

# Hans GÁL

## MUSIC FOR VOICES, VOLUME TWO

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**Borealis**  
**Ian Buckle, piano**  
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# HANS GÁL IN OUTLINE

by Eva Fox-Gál

Hans Gál was born near Vienna on 5 August 1890. Following considerable success as a composer during the 1920s, particularly with his second opera *Die heilige Ente* ('The Sacred Duck'), he was appointed Director of the conservatoire in Mainz in 1929. A major blow to his career came with the Nazi accession to power in 1933. As a 'non-Aryan' because of his Jewish ancestry, he was instantly dismissed from his post and his music banned from publication or performance in Germany. He returned to Vienna, but was forced to leave by Hitler's 'annexation' of Austria to the Third Reich in 1938, fleeing to Britain. Professor Donald Tovey brought him to Edinburgh, where he eventually became a lecturer at the University from 1945, and where he remained until his death, on 3 October 1987.

His compositions include four operas, four symphonies, a number of large-scale cantatas and a host of chamber, piano and choral works. By the end of his long life, he had left a legacy of around 140 published works. Gál's gift was to be able to remain intact in his creative soul, regardless of external circumstances, and to remain true to his own inner values in everything that he wrote.

In addition to his rich output as a composer, he was the author of books on Brahms, Schubert, Wagner, Verdi and Schumann.

[www.hansgal.org](http://www.hansgal.org)

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# HANS GÁL: MUSIC FOR VOICES, VOLUME TWO

by Bridget Budge, Eva Fox-Gál and Stephen Muir

Volume Two of the *Hans Gál: Music for Voices* series offers a rich cross-section of Gál's music for chamber choir, featuring mixed voices, women's voices and male-voice choir, both *a cappella* and with piano, and ranging across four decades. Gál's deep commitment to 'vocal chamber music' is clearly stated in an article from 1928:

What our musical life is in need of is [...] a revival of the joy of music-making, a fresh impetus for domestic music. [...] The glories of the a-cappella epoch have largely been made available in the last few decades by new editions. Here is a treasure to be unearthed for practical music which can be compared in importance to what musical life gained from the rediscovery of the life's work of Johann Sebastian Bach. But above all there is in this area a task for the creative musicians of our own time, whose fulfilment could have an extraordinarily fruitful effect on the whole of musical development: a new vocal music is there to be created, music which, though born of the spirit of our time and using the newly acquired expressive possibilities, leads back to the long-buried sources of genuine vocal music, chamber music in the true sense of the word, which offers pleasure and stimulus not merely to listen but also to sing.<sup>1</sup>

## ***Drei Lieder nach Gedichten von Rainer Maria Rilke, Op. 31 (1928)***

Gál composed his Op. 31 for three women's voices (or three-part women's choir) with piano accompaniment in that same year, a time of growing success. It was first performed by the Berliner Vokalensemble in Berlin in April 1928, and the next few years saw multiple performances and radio broadcasts in Germany, Austria, Switzerland, and even twice in New York under the direction of Margarete Dessoff (1874–1944).<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Hans Gál, 'Vokale Kammermusik', *Musikblätter des Anbruch*, Vol. X (1928), Nos. 9–10, pp. 355–56.

<sup>2</sup> Dessoff had championed Gál from the start with her women's choir in Frankfurt, performing his *Von ewiger Freude*, Op. 1, in 1913 and premiering his *Vom Bäumlein, das andere Blätter hat gewollt* and *Phantasien*, Opp. 2 and 5; she became a strong advocate of his music in America.

Gál directed performances himself with his newly founded madrigal choirs in Vienna (in 1928 and 1929) and Mainz (1932), where he added a madrigal choir and a women's choir to the existing college ensembles, and acquired the nickname 'Hans Madri-Gál'.

