and Drama ernannt, worin sie die größte Auszeichnung und Leistung ihres bisherigen Lebens sieht – abgesehen von ihrem kleinen Sohn!

Der Bariton **Roderick Williams** verfügt über ein breites Repertoire, das vom Barock bis zur Gegenwart reicht. Besonders enge Kontakte pflegt er zur Opera North, an der er zuletzt den Gorjantschikow (*Aus einem Totenhaus*) gesungen hat, und zur Scottish Opera, wo er vor kurzem die Rolle des Grafen (*Le nozze di Figaro*) übernahm. Man bringt ihn besonders mit den Baritonrollen Mozarts in Verbindung; so gab er in den Jahren 2007 und 2009 an der English National Opera hochgerühmte Darbietungen des Papageno (*Die Zauberflöte*).

Im Jahr 2011 kehrte er an das Haus zurück, um den Pollux (in Rameaus *Castor et Pollux*) zu singen. 2008 übernahm er an der Royal Opera, Covent Garden die Rolle des Schaunard (*La bohème*); dort war er vor kurzem auch in der Rolle des Ned Keene (*Peter Grimes*) zu hören. Ferner hat er die Uraufführungen von Opern zeitgenössischer Komponisten wie David Sawer, Sally Beamish, Michael van der Aa, Robert Saxton und Alexander Knaifel gesungen. Er hat mit Orchestern in ganz Europa zusammengearbeitet, darunter sämtliche BBC-Orchester in Großbritannien, und ist auf den BBC-Proms sowie den Festivals von Edinburgh, Cheltenham, Aldeburgh und anderen aufgetreten. Auch als Konzertsänger hat er sich einen Namen gemacht; Auftritte führten ihn in die Londoner Wigmore Hall, die Perth Concert Hall, den Howard Assembly Room in Leeds und den Wiener Musikverein. Er ist regelmäßig auf BBC Radio 3 zu hören, wo er an Iain Burnside's Sendereihe *Voices* teilgenommen hat. Seine umfassende Diskographie hat weltweit Anerkennung gefunden. Roderick Williams ist auch Komponist; Uraufführungen seiner Werke waren in der Wigmore und der Barbican Hall, dem Purcell Room und live im britischen Rundfunk zu hören.

Der Schauspieler, Regisseur und Schriftsteller **Simon Callow** CBE feierte 1975 am Prince of

Wales Theatre im Londoner Westend sein Schauspieldebüt in *The Plumber's Progress*; seither hatte er Engagements in ganz Großbritannien sowie auch im Ausland. Zu seinen zahlreichen Rollen zählen Sir Toby Belch (in *Twelfth Night* am National Theatre), die Titelrollen in *Amadeus*, *Faust* und *Titus Andronicus*, Orlando (*As You Like It*), Verlaine (*Total Eclipse*), Molina (*The Kiss of the Spider Woman*), Dysart (*Equus*), Falstaff (*Merry Wives: the Musical* mit der Royal Shakespeare Company), Garry Essendine (*Present Laughter*), Pozzo (*Waiting for Godot*) sowie Rollen in *Aladdin* und *The Woman in White*. Er hat eine Reihe von One-Man-Shows gegeben, darunter *The Mystery of Charles Dickens*, *Dr Marigold and Mr Chops*, *A Christmas Carol* und *Being Shakespeare*; das letztgenannte Stück hat er vor kurzem in New York und Chicago präsentiert. Auf der Kinoleinwand war er unter anderem in *Amadeus*, *Four Weddings and a Funeral*, *Shakespeare in Love*, *The Phantom of the Opera*, *A Room with a View*, *Maurice*, *Postcards from the Edge* sowie in dem in Reimpaaren gesprochenen Film *Acts of Godfrey* zu sehen. Er erscheint auch regelmäßig im britischen Fernsehen und hat Sendungen wie zum Beispiel *Orson Welles over Europe* und *Acting in Restoration Comedy* geschrieben und moderiert. Bei zahlreichen Schauspielen hat er Regie geführt und außerdem die Opern *Così fan tutte* (in Luzern), *Die Fledermaus* (für Scottish

Opera), *Il tritico, Il turco in Italia, Calisto, The Consul, Le Roi malgré lui* und *Die Zauberflöte* inszeniert. Simon Callow hat zahlreiche Bücher geschrieben; jüngst erschien *Charles Dickens and the Great Theatre of the World*. 1999 wurde ihm der Titel eines CBE (Commander of the Order of the British Empire) verliehen.

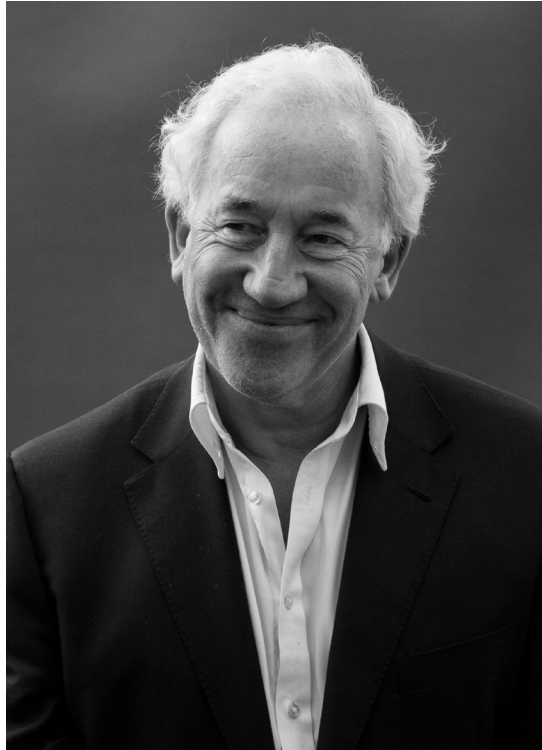
Das **Scottish Chamber Orchestra** (SCO) wurde 1974 gegründet mit der Zielsetzung, der schottischen Gemeinschaft zu dienen; heute gilt es als eines der besten Kammerorchester der Welt und einer der ersten kulturellen Repräsentanten Schottlands, unternimmt internationale Konzertreisen und gastiert regelmäßig auf den Festivals von Edinburgh, St. Magnus und Aldeburgh sowie auf den BBC-Proms neben Auftritten in ganz Schottland. Zu Beginn der Spielzeit 2009/10 übernahm Robin Ticciati das Amt des Chefdirigenten; seine Zusammenarbeit mit dem Orchester wurde vom *Daily Telegraph* als "eine der großartigsten Partnerschaften in der britischen Musik" bejubelt. Regelmäßige Auftritte mit dem Orchester haben zudem Joseph Swensen (Conductor Emeritus), Richard Egarr (Associate Artist), Olari Elts, John Storgårds, Thierry Fischer, Louis Langrée, Oliver Knussen, Piotr Anderszewski und Alexander Janiczek (Associate Artist). Die langjährige Verbindung des Orchesters

mit dem verstorbenen Sir Charles Mackerras (Conductor Laureate) führte zu zahlreichen außergewöhnlichen Aufführungen und preisgekrönten Einspielungen. Die Zusammenarbeit mit vielen hervorragenden Komponisten resultierte in mehr als einhundert Auftragswerken unter anderem von Sir Peter Maxwell Davies (Composer Laureate), Mark-Anthony Turnage, Judith Weir, Sally Beamish, Lyell Cresswell und Hafliði Hallgrímsson. SCO Connect, die Abteilung des Orchesters für Bildung und Öffentlichkeitsarbeit, bietet in ganz Schottland einzigartige Projekte für Kinder und Erwachsene an. Das Orchester ist regelmäßig im Rundfunk zu hören und hat eine Diskographie von mehr als 150 Einspielungen. Das Scottish Chamber Orchestra erhält finanzielle Unterstützung von der schottischen Regierung.

Sir Andrew Davis ist seit dem Jahr 2000 Musikdirektor und Erster Dirigent an der Lyric Opera of Chicago. Zudem ist er ehemaliger Erster Dirigent und gegenwärtig "Conductor Laureate" des Toronto Symphony Orchestra. Diese Position hat er auch am BBC Symphony Orchestra inne, nachdem er dort die zweitlängste Zeitspanne – nach dem Begründer des Orchesters Sir Adrian Boult – als Chefdirigent gewirkt hat; außerdem war er Musikdirektor der Glyndebourne Festival Opera.