In 'Advent' [1] (the first poem in Rilke's 1898 collection of that name), Gál recreates the atmosphere of the brief poem using a highly impressionistic and virtuosic piano opening to create a whirlwind of snowflakes that continues from start to finish. The voices enter quietly, quickly rising to a *crescendo* as the wind drives the snow on through the trees. Gál's distinctive melodic shapes and nuanced dynamic indications mirror Rilke's image of branches stretching out their limbs against the snowstorm, reaching towards the climax – the holy night that nature knows and feels is yet to come.

Gál establishes the mood of the succeeding *Adagio* [2] with a rhythmically repetitive rocking figure for the piano, complemented by three-part vocal writing that exploits space and distance. The sopranos are taken upwards, providing a counterpoint to the low downward trajectory of the alto line, suffusing the tranquil, dreamy mood with similar crepuscular sensations to 'Advent', and reflecting the heightened awareness of twilight depicted in the text – Rilke's poem 'Der Abend ist mein Buch' ('The Evening is my Book') from the collection *Mir zur Feier* ('In Celebration of Myself', 1899). Gál's alternative title, 'Adagio', reminds the listener that for all the magnificent and vivid landscapes, emotions and impressions that he so skilfully evokes, his art is primarily defined in purely musical terms.

In the final setting, 'Sankt Nepomuk' ('Saint Nepomuk') [3], Gál brings the humour of the text to the fore in a *grandioso*, mock-heroic homage to the eponymous and rather hapless fourteenth-century Prague clergyman. Gál emphasises – exaggerates even – Rilke's comedic rhymes, alliterations, assonances and word-play, framing them within an ironic hymn-like musical narrative complete with ostentatious Baroque-like cadences and trills, recalling his 1926 setting of Gottfried Lessing's equally sardonic poem 'Hymnus' (No. 2 of *Epigramme*, Op. 27).<sup>3</sup> Rilke's 'Nepomuk poem' was published as 'Heilige' ('Saints') in *Larenopfer* ('Offerings to the Lares', 1895), a cycle of 90 poems, each

<sup>3</sup> Recorded by Borealis on *Hans Gál: Music for Voices, Volume One*, Toccata Classics TOCC 0509.

a miniature paean to his birthplace, Prague. ‘Heilige’ affectionately mocks the bridges and statues of the city, in particular the myriad representations of John of Nepomuk (c. 1345–93), dubbed the ‘bridge saint’ after being thrown from Charles Bridge into the river Vltava by order of the petulant King Wenceslaus IV.

### ***Drei Gesänge, Op. 37 (1929–30)***

By the time the *Three Songs* that form his Op. 37 received their premiere in 1931, Gál had been appointed to the directorship of the Mainz Conservatoire. It was Margarete Dessoif who premiered the work with her Dessoif Choirs in the Town Hall in New York, a review of which described Gál as ‘the talented Viennese composer whom Miss Dessoif has been particularly instrumental in introducing to New York audiences’.<sup>4</sup> As with the Rilke songs, performances proliferated across Germany up to 1933, and Gál performed them with the Vienna Madrigal Choir he had founded in 1927, and taken up again on his return to Vienna in 1933, and they were amongst the very first of Gál’s works to be broadcast in Britain, in a performance by the BBC Singers in July 1938. But thereafter they were not heard again for almost three decades.

Gál’s superb aural representation both of poetic mood and pictorial detail are particularly evident in ‘Der römische Brunnen’ (‘The Roman Fountain’) [4]. The text, by Conrad Ferdinand Meyer (1825–98), was a powerful response to seeing (and hearing) the Fontana del Cavalli Marini in the Villa Borghese Gardens in Rome. In the music, Gál captures both the sound and movement of the water in a perfect marriage of music and words. A magical expression of both the stillness and the energy of the water, constantly moving and yet serene, is achieved with a rising figure escaping the octave and falling back, as the water rises up to the top of the three-tiered fountain and falls to fill each marble basin, before rising to the top once more in an endless cycle. This simple but effective musical figure is repeated, as if endlessly, throughout the gamut of the choral range, dynamically swelling and fading, finally coming to a peaceful close beneath a sustained soprano pedal note.