Sir Andrew Davis wurde 1944 im englischen Hertfordshire geboren und studierte am King's College in Cambridge, wo er Orgelstipendiat war, bevor er sich dem Dirigieren zuwandte. Sein Repertoire erstreckt sich vom Barock bis zur zeitgenössischen Musik und seine umfassende Erfahrung als Dirigent umspannt die Welt der Sinfonik, der Oper und des Chorgesangs. Neben dem Standardrepertoire in Sinfonie und Oper ist er ein großer Advokat der Musik des zwanzigsten Jahrhunderts von Komponisten wie Janáček, Messiaen, Boulez, Elgar, Tippett und Britten. Er hat das BBC Symphony Orchestra in Konzerten der BBC Proms und auf Tourneen nach Hongkong, Japan, in die USA und nach Europa

geleitet. Er hat alle großen Orchester der Welt dirigiert und Inszenierungen an allen namhaften Opernhäusern und auf den einschlägigen Festivals geleitet einschließlich der Metropolitan Opera in New York, des Teatro alla Scala in Mailand und der Bayreuther Festspiele. Maestro Davis hat eine umfassende Diskographie versammelt und ist gegenwärtig mit Chandos durch einen Exklusivvertrag verbunden. Im Jahr 1991 wurde er mit dem Charles Heidsieck Music Award der Royal Philharmonic Society ausgezeichnet, 1992 zum Commander of the Order of the British Empire ernannt und 1999 im Rahmen der New Year Honours List zum Knight Bachelor erhoben. www.sirandrewdavis.com



Simon Callow



Brian Pidgeon, Sir Andrew Davis, and Roderick Williams in the control room at the Usher Hall, Edinburgh



From the recording sessions in the Usher Hall, Edinburgh

Elgar: The Starlight Express

Algernon Henry Blackwood (1869 – 1951) était tout en contradictions: bien qu'il comptât parmi ses aïeux un lord-maire de Londres, un gouverneur de Caroline du Nord et divers membres de l'aristocratie écossaise, anglaise et irlandaise, il vécut pendant une bonne partie de sa vie sans domicile fixe et aurait réduit ses biens, plus tard au cours de son existence, à des vêtements de rechange, un fourre-tout, des pyjamas et sa machine à écrire. S'il jouissait d'une grande popularité comme conteur auprès de son large cercle d'amis (et par la suite, auprès du public anglais grâce à ses émissions), il n'était jamais plus heureux qu'en route pour une de ses aventures – descendre le Danube dans une petite barque à fond plat, canoter dans le Canada sauvage, escalader les Alpes, explorer le Caucase, errer la nuit dans le désert égyptien, skier dans le Jura suisse.

Si ce personnage sociable et charmant transparait dans l'élégance et l'esprit de la plus grande partie de son œuvre, c'est sa relation intime avec la nature et le talent particulier qu'il a de percevoir les puissances qui l'animent ou qu'elle recèle qui donnent leur authenticité à

tant d'histoires "surnaturelles" de Blackwood. Il avait un autre don remarquable, celui de s'identifier aux enfants et de communiquer avec eux, car il sentait qu'ils n'avaient pas perdu le contact avec l'univers spirituel et pouvaient encore s'en émerveiller. Un certain nombre de livres pour les enfants ou sur les enfants en résultèrent, dont le principal est *A Prisoner in Fairyland*. Il fut édité en mai 1913 et attira rapidement l'attention de Violet Pearn (1890 – 1947) qui, ambitionnant de devenir dramaturge, était convaincue que cela ferait une pièce merveilleuse; par ses relations dans le monde du théâtre, elle semble s'être assuré de porter l'œuvre à la scène dans l'un des théâtres de Londres à un certain moment en 1914. Bien vite on se rendit compte que la pièce gagnerait énormément à être rehaussée par de la musique et le jeune compositeur, chanteur et metteur en scène Clive Carey (1883 – 1968) fut invité à la fournir. (Carey devint par la suite l'un des professeurs de chant les plus réputés de Londres, travaillant tout particulièrement avec le jeune Joan Sutherland.)

Hélas, divers facteurs, notamment le déclenchement de la guerre et les raids de

zeppelins sur Londres, firent capoter le projet, mais il fut ressuscité un an plus tard. Entre temps Carey tomba dans l'oubli, semble-t-il, et Elgar fut approché. Comme Blackwood, Elgar était charmé par l'innocence et la simplicité de l'enfance – les Suites *The Wand of Youth*, fondées sur certaines de ses premières compositions, avaient été éditées quelques années plus tôt – et après une semaine d'hésitation, il accepta. Il avait en fait décidé d'utiliser des épisodes de la musique de *The Wand of Youth* – "Sun Dance" est joué dans son intégralité en tant qu'interlude dans l'Acte II –, mais il se retrouva à composer plus de numéros originaux qu'il ne pensait au fur et à mesure qu'il avançait, enflammé par son enthousiasme pour l'entreprise et son admiration pour Blackwood qui, à cette époque et après, fut toujours bienvenu dans la maison d'Elgar.

Il est dommage, dès lors, que tant l'auteur que le compositeur aient été gagnés par une certaine amertume au cours des répétitions. La pièce est extrêmement longue et Violet Pearn avait donné dans une sensiblerie que le livre frôlait dangereusement en réussissant tout juste, d'une certaine manière, à l'éviter. Mais pires encore étaient les décors et costumes: le concepteur du projet avait choisi de dépeindre les Sprites (esprits follets) comme des dieux grecs. Blackwood fut horrifié et écrivit à Elgar:

ce fourbis prétentieux, suburbain, artisanal,
crocheté sur votre musique est pour moi
vraiment trop pénible à entendre.

Il envisagea de mettre son veto à toute l'affaire, mais finalement la première eut lieu comme prévu, le 29 décembre 1915. Les critiques eurent tendance dans l'ensemble à ridiculiser la pièce, néanmoins dans *The Times* le commentaire se terminait par ces mots mémorables: "Que celui qui broie du noir, écoute Sir Edward Elgar." Il semble que les plus jeunes dans le public, au moins, l'apprécièrent davantage. Le rideau tomba définitivement après quarante représentations ce qui, compte tenu des circonstances en cette période de guerre, n'est après tout pas si mal.

En examinant cet enregistrement, il m'a semblé qu'exécuter la pièce, même en version fortement abrégée, n'était pas, pour les raisons décrites ci-dessus, une bonne option. D'autre part toute la musique, à l'exception des mélodies et des interludes, était conçue en tant que mélodrame et, dans certains cas, comme dans *The Crown of India* (1912), elle n'a pas de signification propre. J'ai donc pris l'initiative audacieuse d'écrire une histoire basée en partie sur la pièce et en partie sur *A Prisoner in Fairyland*. Le récit suit la ligne narrative de la pièce pour ce qui est des deux premiers actes, mais la deuxième scène de l'Acte III, plutôt que de se dérouler à l'extérieur de la Star Cave (la Caverne des Étoiles) dans les montagnes, a

lieu dans le Den (l'Antre) à la Citadelle et est consacrée à la lecture par John Campden (Daddy) de son livre, achevé. La toute fin est complexe. Parce que c'était la période de Noël peut-être – qui sait? –, Violet Pearn rajoute le concept de l'Étoile de Bethléem, source de la lumière de toutes les étoiles. Ayant grandi sous la férule d'un père tyrannique de confession évangélique, Blackwood dut détester cela. Elgar nous a donné une merveilleuse orchestration de "The First Nowell", mais, de l'avis de tous les commentateurs, l'épisode écorche l'oreille. J'ai essayé de trouver des lignes finales plus fidèles à Blackwood.

Mais il est clair que l'effet d'une narration lue sur la musique n'est pas pareil à celui que produit la déclamation d'un texte sur la musique au théâtre. J'espère néanmoins que la solution adoptée pour cet enregistrement offrira une charpente s'appropriant à la merveilleuse et émouvante partition d'Elgar.

Et nous avons un bonus. En lisant une note en bas de page dans l'excellente biographie de Blackwood écrite par Mike Ashley, *Starlight Man* (2001), dont je ne peux que fortement recommander la lecture, j'ai appris que trois mélodies écrites par Clive Carey pour la pièce ont survécu; et à force d'accomplir un travail de détective sur internet et grâce à la découverte d'une compagnie spécialisée dans les musiques épuisées, j'ai pu mettre la main

sur ces mélodies un mois environ avant que commencent les séances d'enregistrement.

Des trois mélodies, c'est la première qui offre le contraste le plus intéressant: Carey mit en musique "To the Children" ("O children, open your arms to me") de manière strophique simple sur les sonorités graves d'un bourdon rappelant "Der Leiermann" de Schubert dans le *Winterreise*; la mise en musique d'Elgar est infiniment plus élaborée et subtile. Le texte de la deuxième mélodie ne fut pas mis en musique par Elgar, mais laissé tel quel pour être récité (dans la scène d'ouverture de l'Acte II, dans la forêt). La mise en musique de la troisième faite par Elgar est conçue comme une mélodie quasi folklorique non accompagnée.

Le langage musical de Carey préfigure le style des années vingt. Je trouve les mélodies pleines de fraîcheur et de charme, et ce fut avec plaisir que je les orchestrai pour les effectifs prévus par Elgar dans *The Starlight Express* – j'espère ainsi avoir offert tardivement une compensation au jeune compositeur pour la manière injuste dont il fut traité.

En septembre 2011, j'ai visité le village de Bôle dans le Jura suisse, le vrai Bourcelles de la pièce. Blackwood, exactement comme Henry Rogers dans *A Prisoner in Fairyland*, avait passé plusieurs mois là-bas, en 1886 – 1887, étudiant le français en compagnie de son cousin, et il y retourna souvent, plus tard, pour écrire et

skier. La plupart des lieux mentionnés dans le livre sont encore là: la Pension, l'église, le pin sentinelle -, mais la Citadelle (construite en effet par Lord Wemyss) fut détruite par un incendie, ai-je découvert, en 1925. J'ai traversé aussi les gorges de la rivière Areuse et j'ai même trébuché sur ce qui aurait pu être l'entrée d'une "Star Cave" dans les escarpements rocheux bizarrement érodés. Le message de Blackwood - à savoir que le monde avait l'impérieux besoin de redécouvrir ce qu'il appelait "Sympathy", mais qui est mieux rendu de nos jours par le concept d'empathie - était certes de nature à toucher un grand nombre d'individus en ce temps-là, soit avant, pendant et après la Première Guerre mondiale. Ce message reste tout aussi pertinent de nos jours. *A Prisoner in Fairyland* est un livre merveilleux, malgré ses imperfections. Mike Ashley l'exprima parfaitement lorsqu'il écrivit qu'il "gagne à être lu une deuxième fois si vous réussissez à survivre à la première lecture".

Je présume qu'Elgar comprit le message de Blackwood et que c'est la raison pour laquelle il s'investit autant dans ce que d'autres auraient pu considérer comme une entreprise inopportune ou insignifiante. Au cours des premières années de guerre, il lui arriva aussi d'écrire le genre d'œuvres patriotiques que l'on attendait de lui; nombreuses d'entre elles sont très belles et devraient être réévaluées. Mais le fait qu'il choisit

de la musique de *The Starlight Express* pour l'un de ses premiers enregistrements, en février 1916, est significatif, tout comme la lettre qui suit, qu'il reçut en octobre 1917 d'un officier en service en Flandre:

Bien que vous ne me connaissiez pas, je sens que je dois vous écrire ce soir. Nous avons un assez bon gramophone dans notre mess, et j'ai acheté votre disque *Starlight Express*: "Les cœurs doivent être enveloppés d'un doux velours", alors qu'on le joue pour la douzième fois. J'avais le gramophone en abomination avant cette guerre: on en abusait tant. Mais tout a changé maintenant, et c'est le seul moyen qu'il y a de nous rappeler les jours envolés et de nous aider à franchir la porte d'ivoire qui conduit à l'autre monde, ou au paradis, peu importe le nom qu'on lui donne... La musique est tout ce que nous avons pour nous aider à aller de l'avant.

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Traduction: Marie-Françoise de Meeüs

Née à Swansea, la soprano **Elin Manahan Thomas** étudia l'anglo-saxon, l'ancien nordique et le celtique au Clare College à Cambridge avant de se lancer dans une active carrière musicale. Elle fut d'abord très applaudie pour sa prestation dans la Passion selon Saint Matthieu de Bach dirigée par Sir John

Eliot Gardiner à la Thomaskirche à Leipzig et pour son interprétation de haut niveau du Miserere d'Allegri dirigé par Harry Christophers, et elle participa à la création du Requiem de Sir John Tavener sous la baguette de feu Richard Hickox à la cathédrale de Liverpool. Elle est apparue lors du Edinburgh International Festival et du Lufthansa Festival ainsi qu'au Wigmore Hall à Londres et au Concertgebouw à Amsterdam. Elle a participé à de nombreux programmes radiophoniques et s'est produite en télévision dans *Birth of British Music* (BBC 2), *Sacred Music* (BBC 4), *How Music Works* (Channel 4) et, le jour de Noël, *A Musical Nativity* (BBC 2). Elle fut aussi l'interprète principale dans *Y Sopranos*, le documentaire en six épisodes de S4C (chaîne de télévision de langue galloise du Pays de Galles), et en tant que présentatrice, elle a été nommée deux fois pour un Bafta Award. Elle a sorti son premier album *Eternal Light*, en 2007, un enregistrement réalisé avec l'Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment et elle est la première cantatrice à avoir enregistré *Alles mit Gott* de Bach, une ode d'anniversaire écrite en 1713 et redécouverte en 2005. Son importante discographie comprend cinq albums d'œuvres chantées en solo. En 2012, Elin Manahan Thomas fut nommée Honorary Fellow of the Royal Welsh College of Music and Drama ce qu'elle considère comme le plus grand honneur qui lui a été rendu et sa plus belle

réalisation à ce jour – outre le privilège d'avoir mis au monde son petit garçon.

Le baryton **Roderick Williams** entretient d'étroites relations avec l'Opera North et le Scottish Opera dans un vaste répertoire, de la musique baroque à la musique contemporaine. À l'Opera North, son dernier rôle a été Goriantchikov (*De la maison des morts*); au Scottish Opera, il s'est récemment produit dans celui du Comte (*Le nozze di Figaro*). Particulièrement identifié aux rôles de baryton de Mozart, il a remporté un grand succès dans Papageno (*Die Zauberflöte*) à l'English National Opera en 2007 et en 2009. Il y est retourné pour chanter le rôle de Pollux (*Castor et Pollux* de Rameau) en 2011. En 2008, il a été Schaunard (*La bohème*) au Royal Opera de Covent Garden, où il s'est produit très récemment dans le rôle de Ned Keene (*Peter Grimes*). Il a aussi participé à la création mondiale d'opéras de David Sawer, Sally Beamish, Michael van der Aa, Robert Saxton et Alexander Knaifel, notamment. Il travaille avec orchestre dans toute l'Europe, notamment avec tous les orchestres de la BBC au Royaume-Uni, et s'est produit aux Proms de la BBC, ainsi qu'aux festivals d'Édimbourg, Cheltenham et Aldeburgh, parmi tant d'autres. Il excelle en récital et a chanté au Wigmore Hall de Londres, au Concert Hall de Perth, à la Howard Assembly Room de Leeds et au Wiener Musikverein. On peut l'entendre régulièrement sur BBC Radio 3, où il a participé

à l'émission d'Iain Burnside *Voices*. Sa vaste discographie connaît un grand succès dans le monde entier. Roderick Williams est également compositeur; ses œuvres ont été créées au Wigmore Hall et au Barbican, à la Purcell Room, et en direct à la radio nationale.

L'acteur, metteur en scène et écrivain **Simon Callow** CBE apparut pour la première fois à West End en 1975 dans *The Plumber's Progress* au Prince of Wales Theatre, et depuis, il s'est produit dans divers théâtres partout au Royaume-Uni et à l'étranger. Citons parmi ses nombreux rôles: Sir Toby Belch (*Twelfth Night* au National Theatre), le rôle titre dans *Amadeus*, *Faust* et *Titus Andronicus*, Orlando (*As You Like It*), Verlaine (*Total Eclipse*), Molina (*The Kiss of the Spider Woman*), Dysart (*Equus*), Falstaff (*Merry Wives: the Musical* avec le Royal Shakespeare Company), Garry Essendine (*Present Laughter*), Pozzo (*Waiting for Godot*) ainsi que des rôles dans *Aladdin* et *The Woman in White*. Il a donné plusieurs one man shows, notamment *The Mystery of Charles Dickens*, *Dr Marigold and Mr Chops*, *A Christmas Carol* et *Being Shakespeare*, récemment à l'affiche à New York et à Chicago. Au grand écran, il a joué notamment dans *Amadeus*, *Four Weddings and a Funeral*, *Shakespeare in Love*, *The Phantom of the Opera*, *A Room with a View*, *Maurice*, *Postcards from the Edge* et – en

couplets versifiés – *Acts of Godfrey*. Il apparaît régulièrement aussi sur les chaînes de la UK television, et a présenté et écrit des programmes comme *Orson Welles over Europe* et *Acting in Restoration Comedy*. Il a mis en scène un grand nombre de pièces ainsi que les opéras *Così fan tutte* (à Lucerne), *Die Fledermaus* (pour le Scottish Opera), *Il trittico*, *Il turco in Italia*, *Calisto*, *The Consul*, *Le Roi malgré lui* et *Die Zauberflöte*. Simon Callow a écrit de nombreux livres, et entre autres, tout récemment, *Charles Dickens and the Great Theatre of the World*. Il a été nommé CBE (Commander of the Order of the British Empire) en 1999.

Formé en 1974 avec l'engagement de servir la communauté écossaise, le **Scottish Chamber Orchestra** (SCO) est reconnu comme l'un des meilleurs orchestres de chambre du monde et comme l'un des principaux ambassadeurs culturels de l'Écosse, se produisant dans le monde entier et, de manière régulière, aux festivals d'Edimbourg, de St Magnus et d'Aldebourg, ainsi qu'aux Proms de la BBC et partout en Écosse. Robin Ticciati en devint le chef principal au début de la saison 2009/2010; lui-même et l'Orchestre ont été salués par *The Daily Telegraph* comme "l'un des grands partenariats dans la musique anglaise". Les artistes suivants se produisent régulièrement avec l'Orchestre: Joseph Swensen

(chef émérite), Richard Egarr (artiste associé), Olari Elts, John Storgårds, Thierry Fischer, Louis Langrée, Oliver Knussen, Piotr Anderszewski et Alexander Janiczek (artiste associé). Les liens qui longtemps ont uni l'Orchestre à feu Sir Charles Mackerras (chef lauréat) menèrent à de nombreux concerts d'exception ainsi qu'à des enregistrements couronnés de prix. Le SCO qui est très proche aussi de nombreux compositeurs de renom a commandé plus d'une centaine d'œuvres nouvelles, notamment de Sir Peter Maxwell Davies (compositeur lauréat), Mark-Anthony Turnage, Judith Weir, Sally Beamish, Lyell Cresswell et Hafliði Hallgrímsson. SCO Connect, le département d'éducation et de communication de l'Orchestre offre un programme unique de projets pour les enfants et les adultes dans toute l'Écosse. L'Orchestre participe régulièrement à des émissions et sa discographie comprend plus de 150 enregistrements. Le Scottish Chamber Orchestra reçoit des fonds du gouvernement écossais.