<sup>4</sup> Olin Downes, *The New York Times*, 16 April 1931, p. 33.

'Am Abend' ('In the Evening') [5] is the most substantial setting of the three songs and, with its sombre premise, makes for a fitting 'middle slow movement' to the set. Gál employs a fugal style in response to the text – the first two stanzas of the poem 'Abendlied' by German poet Johann Christian Günther (1695–1723) – lending the musical texture a complexity befitting the subject. A state of existential crisis arrives as Gál summons the full power of his contrapuntal genius towards the close of the piece – and yet in the end he expresses not a struggle but a calm inevitability, a mature and peaceful acceptance. Fragments of the sombre opening theme – from the altos at the extremity of their low range – are soon dispersed, as the music arrives at the warmth of C sharp major in striking contrast to the modally ambiguous F sharp minor of the opening.

In the final song of the set, 'Wiegenlied' ('Cradle Song') [6], Gál selected words uttered by the water fairy Loreley herself, drawn from *Rheinmärchen* ('Rhine Fairy Tales') by Clemens Brentano (1778–1842), a giant of the German Romantic movement primarily known (in musical circles at least) for the collection *Des Knaben Wunderhorn*. Gál's beautifully alluring melody conveys gently soothing motion with its characteristic rocking figure of repeated fourths and fifths, adorned by delicate semiquaver elaborations suggesting murmuring bees and the babbling spring. The tranquillity is only momentarily interrupted by an occasional brief flourish from the rising soprano and tenor lines against the ever-present rocking motion of this glorious setting.

### ***Spätlese: Lieder für Männerchor a cappella, Op. 91 (1966)***

Gál's title *Spätlese* ('Late Harvest') literally means a harvest at the end of or after the normal harvesting season, producing an exceptionally sweet grape. Published in 1970 as Op. 91, it is Gál's last choral work, a conscious conclusion and farewell, and brings the full maturity of his musical creativity to Austrian and German poets whom he had known and loved from his earliest vocal compositions. Gál never actually wrote for men's chorus in the English language, and *Spätlese* also seemingly represents a desire to return to his native soil, now imbued with a deep musical wisdom wrought over a lifelong passion for the human voice.

*Spätlese* features texts by diverse poets, including the perennial favourites Goethe and Brentano. Likewise, the musical settings show a wide range of textures: drama, lyricism, agility and warmth are all found in the vocal writing, served inevitably by Gál's excellent depictive skills, in turn enabled by his innate understanding of the texts.

In his humorous setting of 'Bruder Augustin' ('Brother Augustine') [7] Gál drew upon one of the most popular of all Viennese ballads, about a frivolous and less than sober Viennese monk. The opening section sees the basses providing a drone (as with various instruments popular in folk culture), although in this instance it is rhythmically fragmented into drunken quaver-patterns. The tipsy monk can then be heard staggering about town singing until all his money is spent – apparently (according to the poet) a bad influence on all Viennese ever since! The well-known *Ländler* melody (previously used by Gál in his 1914 *Variations on a Viennese 'Heurigen' Melody* for violin, cello and piano, Op. 9) is emblematic of the Viennese soundscape in which he had been immersed from a young age. Some earlier versions of the song depicted the inebriated monk's antics in the time of the 1679 Great Plague of Vienna. But Gál's selected text – perhaps drawn from the 1858 collection *Ein Buch von uns Wienern in lustig-gemüthlichen Reimlein* ('Our Book of Amusing, Cosy Little Viennese Rhymes') by the Austrian writer Eduard von Bauernfeld (1802–90) – is of a far more benign and gently mocking nature.