Depuis l'an 2000, **Sir Andrew Davis** est directeur musical et premier chef du Lyric Opera de Chicago. Ancien premier chef du Toronto Symphony Orchestra, il en est aujourd'hui chef d'orchestre lauréat; il est également chef lauréat du BBC Symphony Orchestra – dont il a été le premier chef pendant de nombreuses années, seul son fondateur, Sir Adrian Boult,

étant resté plus longtemps que lui à ce poste; il a été également directeur musical de l'Opéra du Festival de Glyndebourne. Né en 1944 dans le Hertfordshire, en Angleterre, il a fait ses études au King's College de Cambridge, où il a étudié l'orgue avant de se tourner vers la direction d'orchestre. Son répertoire s'étend de la musique baroque aux œuvres contemporaines et ses qualités très développées dans le domaine de la direction d'orchestre couvrent l'univers symphonique, lyrique et choral. Outre le répertoire symphonique et lyrique de base, il est un grand partisan des œuvres du vingtième siècle de compositeurs tels Janáček, Messiaen, Boulez, Elgar, Tippett et Britten. Il a donné des concerts avec le BBC Symphony Orchestra aux Proms de la BBC et en tournée à Hong-Kong, au Japon, aux États-Unis et en Europe. Il a dirigé tous les plus grands orchestres du monde, ainsi que des productions dans des théâtres lyriques et festivals du monde entier, notamment au Metropolitan Opera de New York, au Teatro alla Scala de Milan et au Festival de Bayreuth. Maestro Davis enregistre de manière prolifique; il est actuellement sous contrat d'exclusivité chez Chandos. Il a reçu la Charles Heidsieck Music Award de la Royal Philharmonic Society en 1991, a été fait commandeur de l'Ordre de l'Empire britannique en 1992, et en 1999 Knight Bachelor au titre des distinctions honorifiques décernées par la reine à l'occasion de la nouvelle année. www.sirandrewdavis.com



Dario Acosta

Sir Andrew Davis



Sir Andrew Davis with the score of 'The Starlight Express' at the BBC Broadcasting House, London



Simon Callow and Sir Andrew Davis at the BBC Broadcasting House, London

The Starlight Express, Op. 78

COMPACT DISC ONE

Act I

No. 1. Song 'To the Children'

Organ-grinder

1
CD
2:
18
O children, open your arms to me,
Let your hair fall over my eyes;
Let me sleep a moment, and then awake
In your garden of sweet surprise!
For the grown-up folk are a wearisome folk,
And they laugh all my fancies to scorn,
The grown up folk are a wearisome folk,
And they laugh all my fancies to scorn,
My fun and my fancies to scorn.

O children, open your hearts to me,
And tell me your wonder thoughts.
Who lives in the palace inside your brain?
Who plays in its outer courts?
Who hides in the hours tomorrow holds?
Who sleeps in your yesterdays?
Who tip-toes along past the curtained folds
Of the shadow that twilight lays?

O children, open your eyes to me,
And tell me your visions too;
Who squeezes the sponge when the salt tears
flow
To dim their magical blue?

Who brushes the fringe of their lace-veined
lids?
Who trims their innocent light?
Who draws up the blinds when the sun peeps
in?
Who fastens them down at night?

O children, I pray you sing low to me,
And cover my eyes with your hands.
O kiss me again till I sleep and dream
That I'm lost in your fairylands;
That I'm lost in your fairylands;
For the grown-up folk are a troublesome folk,
And the book of their childhood is torn!
Is blotted, and crumpled, and torn!

Scene 1

2
In the village of Bourcelles in the Swiss
Jura mountains stood the Citadelle, the
crumbling wing of a castle begun by the
Jacobite exile Lord Wemyss but never
completed. It was here that the English family
had lived for the past five years, and here, in
a southern-facing room, that they now sat
after tea. Despite the fact that John Campden,
the father, barely earned enough from his
well-regarded but not very successful books
to keep their heads above water, they were all
devoted to each other and happy. The author,
just now wrestling with a new book far bigger
than anything he had attempted before, was
absent-mindedly lighting his pipe for the tenth
time; his wife, an ample and motherly woman,
was knitting on the other side of the fireplace,
with the family cat, Riquette, asleep in her lap.

In the open window, gazing out into the sunshine, stood two children, a boy and a girl of ten and twelve, respectively: Jimbo and Monkey. Across the vineyard slopes, Lake Neuchatel lay blue as a southern sea, while beyond stretched the whole range of the Alps.

Jane Anne (Jinny)

Get out, you Morning Spider!
You fairy-cotton rider.
With my tiny nets of feather
I collect the stars together:
And on strips of windy weather
Bring the day!

A third, taller child had come in. She was sixteen, of a sunny though earnest disposition; her eyes held a curiously puzzled look, as though life confused her so much that while she did her duties bravely she did not quite understand why it should be so. Now she gently brushed a crumb from her father's beard and dusted his hair – Jinny dusted everything. 'I wish you could dust my brain', he said.

No. 2

[3] Just then a lamplighter, a tall man with a long pole, went down the street, but vanished before they could get a good look at him.
'Oh, the lamplighter reminds me,' said Daddy, 'my cousin Henry is coming to stay

with us – he arrives tonight!' He went on to tell them how he and Henry, now a newly retired successful businessman, had spent a year together in Bourcelles in their youth, studying French and staying at the Pension des Glycines where the family now took its meals.

No. 3

[4] At that time, Henry had told him about the old railway carriage that his father had bought him as a Christmas present. He had named it the Starlight Express and peopled it with special passengers whom he called the Sprites.

'One of them was a lamplighter, I remember,' said Daddy, 'who lights us up and makes us glow – that's Hope. There was the Laugher, who sings all trouble into joy, the Gardener, who clears away the dead leaves and makes things grow in the night, the Sweep who cleans chimney flues – and hearts – and the Woman of the Haystack, majestic and imperturbable...

No. 4

[5] ...the mother of them all.

There was a Tramp too, an unkempt figure like an old rag-and-bone man, Traveller of the World, the Eternal Wanderer, homeless as the wind, who played an old-fashioned barrel organ.'

Daddy was getting excited. 'By George, they really were splendid – and they would be the perfect mouthpieces for the ideas I'm trying to put across in my new book.

No. 5

8 Oh! but I'm forgetting the most important one of all. The Dustman – he flies tirelessly through the Constellations, filling his sacks with stardust, which he scatters about the world, bringing dreams of Love and Beauty.' He sighed. 'I could really use his help right now. Sometimes some of his starlight comes to me but then I seem to lose it. Actually, I tried to express that in a little verse I wrote today.' The children all gathered round him.

No. 6

7 They were always eager to hear his poetry, though they usually found it puzzling. He cleared his throat nervously and began:

'Starlight
Runs along my mind
And rolls into a ball of golden silk –
A little skein
Of tangled glory;
And when I want to get it out again
To weave the pattern of a verse or story,
It must unwind.

It then gets knotted, looped and all
up-jumbled,
And, long before I get it straight again,
unwumbled,
To make my verse or story;
The interfering sun has risen
And burst with passion through my silken
prison
To melt it down in dew,
Like so much spider-gossamer or fairy-cotton.
Don't you?
I call it rotten!

Jinny very reasonably objected that 'Don't you?' should go *after* 'I call it rotten!', not before. Monkey mischievously put a crumb *back* into her father's beard. Jimbo turned his head towards the windows and said softly, 'Someone in heaven is letting down the star-ladders'.

No. 7

8 And suddenly a new, enormous thing stirred in their father's heart. A softness of ten thousand stars trooped down into his blood. A thought came to him, he knew not whence. 'You know about the Star Caves, I suppose?' – They shook their heads. 'They're places where lost starlight gathers. There are numbers of them round the world and one, I think, may not be far from here – where the forests of Boudry dip towards the gorges of the river Areuse. It's hard to get in because the entrance is narrow

but it's there that star dust is stored – and by walking through it you get clothed and covered in it. It gives you the gift of Sympathy – feeling for others – and you come out again all soft-shiny – like a star!

Monkey wanted to go and find it then and there; Jimbo felt it sounded familiar somehow. But Mother pointed out that since they had to await Henry's arrival they would have to forego supper at the Pension – they had had a big tea anyway – and she dispatched Jimbo to bear the news to Madame Jequier.

Conversation then naturally turned to the Pension and its eccentric residents – the three retired governesses, who were enduring with little grace the straightened circumstances of their declining years; sweet old Miss Waghorn, who introduced herself at least three times a day to people in whose midst she had been living for years; and the widow Jequier herself, whose impulsive generosity not only to her clients but also to others in the village had rendered her relationship to her bank so precarious that she was in danger of losing the Pension; her only solace was her garden, which she tended with passionate devotion.

No. 8

⁸ As though on cue, the burly figure of a gardener passed the window. They heard him crying, "Leaves to sweep! Any dead leaves to sweep?!" And then he was gone.

No. 9

⁹ 'That's odd,' said Mother, 'you don't need to sweep leaves in the Spring', but the irrepressible Monkey, clearly fascinated with her father's newly invented word, declared that it just proved that the whole village was 'wumbled', and began to dance giddily round the room, chanting, 'Bourcelles! Bourcelles! Little wumbled Bourcelles!' 'It's not just our village, dear', Mother said ruefully. 'It's the whole world.'

But something caught her eye, and Monkey too stopped her dance. It was Jinny; she had found an old shawl, blue spangled with...

No. 10

¹⁰ ...gold and had put it on for warmth against the cool evening air – she appeared transformed. 'You're like a star', said Jimbo, back from his errand. 'A whole lot of stars', said Monkey. 'The Pleiades, perhaps', was Daddy's suggestion. 'Yes, the Pleiades are my stars', Jinny replied. 'I love them best of all.' Her father smiled at her fondly. 'Then watch out for Orion! He hunts the Pleiades all night long.' A loud knock at the door made them all jump. 'It's still a little early for Cousin Henry, isn't it?' said Mother. 'Jimbo, see who's there.'

No. 11

¹² Before them stood an extremely dishevelled figure holding a suitcase. 'He's coming!' it said, putting down the bag. 'Who?' cried the children. 'Him!' it said – and vanished.

It was quite disconcerting. The family stood staring at each other open-mouthed. 'Surely that was a tramp!'

They were all struck with the same thought. First a lamplighter outside their window, then a gardener, who had sounded distinctly English, by the way, and now comes a tramp! The coincidence seemed too great. Were Henry's Sprites, the creatures of his imagination, preceding him? No, it was all too fantastical!

But then, moments later, Henry Rogers himself arrived and they all rushed to greet him. A warm handshake between the cousins, an affectionate beam at Mother and then the introductions to the children: Jinny shy and formal, Monkey mildly impertinent, Jimbo the perfect little gentleman.

No. 12

¹³ As Daddy took charge of the luggage, Henry moved to the open window. Jinny followed. 'My, what wonderful stars you have here! They're like diamonds. A perfect network suspended over the Alps. All the constellations shine so clear and close! Look! You can even see the misty Pleiades.' Jinny was delighted. 'They're my constellation', she said proudly. 'So you have your own constellation, do you?' he replied. 'As a boy I had one too. It was Orion.'

How could this stranger be so enchanting? But once again Mother intervened, taking Jinny away to help prepare something for their guest to eat. Immediately the two younger children pounced.

No. 13a

¹⁴ 'We want to tell you something; only you must promise never to let it out – as long as the stars shine.' Henry promised on his starlight honour. 'There,' said Monkey, 'we knew you were a star person. We've got a secret society, a Star Society – oh bother! Here's Jinny!' And indeed their sister was back...

Jane Anne (Jinny)

With their tiny nets of feather
They collect the stars together:
And on scraps of windy weather...

...to put a cloth on the table – which task accomplished, she went back to the kitchen in full song. 'Isn't Jinny in the Society too?' asked Henry. 'Oh no,' said Monkey, 'she'd never understand. Now repeat after me:

No. 13b

¹⁵ All the rules I swear to keep,
When awake or when asleep,
None can tell what I'm about,
For when I'm in I'm also out.'

Henry duly recited. 'Now you're a full member of the Secret Star Society. You must choose a star.' 'What's yours?' Henry asked. Not surprisingly Monkey had two whole constellations – the Great and Little Bears. 'Mine's the Pole Star', said Jimbo. 'I'll take Orion', said Henry. 'He's always chasing the seven Pleiades.' Monkey said scornfully, 'Jinny calls the Pleiades hers, but people who aren't in can't have a star'. Jimbo was thoughtful. 'I wonder if Daddy has one?' 'But listen,' Monkey interrupted, 'we think – we're almost sure – we get out of our bodies at night and go shooting up to the stars. We think you go there too. But we want to know more about the Starlight Express and the Sprites – Daddy told us about them.' 'Well, you see, it's like this', Henry replied. 'I can't talk about these things except under the stars.' 'Then we must call a meeting for tomorrow night' – Monkey was beside herself with excitement – 'up in the mountains near the gorges of the Areuse.' 'I know exactly where', added Jimbo.

But Jinny and Mother were back with Henry's supper and the two young ones were packed off to bed, but not before reminding their guest of the next day's rendezvous.

No. 14

¹⁶ 'Are you sure you have everything you need?' Jinny asked Henry. He reassured her and she moved across the room to her father. He was back in his chair with his unlit pipe

and his confused tangle of thought about the new book.

She worried about him. Yet, though she knew the agonies he went through to get his ideas down on paper, her faith in him was absolute. 'Never mind, Daddy,' she whispered, 'I'll get it straight for you one day. I can pull very hard. I'll unwumble it.' She gave him a kiss. 'Thank you, child.' He smiled. 'I'm sure you will. Only you'd better let me know when you're coming. It might be dangerous to my health otherwise.' She took it in perfect seriousness. 'Oh, but, excuse me, I'll come to you when you're asleep. I'll come to you when I'm dreaming.' And in a certain amount of confusion she hurried off to bed.

The two men were left amazed.

Act II

No. 15. Song 'The Blue-eyed Fairy'

Organ-grinder

¹⁷ There's a fairy that hides in the beautiful eyes
CD
2.
¹⁷ Of the children who treat her well;
In the little round hole where the eye-ball lies
She weaves her magical spell.
She is awfully tiny and shy to the sight,
But her magic's past believing
For it fills you with light and with laughter,
It's the spell of her own sweet weaving.

But the eyes must be blue,
And the heart must be true,
And the child must be better than gold!

And then if you'll let her,
The quicker, the better,
She'll make you forget that you're old.

So if such a child you should chance to see,
Or with such a child to play,
No matter how tired or dull you be,
Nor how many tonnes you weigh,
You will suddenly find that you're young
again,

And your movements light and airy,
And you'll try to be solemn and stiff in vain.
It's the spell of the blue-eyed fairy!

The next evening after tea the three
conspirators escaped by the garden and
climbed up into the forest.

Scene 1

No. 16

¹⁸ They found a clearing with the open sky
above them. In the cliffs behind was a crevice
that might have been the entrance to a Star
Cave, but it was much too narrow to enter.
Dusk was slowly bringing on darkness. Henry
lit a fire. They sat watching the smoke curl
lazily up into the trees. After a while Henry put
a finger to his lips. 'Listen,' he said, 'can you
hear the night coming? It's like a palace that
has to be built afresh each time. First twilight
builds a scaffolding and then hangs the night
on it, fastening it with bright nails that are the
stars – they're starting to shine now.'

They all looked southward, where above the
Alps the huge outline of Orion began to appear,
tilting with the speed of his eternal pursuit
of the Pleiades, who sail ever calmly beyond
his reach.

No. 17

¹⁹ Henry explained that the Pleiades had
been attendants upon Artemis, and that the
gods had set them among the stars to escape
from the Mighty Hunter.

'But Orion never gave up', he said. 'He hunts
them still. Look at his head and shoulders
leaning forward above the horizon, never tired,
never resting; his gleaming sword; his shining
belt; and his aching arms, stretched out,
across the sky.'

'But truly, you know, he *has* caught them.'
Henry was thinking of himself.

'Because their beauty is in his heart; and
they toss their golden rain over him with their
song, their tears, their laughter. And every
night they dance together over our poor
wumbled world.'

No. 18. Song 'The sun *has* gone'

²⁰ And then, as he had promised, Henry began
to tell of the Starlight Express and the
passengers whom he had brought to life
from his boyhood's imagination and who each
possessed a special magic which they used
to bring the world back into sympathy and
harmony.

And as he spoke, his mind went back to his childhood, and to the Vicar who had been his tutor. They had met again, after twenty-five years, just before he had left London for Bourcelles, and the old man said two things that stuck in his mind: 'The world wants its fairyland back again' and 'Keep close to the children'.

The warmth of the fire was making them all drowsy, and in their reverie they seemed to hear a voice floating from the trees:

The busy Dustman flutters down the lanes;
He's off to gather star-dust for our dreams.
He dusts the Constellations for his sack,
Finding it thickest on the Zodiac,
But sweetest in the careless meteor's track;

That he keeps only
For the old and lonely
(And is very strict about it),
Who sleep so little that they need the best;

The rest –
The common stuff –
Is good enough
For Fräulein, or for Baby, or for Mother,
Or any other
Who likes a bit of dust,

But yet can do without it
If they must!

The busy Dustman hurries through the sky;
The kind old Dustman's coming to *your* eye!

Organ-grinder

^{CD}
^{2:}
¹⁸ The sun *has* gone;
The tide of stars is setting all one way,
The Pleiades call softly to Orion
As, nightly, they have called these million
years:
The children lie asleep; now let them out;
And, overhearing,
We waft the fairy call into *your* dreams,
That you may swim upon that tide of gold
And, list'ning in your hearts,
Just overhear
That deep, tremendous thunder
Signalling reply:
All's well!
Orion answering the Pleiades!

The Curfew began to ring from the village below. The three roused themselves, put out the fire, and started homewards. It had been an important evening for all of them.

As they approached the Citadelle Henry said, 'Don't forget to dream tonight!'

No. 19

²¹ Now, cats are curious creatures, and Riquette was no exception. That night she crept into the two children's bedroom to witness a wonderful and beautiful thing, which she had clearly seen before and found

quite natural: Monkey got out of herself as a sword slips from its sheath. Her body went on breathing in the bed; Monkey herself stood softly shining on the floor. Jimbo was close behind, even brighter than his sister.

No. 20a

22 Turning towards the open window, they rose up lightly and floated through it into the starry night.

Their flight took them through the forest to the entrance to the Star Cave, which in their dream forms they had visited before but never entered. Imagine their astonishment as a brilliant figure flew past them and into the cave – it was none other than Jinny! Narrow though the entrance was, she clearly had no trouble getting in.

Monkey was ashamed; to think that she had not wanted her sister in the Star Society! Jinny was obviously far more at home here than they were.

To Jimbo it seemed that she was perhaps more her true self here than in her waking hours. Her frequent air of perplexity was explained; she was simply waiting for sleep to take her to a place where her natural generosity of spirit could find fulfilment.

No. 20b

23 At length Jinny came out of the cave and came over to them. 'Oh good, you're here!' she said. 'You can help me – I've been collecting

stardust for Mother and Daddy. Mother has such a burden of worry on her shoulders, and Daddy needs such an awful lot to help clear the way for his big ideas to come through.

No. 21

24 Then there's Madame Jequier and dear Miss Waghorn – and so many others need help...

Baritone (*from a distance*)

CD
2.
20
Ah!