In complete contrast, 'Abendlied' ('Evening Song') [8] comes from Brentano's *Das Märchen von Gockel und Hinkel* ('The Tale of Gockel and Hinkel'; 1858), an enchanting and highly entertaining story of Count Gockel of Hanau, his wife Hinkel, and their daughter Gackeleia returning to their dilapidated, roofless country pile. Gál takes the first three of five stanzas (omitting Brentano's 'Good night, hush-a-bye' refrain) and envelops them in a sensitive but luxurious, richly timbred texture. The first tenor carries the melody with a demandingly high and soft melodic line towards the end of each verse, and the dynamics are largely muted as evening falls and the creatures of the wild seek their nightly shelters. An exhilarating musical variation in the final stanza deftly touches upon Neapolitan and other richly expressive harmonic centres, before a cathartic coming-to-rest with the now-expected familiar tenor melody. The song ends on the words 'completely silent', for which

the singers are directed to hum on the final part of the last word 'stumm', thereby leading the already soft tones into eventual stillness.

'Nachtgesang' ('Night Song') [9] explores the healing nature of sleep, a natural choice of text to follow 'Abendlied'. Gál reflects the opening of the poem – the 'fluttering wing' – in light dotted rhythms scattered liberally through the voices. The setting is gentle throughout, the idea of peaceful slumber achieved through long sustained notes that form a tranquil backdrop against the dotted figures. Gál had deep and extensive knowledge of the works of Franz Seraphicus Grillparzer (1791–1872), the *de facto* Austrian national poet and playwright of his day who wrote the oration for Beethoven's funeral and a somewhat controversial epitaph for Schubert's tombstone – indeed, Gál's first-born was named Franz Seraphicus. The text of 'Nachtgesang' is from 'Berthas Lied in der Nacht' (1816), originally intended for Grillparzer's drama *Die Ahnfrau*.

In 'Grabschrift' ('Epitaph') [10] the relief of sleep gives way to the release of death. Gál's faltering, tiptoe-like opening figure leads to an expressively flowing account of a life tinged with regret, the shifting harmonies and shaded dynamics closely reflecting the words of Marie von Ebner-Eschenbach (1830–1916), Austria's leading female author of the period. Gál introduces moments of subtle imitation to draw attention to key aspects of the thought-provoking text, before an impassioned entreaty to the almighty: 'Lord, let me rest!' But just as he allows the struggle to give way to acceptance at the close of 'Am Abend' in the Op. 37 songs, he devises an achingly beautiful transformation from fervour to submission in the final bars of 'Grabschrift', resolving the predominantly G minor setting to a hushed chord in the major mode for the final word 'rest'.

From the outset of 'Trutzlied' ('Song of Defiance') [11] Gál establishes a mood of unrest by means of an agitated barcarolle-like figure befitting the poetry of Baroque poet Daniel Stoppe (1697–1747). The lightness of the setting belies an internal dialogue between conflict and resolution: short outbursts of ever-expanding rising intervals are set against flowing imitative passages as the protagonist's bravery against adversity briefly wins through. A sense of loss is reached for the final verse, underlined by Gál's use of open fifths to depict the hollow echo of the forest. The Baroque impetus is felt to the last:

the word ‘arduousness’ is set to a drawn-out hemiola, underlining the contention that love is the biggest challenge of all.

Gál gives the final song of *Spätlese* an energetic treatment through a rustically stylised imitative figure consisting simply of repeated crotchets and tumbling quavers. In his hands ‘Der faule Schäfer’ (‘The Lazy Shepherd’) [12] from the one-act Singspiel *Jery und Bätely* (1779) by Goethe (1749–1832) becomes a worldly burlesque on the pastoral, a witty reversal of the romanticised shepherd type, as well as a comic juxtaposition to the previous movement, ‘Rotanzlied’. After a more lyrically quizzical passage depicting the shepherd-boy’s distracted yearning for a young maiden, the opening material returns. But Gál has one more surprise in store: an unexpected *forte*, *Allargando*, on the words ‘thirst, appetite’ gives way to a *subito pianissimo* for the final word ‘sleep, creating a mischievous musical twist to conclude.

### ***Two Madrigals to Poems by Thomas Lodge (1939–40)***

In November 1939, only two months after the start of the Second World War, the Gál family moved to Edinburgh to escape the nightly siren-alarms in London. Gál had enjoyed six months’ temporary work in Edinburgh from October 1938, cataloguing the Reid Music Library, and he was now able to return there, thanks to the offer of spacious accommodation in the home of Sir Herbert Grierson, emeritus professor of English, in return for Hanna Gál, Hans’ wife, acting as housekeeper. In Edinburgh Gál was quickly able to resume composing and managed to form a madrigal ensemble, with five solo voices, in an astonishingly short time, as explained in a document dated March 1940 inviting support for the establishment of the Edinburgh Madrigal Singers on a more permanent basis. Grierson’s extensive literary library must have provided Gál with a wealth of poetry, including the poems set in the *Four Madrigals to Elizabethan Poems*, Op. 51,<sup>5</sup> and the two Thomas Lodge settings presented here.<sup>6</sup> They would all have been composed during his time with Sir Herbert, and before Gál was arrested in May 1940 as an ‘enemy alien’ and interned. That put all plans for the Edinburgh Madrigal Singers on indefinite hold, as Gál made clear in a diary entry five days after his arrest:

<sup>5</sup> Recorded on *Hans Gál: Music for Voices, Volume One*.

<sup>6</sup> Grierson was a specialist in seventeenth-century poetry and one of the best-known literary figures in the country.

I had a busy, productive winter, establishing an orchestra and an excellent madrigal group, gave lots of concerts, laid all sorts of foundations for further useful work. There are many people in Edinburgh who are receptive to music and a still rather rudimentary musical life. Now that has all been interrupted, probably buried.<sup>7</sup>

The settings of poems by Thomas Lodge (1558–1625) sit alongside several other such pieces that Gál composed at the time. Lodge's texts, full of playfulness, pithy short lines, and plenty of rhymes, were an ideal vehicle for the foregrounding of the human voice within a highly expressive contrapuntal style. Lodge had led a colourful life, highlights of which included entering the bar at Lincoln's Inn, voyages of discovery around the world, and temporary exile in France following the Gunpowder Plot of 1606. Such a rich life was reflected in the breadth of his poetry, and must have had a considerable attraction for a composer of Gál's intellectual curiosity.

The first, 'Her Rambling' [13], is set as a madrigal in five parts (the soprano line being split in two), a nod to the five-part settings of the sixteenth-century English madrigalists. The text is taken from the historical romance *The Life and Death of William Longbeard*, written during and after Lodge's return voyage from the New World in 1593. A lengthy opening melody elegantly expresses the text in a flurry of quaver movement encompassing the unusually wide interval of an eleventh. The subsequent entries move up in turn through the choir in close proximity (*stretto* style) over a pedal bass. The texture is light and graceful, requiring a high degree of virtuosity and articulation from the singers. Only occasionally is the continual activity interrupted by Neptune 'yielding up to her his reign', the tempo finally slowing to a *quasi andante* in a broad finish incorporating snatches of the main theme in the tenor and second soprano.

The four stanzas of 'Carpe Diem' ('Seize the Day') [14] deal with young love, and the music is full of energy and rhythm. Gál writes a *grazioso* gavotte befitting the seductive song of the Hamadryad (a tree nymph in the form of a beautiful woman) from Lodge's historical romance *The History of Robert, Second Duke of Normandy, surnamed Robert the Devil* (1591). *Staccato* and *legato* lines alternate between the voices, with occasional

<sup>7</sup> Entry for 17 May 1940, in Hans Gál, *Music behind Barbed Wire: A Diary of 1940*, Toccatà Press, London, 2014, p. 54.