Listen! Do you hear? It's the whole world crying in its sleep.

'I must go,' Jinny cried, 'I've got so much to do before the interfering sun comes up!' And she shot away like a comet. At the same time a new light appeared in the sky. Could it be the sun already? Another comet like Jinny? Whatever it was dipped slowly through the trees, settled, stopped, and began to purr. Jimbo gasped. 'It, it, it, it's a railway train!' he stammered in amazement.

No. 22

25 Could it be?

It was!

The Starlight Express!

'Last stop; all get out here!' cried the Guard. 'Return journey begins five minutes before the interfering Sun rises.'

No. 23

[26] And with that the first passenger hurried by them: he already was aglow before he entered the cave.

It was the Dustman.

Behind him came a figure enveloped in a cloud of black that turned golden as he went in.

No. 24

[27] The Sweep.

Next came the sunburnt figure of the Gardener.

No. 25

[28] Then a fantastic, light, twirling creature who sang as she danced around them – the Laugher.

No. 26. Song 'I'm ev'rywhere'

Laugher (*laughing*)

[29] I'm ev'rywhere

The universal solvent of despair.

[22] (*laughing*)

Ah! That sings away the half
Of ev'ry care
Because I laugh! I laugh!

Now the lanky form of the Lamplighter rushed by, to gather dust to light the stars.

No. 27

[30] And the shabby Tramp, playing his barrel organ.

No. 28

[31] 'Well, let's see now', said Monkey. She counted on her fingers: 'Dustman, Sweep, Gardener, Laugher, Lamplighter, and you, Tramp – oh, but where's the Haystack Woman?' asked Monkey. 'Stuck in the train, I'm afraid', replied the Tramp. 'We need the Winds to blow her out; I'll call 'em.'

**No. 29. Song 'Wake up, you little Night Winds!'
Organ-grinder**

[32] Wake up, you little Night Winds,

CD
2.
[23] Blow your best!

We want you *all* –
Ha! Ha! that's East and West;
The North Wind too –
She always blows the strongest:
You *all* must draw your deepest breath and
longest,
With open mouth!

Now go and blow the Haystack out of bed!
Whistle her dreams of straw across the sky
And whirl her canvas skirts about her head!
You can but try!
Go, sweep her to'ards the Cave, and break her
trance:

Thick Mother of the Sprites –
She must get in:
Even a Haystack's elephantine dance
Is somewhere thin!
Is somewhere – thin!

The Haystack Woman's natural state was
inertia. Some of the passengers had been
trying to pull and push her through the
carriage door.

No. 30. Dance of the Winds

³³ To no avail!

The Winds began a dance, at first gentle,
then more boisterous, hoping somehow to
propel the Haystack Woman's enormous frame
out of the train.

'Oh, what's the use?!' came the voice from
the mass of hay. 'Nothing short of a gale could
move me; and if I ever should get into the cave
I'd block the whole place up!' The Winds kept
trying anyhow.

'Will someone please fetch the Dustman?!'
said the Guard.

The Dustman sprinkled the poor exhausted
Haystack Woman with a few golden handfuls
and she fell asleep instantly.

'She'll dream she's been in', he said. 'That's
just as good.'

No. 31

³⁴ 'But where's Cousin Henry?' Jimbo said
anxiously.

'Let me think now', the Tramp said with
a twinkle in his eye. 'I'm almost sure I saw
him on the Express; he can't be far away.'
'I've been here all along,' came the familiar
voice, 'watching the excitement. But now
it's time to go into the Cave.' 'What do we do
there?' Monkey asked. 'We load ourselves
with starlight, and then it's off to mix it with
people's dreams.'

And so saying, he led them towards the
entrance, from which a great light shone, and
together they plunged in.

No. 32

Soprano (*from a distance*)

³⁵ Ah!

CD

2:

²⁵

Anyone gazing skywards at that moment
would have seen the Seven Sisters of the
Pleiades – Maia, Electra, Alcyone, Taygete,
Asterope, Celaeno, and Merope – dancing their
gently radiant dance.

Three glowing figures, loaded with stardust,
had emerged from the cave. 'Now our work
begins', said Henry. 'We'll stop first at the
Pension to see how we can help, and then to
Mother and Daddy, who need us the most. But
we must be quick to do as much as we can
before the sun rises.'

No. 33. Sun Dance

³⁶ And away they flew.

The stars in their courses
Are runaway horses
That gallop with Thoughts from the Earth;
They collect them, and race
Back through wireless space,
Bringing word of the tiniest birth;
Past old Saturn and Mars,
And the hosts of big stars,
Who strain at their leashes for joy.
Kind Thoughts, like fine weather,
Bind sweetly together
God's suns, with the heart of a boy.

So beware what you think;
It is written in ink
That is golden, and read by his Stars!

Henry and the children were now outside the Pension. They hovered for a moment over the fragrant lilac bushes and then, gliding into the house, stood beside the bed of the Widow Jequier.

Scene 2

No. 34

³⁷ Madame Jequier's constant anxiety about her obligations to her bank and the future of the Pension had clearly not been relinquished when she slept; the atmosphere about her was

dark and dense – could their starlight succeed in getting through to her?

'We must deal with this at once,' Henry said, 'but, truthfully, I'm not sure how to begin.'

As though summoned by his words, the Gardener was instantly at their side. 'I'll show you how', he said. 'She loves her garden, and her sympathy with nature always lets me in.'

And he began to sing of the yellow flowers that store starlight.

No. 34a. Song 'Dandelions, Daffodils'

Gardener

³⁸ Dandelions, Daffodils,
Sheet o' yaller Roses,
Golden Rod and Marigold,
Buttercups for Posies!

Golden Gorse shines up the hill,
Primroses are near you,
Cowslips ring their starry bells
Ev'rywhere to cheer you!

Crocus and Laburnum,
Love the names and learn 'em,
*All my yaller flowers are
Seeded from a yaller star.*

He spread his big hands over her troubled face and brought into the room the scent of trees and blossoms.

The room filled with the little rushing music of wind in leaves, and Madame Jequier stirred in her sleep and smiled, settling into a peaceful slumber.

Henry wondered if there was something he might do to help her in the waking world. 'Should we go to Miss Waghorn now?' asked Jimbo.

No. 35

³⁹ In her attic chamber above, the old lady lay among her fragments of broken memory. They were hardly surprised to find the Lamplighter there before them; with his glowing pole he was touching the objects strewn in disarray about the room; though he could not restore her dishevelled mind, he could help her find more readily some of the lost things her memory often sought in vain.

'She's fastened so delicately to the heart and brain', Henry murmured. 'Already she's partly out!'

He thought of the stardust kept only
'For the old and lonely,
Who sleep so little that they need the best.'

No. 36

⁴⁰ Henry turned to the children. 'Now for your parents!' But, in a twinkling, Jimbo was gone, waked by the singing of the birds in the plane tree outside his window: dawn was not far off.

Scene 3

No. 37

⁴¹ At the Citadelle, Henry and Monkey found Mother and Daddy both asleep in the den: she on the couch, where the Woman of the Haystack hovered over her; he on a daybed by his desk. Jinny was there. 'Oh, please help me', she said. 'I've been pulling so hard. His night-body comes out easily as far as the head, but then it sticks hopelessly.' 'Let me look', Henry said.

Around John Campden there glowed a pattern of great beauty, but, as he had himself said, it was 'knotted, looped, and all up-jumbled'; there was no main pathway through his inner world. He could not reconcile the Dreamer and the Thinker.

'We need a lot of help here', said Henry. 'Sing for him, Jinny. Perhaps that will summon the Sprites.'

Jane Anne (Jinny)

I dust the den with starlight
Till it glistens and it gleams!
And I give my wumbled parents
The Pleiades for dreams!

No. 38. Song 'O, stars shine brightly'

⁴² First to appear was the Laugher.
She began a light and graceful dance, and
Daddy's pattern started to clear.
'I'm calling the others!' she cried.

CD
2:
29

Laugher
O, Stars, shine brightly!
He's sleeping tightly!
His pattern's pouring through!
O, Sprites, come swiftly!
Unwumble deftly!
The world has need of you!

One by one the Sprites began to appear.
While Henry and the girls dusted everything in sight – and especially the papers, pencils, pens, and ink-pots – the Sprites went to the work of loosening and disentangling the knots and opening the lines in the pattern.

The Dustman said: 'Everything's here in his heart and his brain. And he has his family to inspire and support him; with our help and yours his vision will soon light up the world.'

The Laugher nodded.

Laugher
They'll listen to my song,
And understand
That, exiled overlong
From fairyland,
The solemn world has rather lost its way!
My secret's double,
For tears of trouble
Are really tears of laughter gone astray!

No. 39
43 The Sprites had almost finished their task. Henry and the girls began to feel their concentration slipping away; the interfering sun was about to rise.
Said the Dustman, 'The pattern's disentangled. It will hold the light when it arrives'.
Henry and the girls slipped back into their sleeping bodies; they would remember nothing when they waked.

No. 40
44 The Sprites flitted out, back to the Starlight Express.

The Laugher was the last to leave, greeting the coming day with Jinny's song. Or had Jinny been singing hers?

No. 41. Song 'Dawn Song'
Laugher

45
CD
2:
30

We shall meet the Morning Spiders,
The fairy-cotton riders,
Each mounted on a star's rejected ray.
With their tiny nets of feather
They collect our Thoughts together
And on strips of windy weather
Bring the day!