*forte* climaxes serving to highlight key words such as ‘joy’ and ‘feasting’. A bucolic, pastoral drone bass line invites the listener to ‘Feast it freely with your lovers’, over which the upper voices teasingly declare that ‘after death is pleasure none’. A beguiling solo soprano line glides serenely over the ceaseless activity of the quaver energy below, before a final rendition of the haunting refrain reminds the listener that ‘After death when you are gone / Joy and pleasure is there none’.

### ***Drei Porträtstudien nach Gedichten von Wilhelm Busch, Op. 34 (1929)***

Gál delved frequently into the inimitable poetry of Wilhelm Busch (1832–1908), later also basing his *Drei Idyllen*, Op. 40 (1932), and two of the *Satirikon: Vier Aphorismen für 4 Männerstimmen a cappella*, Op. 72 (1956),<sup>8</sup> on texts by him. Busch is probably the most universally known German humourist through his illustrated cautionary tales for children, particularly *Max und Moritz* (1865). In *Porträtstudien*, Gál exploits the tongue-in-cheek nature of these whimsical but philosophical texts to the full by adding a piano part to the male voices, the instrument playing a major role alongside the singers in the unveiling of the drama, rather than acting merely as accompaniment.

A broad chant-like theme in octaves (doubled by the piano) is heard at the opening of ‘Der Fromme’ (‘The Pious Man’) [15], perhaps indicating the puffed-up character of Herr Kaplan (meaning either ‘Mr Kaplan’ or ‘Father Kaplan’, denoting a priest or chaplain). A new more flowing passage introduces the forest birdlife as Herr Kaplan walks into the countryside for some quiet contemplation. A cuckoo is first to be heard, with its characteristic call imitated throughout the voices and keyboard. Then, rather less friendly, a stork follows, with its raucous and onomatopoeic ‘Plapperapp!’ similarly scattered through the parts, but this time, by contrast, rather aggressive and discordant in nature. At the close, a return to the opening theme, rather more subdued, sets words stating that even the most pious of people cannot please everyone.

‘Der Weise’ (‘The Wise One’) [16] is framed by a piano introduction which sets the pace and mood, indicated by Gál’s marking ‘with comfortable contentment’ as the donkey, the subject, stands pensively grazing to an easygoing scalic theme. A change of

<sup>8</sup> Recorded on *Hans Gál: Music for Voices, Volume One*.

mood (and key) sees two youths arrive, taunting and poking fun at the donkey. A short descending octave figure in the piano pervades the ensuing passage, perhaps depicting the surprised braying of the donkey. Eventually, however, the sedate pace of the opening returns, along with the accompanying thematic material, as the donkey turns full circle in order to present, contemptuously, the part of his body ‘where the tail is found’ to the youths.

The fiendishly virtuosic piano writing in ‘Der Unvorsichtige’ (‘The Careless One’) [17] brings Gál’s musical picture-painting to the fore, with the buzzing fly effectively characterised by triplets rushing hither and thither, finally settling (as the voices enter) over a pot of honey. The voices similarly imitate the sound of the buzzing with a mixture of *staccato* and *legato* notes and cleverly nuanced dynamic markings. Suddenly the fly realises it is trapped; the piano briefly falls silent as the voices make an *a cappella* plea (with a distinctively Gálian cadence) for the fly to be freed from its ‘sweet slavery’. But it is too late, and the piano utters the fly’s last-ditch efforts to escape. The closing moral of the tale reprises the opening sung material, slower in pace, and ending with audible drawn-out expressions of submission indicated in the score by Gál’s instruction to the singers: ‘deep sighs’.

### ***Songs of Youth, Op. 75 (1959)***

Gál dedicated his five *Songs of Youth* to the conductor Robert Goodale and his women’s chorus at Bryn Mawr College, Pennsylvania (one of the leading women’s colleges in America), for the 75th anniversary of that institution; the *College News* of May 1960 reported that Gál had proclaimed ‘female choir [as] his favourite medium.’ *Songs of Youth* was the first in a trio of Gál’s works for women’s voices commissioned by and performed at Bryn Mawr, and was followed by *A Clarion Call* for double women’s choir *a cappella*, Op. 76, and *Of a Summer Day* for women’s choir, soprano solo and string orchestra, Op. 77. Gál’s relationship with the college was warm: his attendance at the premiere of *A Clarion Call* in April 1960 was his only visit to the USA, despite the Gál’s original intention of settling in the country.