COMPACT DISC TWO

Act III

No. 42. Song 'My old tunes'

[1] The children had come to love all the Sprites.
But it was the Tramp, with his merry-
melancholy barrel-organ tunes and his
whimsical songs, that was their favourite.

Organ-grinder

[31] My old tunes are rather broken,
And they come from far away,
Bringing just a little token
Of a long forgotten day.
When the children came to listen,
T'other side the garden fence,
And my heart leapt out of prison
At the gift of seven pence!

Just beyond the Haystack's shadow,
Long ago, that leafy June,
How they danced about the meadow
At the rising of the moon!
While from out a railway carriage,
Standing ready to alight,
Stepped their guests as to a marriage,
Asked to dine and stay the night!

Sweep and Laughter danced together,
And a man who had a lamp
Capered lightly as a feather
With a lazy-looking Tramp;

When a voice disturbed the Lancers:
'Children, come! It's time for bed!'
Railway carriage, Sprites and Dancers
Flew up to the stars instead!

Now I am a Constellation,
Free from ev'ry earthly care,
Playing nightly at my station
For the Big and Little Bear;
But my tunes are still entrancing
As that night in leafy June,
When I caught the children dancing
With the Sprites beneath the moon!

Still the children come to hear me
In the lone and dingy street;
Still the heavy pavement near me
Flutters to their happy feet;
For *my* tunes are ne'er forgotten,
And they bring the scent of musk:
Grown-up folk may call 'em rotten,
But I'm looked for when it's dusk.

Scene 1

No. 43. Song 'Dandelions, Daffodils'

[2] A few days later the early morning saw the
den of the Citadelle a hive of activity.

Jane Anne (Jinny)

[32] Dandelions, Daffodils,
Sheet o' 'yaller Roses,
Golden Rod and Marigold,
Buttercups for Posies!

Crocus and Laburnum,
Love the names and learn 'em,
All my yaller flowers are
Seeded from a yaller star.

Golden Gorse shines up the hill,
Primroses are near you,
Cowslips ring their starry bells
Ev'rywhere to cheer you!

Jinny had already been into the fields, picking yellow flowers, which were now in bowls everywhere, and she was singing of them as her mother came in.

Mother seemed rejuvenated somehow. The truth was that the nocturnal efforts of the three children and Henry, who all now appeared for breakfast, had finally succeeded in getting both parents 'out'.

The book was beginning to take shape and John Campden was drawing great support from his wife – they had not been so close for many years.

Henry had also taken a trip into Neuchatel and visited the bank.

The reason for this now became apparent as Madame Jequier burst into the room and flung her arms round his neck. The Pension was saved; how could she ever thank and repay him? His embarrassment was fortunately short-lived as the widow's other news came tumbling out.

No. 44

³ Miss Waghorn, whose confusion of mind had of late made her exasperating and difficult to live with – she was becoming increasingly argumentative – had suddenly changed; she seemed soothed, composed, and gentle.

Her mind and memory were more orderly somehow – she was sweet and good-natured all day, had sorted her bills and papers, and even written a letter to her nephew. Everyone was delighted.

'Of course,' Madame Jequier added ruefully, 'one can't tell how long it will last, hélas!'

And then Daddy came in; he looked as if he would burst. Mother took his hand. They all waited. 'I've got the form, the pattern, as it were', he said at last. 'All the rest is flowing in.'

No. 45

⁴ 'My main idea is this: that the sources of our life lie hid with beauty very, very far away, and that our real, big, continuous life is spiritual – out of the body, as I shall call it. The waking-day life uses what it can bring over from this enormous, under-running sea of universal consciousness where we're all together, splendid, free, untamed; where thinking is creation and we feel and know each other face to face.'

The room was held in a kind of awed silence.

Was it Henry's ever-active imagination or did the tall figure of a lamplighter at that moment pass by? It was certainly the wrong time of day!

No. 46a

5 Then Mother spoke, 'It's simply wonderful!' and, as her husband, beaming at her, left to go back to work, she turned to Henry. 'I feel our life here has been a dream, and I've just waked up. There's a bright light over everything, like... like a scene in a theatre. It's exhilarating, but I can't quite make it out. It can't be right to feel so frivolous and jumpy-about at my age, can it?'

No. 46b

6 A few days later Henry left to return to London. The foundering of one of his former companies – for which, it should be said, he no longer bore any responsibility – drew him back, and restoring it – and its employees – to prosperity was a labour of love that lasted for several months. His thoughts, however, were always turning to Bourcelles and its inhabitants – especially the children.

Summer had faded into Autumn when, at long last, Henry found himself back in the Jura mountains. He was delighted to find that life proceeded at least as smoothly as when he had left; old Miss Waghorn was frailer but serene, Madame Jequier happy and secure; even the governesses seemed more content.

And the Campdens' family aura of fantasy, freedom, and fun was if anything intensified.

Scene 2

No. 47

7 It was late evening on the day of his arrival; the children were in bed and the three grownups were sitting comfortably together in the den.

Henry had dozed and awoke with a start. He had dreamt that he stood outside a cave in the forest; a shadowy figure carrying a long pole with a star at its end had approached him and whispered in his ear.

And, in the instant of waking, he remembered its words:

'Send it down in action,
Scatter it in thought,
Sympathy and kindness
Bring the whole world out.
Sow it. Plant it.
Millions want it.
Half the world is
Crying in its sleep.'

John Campden stood up and, somewhat self-consciously, took a portfolio from his desk. 'I thought you might like to hear what your last visit brought to us all', he said. Mother put down her knitting as he began to read. It was a tale of Starlight and Star Caves, and ever increasing numbers of Starlight Expresses with their Sprite passengers and the people they recruited to bring back to the world what

it had lost. The story took Bourcelles as its starting point and yet revealed the whole Universe as One. Sympathy – to feel with everything – was the clue; for sympathy is love, and to love a star was to love a neighbour. The symbolism of the story his listeners easily understood, because they felt it true. To be 'out' of the body was merely to think and feel away from self and toward others; thinking and feeling apart was cutting oneself off from life, from the Whole, God, and from joy.

With delight Henry recognised many details in the story; first of all the landscape which he had come to love – the lake in all its moods, the distant, mysterious Alps, the curious limestone formations of the Jura mountains, the river gorges, the all-embracing forest.

Then the village – the church with its highly visible spire and its touching memorial to Lord Wemyss's young wife, the sentinel pine tree that stood guard and announced the winds, the vineyards where Gygi, the gendarme, spent more time than he did in uniform, the Post Office with its taciturn Postmaster, married to Madame Jequier's sister Anita, who consulted tea leaves.

And of course there were Henry's own Starlight Express and its passengers who, little though the inhabitants of the Citadelle knew it, had played such a vital role in their own lives and now would bring their magic to a wider world.

He felt, if possible, even more attached to those Sprites now than he had been as a boy – the Gardener, the Sweep – and the children's favourite, the disreputable Tramp.

Henry himself was there too – named Orion. Somehow his cousin had blended everything together; the boundaries between fantasy and so-called reality had become blurred. It was remarkable.

The author had paused while his wife went to fetch him some tea – Henry, from the fatigue of his journey and the warmth of the room, nodded off again.

Immediately he was back at the cave and the Laugher was singing.

Laugher

Laugh a little ev'ry day,
At yourself, that is to say.

And then another voice:

'Plant it. Seed it.
Millions need it.
Half the world...'

Mother was back with the tea, balancing the tray precariously as she came through the door. The men hurried to help. When they were all comfortably settled again she said, 'I have a question; is it allowed for me to have a favourite Sprite?' 'Of course!' they

both answered at once. 'Then I must say the Haystack Woman is mine. I find her so reassuring; she's impervious to storms and winds and torrential rain and breathes an air of majestic calm.' 'I believe you're describing yourself', said her husband with a smile. They all laughed, Mother blushed.

We each need to find our own Sprite within, Henry thought, who can show us how to put our aspirations into effect. But desire must be there first – without Desire there is no Will or Action.

'Bring it down in actions!
Scatter it in thought!
Sympathy and Stardust
Bring the whole world out!'

He felt that his waking and dreaming selves were remarkably close tonight, so it was no surprise that, as the three sat quietly together, the voice of the Tramp crept into the darkening room:

Organ-grinder

They're all soft-shiny now,
The time draws near;
Their hearts are dusted
And the path's swept clear!
The tide of stars is setting
All one way;
Bring on the dawn,
Yet not the dawn of Day!

Daddy now resumed his reading and once again they were drawn in by the profound simplicity of the tale, which seemed as familiar as something read in childhood long ago, and only half forgotten.

Henry had the feeling that its message was already being borne by the blue winds of night into the northern forests, across southern seas, into the farthest corners of the earth wherever there were receptive hearts.

No. 48

8 And suddenly he remembered an extraordinary conversation he had had with Miss Waghorn just before his departure in the Spring:

They were sitting together in the Pension after supper and talking about sleep. 'I look forward to it,' she said, 'it unties knots. I am old and lonely and I need the best –'. Without thinking, he took her up: 'The rest, the common stuff –', 'Is good enough', she chimed in, 'For Fräulein, or for Baby, or for Mother', he laughed, she: 'or any other', he: 'who needs a bit of dust', she: 'but yet can do without it', then both together: 'if they must!' 'Well, I never!' she exclaimed, 'if that's not a nursery rhyme of my childhood that I've not heard for sixty years and more!'

But how *had* she known the rhyme? He had heard it one night in the forest. Do we all think the same things? No, but maybe our dream worlds have common images and every dream that comes to us has been dreamt before.

As though reading his cousin's mind, Daddy closed the portfolio and rose from his chair. 'It's not my own idea,' he said, 'I'm convinced of that. It's all flocked into me from some other mind that thought it long ago, but couldn't write it, perhaps. No thought is ever lost, you see. I've written this poem to end the book:

'Now sinks to sleep the clamour of the day,
And, million-footed, from the Milky Way,
Falls shyly on my heart the world's lost
Thought –
Shower of primrose dust the stars have taught
To haunt each sleeping mind,
Till it may find
A garden in some eager, passionate brain
That, rich in loving-kindness as in pain,
Shall harvest it, then scatter forth again
Its garnered loveliness, from heaven caught.'

No. 49

⁸ All three children, perhaps sent back from their nocturnal enterprises by the Sprites, had waked and were now standing in the room, listening. Without a word being said everybody went out into the night; the sky was ablaze with stars.

The whole creation seemed to glow, as though waiting to be kindled into flame. The promise of new hope was everywhere around them, and the stars themselves seemed to be calling:

The Interfering Sun has set!
Now Sirius flings down the Net!
See, the meshes flash and quiver,
As the golden, silent river
Clears the dark world's troubled dream.
Takes it sleeping,
Gilds it weeping
With a star's mysterious beam.

Soprano

³³ Oh, think Beauty!
It's your duty!

In the Cave you work for others,
All the stars your little brothers;
Think their splendour,
Strong and tender;
Think their Glory
In the Story
Of each day your nights redeem!

Soprano

Ev'ry loving, gentle thought
Of this fairy brilliance wrought.

Every wish that you surrender,
Every service that you render
Brings its tributary stream!

Soprano

While the busy Pleiades,
Sisters to the Hyades,
Seven by seven,
Across the heaven!

Light desire
With their fire!
Working cunningly together
In a soft and tireless band,
Sweetly linking
All our thinking,
In the Net of...

¹⁰ ...Sympathy
That brings back Fairyland!

No. 50. Finale. Song 'Hearts must be soft-shiny dressed'

Henry looked happily up at *his* constellation still pursuing the Seven Sisters. Orion never gives up, he thought, and neither shall I! He glanced over at the children. Nor must they! His most fervent wish was that the meaning of this night would stay with them for ever. Jinny in particular seemed radiance personified; in her heart she was calling to the Sprites.

Laughter

³⁴ Tramp and Laughter, Haystack Woman, Sweep,
Lampighter too,
The world now waking from her heavy sleep
Has need of you!
Dustman, Gardener, come! take of our best,
Our sweetest dust,

And sow earth's little gardens of unrest
With joy and trust;
For ev'ry hour
A golden flower:
Love, Laughter, Courage, Hope,
And all the rest.

Organ-grinder

Hearts must be soft-shiny dressed
With your softest, sweetest best...

Laughter

With your softest, sweetest best
Dust that comes from very far.
Ah! Hearts must be soft-shiny dressed
With your softest, sweetest golden dust
For the rising of the star.

Organ-grinder

Daddy's pattern, heart and brain,
Sprinkle with the golden, golden rain,
With your softest, sweetest best dust.
For the rising of the star.

And a star of tremendous brilliance was rising
in the East, heralding the dawn.

¹¹ Jinny said, with her characteristic gravity, 'I believe that star first appeared to announce the birth of a child'. Jimbo added quietly, 'Only children and Very Wise Men know what it means'.

FINIS

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Three Songs from 'The Starlight Express'

I. The Organ-grinder's Song

12 O children, open your arms to me,
Let your hair fall over my eyes;
Let me sleep a moment, and then awake
In your gardens of sweet surprise!
For the grown-up folk are a wearisome folk,
And they laugh my fancies to scorn,
My fun and my fancies to scorn.
For the grown-up folk...

O children, open your hearts to me,
And show me your wonder thoughts.
Who lives in the palace inside your brain?
Who lives in its outer courts?
Who hides in the hours tomorrow holds?
Who sleeps in your yesterdays?
Who tip-toes along past the curtained folds
Of the shadows that twilight lays?

O children, open your eyes to me,
And tell me their visions too;
Who squeezes the sponge when the salt tears
flow
To dim their magical blue?
Who brushes the fringe of your lace-veined lids?
Who trims their innocent light?
Who draws up the blinds when the sun peeps in?
Who fastens them down at night?

Then children, I pray you sing low to me,
And cover my eyes with your hands.
O kiss me again till I sleep and dream
That I'm lost in your fairylands;
For the grown-up folk are a troublesome folk,
And the book of their childhood is torn!
Is blotted, and crumpled, and torn!
For the grown-up folk...

II. The Dustman's Song

12 The busy Dustman flutters down the lanes;
He's off to gather star-dust for your dreams.
He sweeps the Constellations for his sack,
Finding it thickest in the Zodiac,
But sweetest in the careless meteor's track;

That he keeps only
For the old and lonely
(And is very strict about it),
Who sleep so little that they need the best;
The rest –
The common stuff –
Is good enough
For Fräulein, or for Baby, or for Mother,
Or any other
Who likes a bit of dust,
And yet can do without it
If they must!

The busy Dustman hurries through the sky;
The kind old Dustman's coming to *your* eye!

III. The Gardener's Song

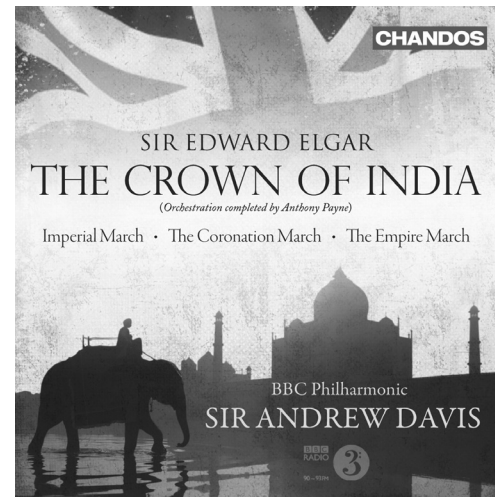
14 Stars are seeding in the air
(If only you could know);
They'll bless your garden ev'rywhere
(If you'll only let them grow).

Dandelions, Daffodils,
Streets o' yaller Roses,
Golden Rod and Marigold,
Buttercups for Posies!

Golden Gorse shines up the hill,
Primroses are near you,
Cowslips ring their starry bells
Ev'rywhere to cheer you!

Crocus and Laburnum,
Love the names and learn 'em,
All my yaller flowers are
Seeded from a golden star.

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Chandos 24-bit / 96 kHz recording

The Chandos policy of being at the forefront of technology is now further advanced by the use of 24-bit / 96 kHz recording. In order to reproduce the original waveform as closely as possible we use 24-bit, as it has a dynamic range that is up to 48 dB greater and up to 256 times the resolution of standard 16-bit recordings. Recording at the 44.1 kHz sample rate, the highest frequencies generated will be around 22 kHz. That is 2 kHz higher than can be heard by the typical human with excellent hearing. However, we use the 96 kHz sample rate, which will translate into the potentially highest frequency of 48 kHz. The theory is that, even though we do not hear it, audio energy exists, and it has an effect on the lower frequencies which we do hear, the higher sample rate thereby reproducing a better sound.

A **Hybrid SA-CD** is made up of two separate layers, one carries the normal CD information and the other carries the SA-CD information. This hybrid SA-CD can be played on standard CD players, but will only play normal stereo. It can also be played on an SA-CD player reproducing the stereo or multi-channel DSD layer as appropriate.

Microphones

Thuresson: CM 402 (main sound)

Schoeps: MK22 / MK4 / MK6

DPA: 4006 & 4011

Neumann: U89

CM 402 microphones are hand built by the designer, Jörgen Thuresson, in Sweden.



Scottish
Chamber
Orchestra

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Chandos would like to thank the Elgar Society for making available to Sir Andrew Davis the Elgar Complete Edition full score of *The Starlight Express*. Those who wish to gain a fuller understanding of the relationship between the music of Sir Edward Elgar and the text of the play by Valerie Pearn should consult Volume 19 in the Elgar Complete Edition, published in 2010.

Recording producer Brian Pidgeon

Sound engineer Ralph Couzens

Assistant engineer Jonathan Cooper

Editor Peter Newble

A & R administrator Sue Shortridge

Recording venue Usher Hall, Edinburgh: 28–31 May 2012 (musical numbers); Studio 80a,

BBC Broadcasting House, Portland Place, London: 3 August 2012 (spoken narrative)

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Scottish Chamber Orchestra

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2-disc set CHSA 5111(2)

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Sir Edward Elgar (1857-1934)

COMPACT DISC ONE

premiere recording in this version

The Starlight Express, Op. 78*

- - □ Act I 20:29
 - - □ Act II 37:30
- TT 58:03

COMPACT DISC TWO

- - □ Act III 28:47

Clive Carey (1883-1968)

premiere recording

- - □ Three Songs from 'The Starlight Express'[†] 6:03
- Orchestrated by Sir Andrew Davis

Sir Edward Elgar

premiere recording

- - □ Suite from 'The Starlight Express'[‡] 44:57
- Arranged by Sir Andrew Davis
- TT 80:05



Elin Manahan Thomas soprano
(Laughter/Jane Anne)^{*‡}

Roderick Williams baritone
(Organ-grinder/Gardener)^{*‡}

Simon Callow narrator^{*}

Scottish Chamber Orchestra
Peter Thomas leader

Sir Andrew Davis

Thomas/Williams/Callow/SCO/Davis

ELGAR: THE STARLIGHT EXPRESS

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