‘Crabbèd Age and Youth’ [18] is full of verve and energy. From the start, Gál reflects the impetuosity of youth with strong dotted rhythms and cascading quaver phrases; imitation and sudden *piano* dynamic contrasts abound, as if mischievously ‘full of pleasure’. Slower, accented, homophonic passages convey the idea of age, the music weighed down and ‘full of care’. The text (marked ‘Anon.’ in Gál’s setting) is from *The Passionate Pilgrim*, a collection of poems published in 1599 and attributed to William Shakespeare (1564–1616), though others, notably the balladist and novelist Thomas Deloney (c. 1543–1600), may have contributed. It provides Gál with a wonderful vehicle for prodigious juxtaposition of homophony, counterpoint and explosive dynamic contrasts, making for a gloriously varied texture. For example, ‘Age is weak and cold’ is slow, discordant, and scored deliberately thinly, the dissonant outburst on the words ‘Age I do abhor thee’ paving the way for the delicately radiant and contrasting ‘Youth I do adore thee’ cadence which follows. The ending – a sustained *pianissimo* chord formed by the voices entering consecutively from top to bottom – underlines once more with longer notes that youth really is all too fleeting.

The setting of the well-known poem ‘Love is a Sickness’ [19] by Samuel Daniel (1562–1619) is unusual in Gál’s choral works for being entirely strophic, without variation between the verses. But this apparent simplicity belies a subtle musical interplay that highlights the alliterative aspects of the text so typical of many Elizabethan poets, employing light, repeated quaver motifs with a dance-like impulse. Daniel’s text originally closed Act I of his masque *Hymen’s Triumph*. A predominantly subdued dynamic scheme lends more impact to the contrasting final outburst of each stanza, sung in open octaves – a stark question ‘Why so?’ bemoaning the ironic cruelty of love, which receives a rather sardonic shrug of a rejoinder: ‘Heigh ho!’

Gál adopted a far less contrapuntal approach for ‘Tell me where is Fancy bred’ [20], Bassanio’s bitter-sweet song about the source of love from Act 3, Scene 2, of Shakespeare’s *The Merchant of Venice*. A broad, lilting two-in-the-bar pulse with rising and falling phrases underlines the questioning nature of the text until a dramatic change at ‘let us all ring Fancy’s knell’. Gál captures an appropriately funereal sonority throughout the final

passage ('ding, dong, bell') with hypnotic canonic writing and *forte-piano* accents that seem to imitate the bell's clapper; sustained soprano interjections ingeniously suggest the build-up of overtones that occurs in peals of bells. The texture ebbs and flows, finally reaching a striking conclusion via the harmony of the penultimate bar, where the alto G flat clashes trenchantly against the soprano's G natural of the prevailing E flat major chord, a stroke of genius typical of Gál's inventive and depictive word-painting.

'Capriccio' [21] was Gál's alternative title for Thomas Lodge's poem 'Rosalynde's Madrigal', the score marked *Scherzando* ('playfully') accordingly. Gál once more delights in the use of dotted rhythmic figures to convey the mood, and one can almost hear the gently strummed accompaniment depicted by Lodge in his pastoral romance *Rosalynde or, Euphues' Golden Legacy* (1590): 'taking up her lute that lay by her, she warbled out this ditty'. Only a brief, harmonically deceptive passage – portraying 'Alas! What hereby shall I win if he gainsay me?' – interrupts the overall sense of momentum until the sustained diminished penultimate chord, typically avoiding predictable cadential formulae, brings the song to a beautifully understated, *pianissimo* conclusion.

Gál closes his *Songs of Youth* with a sublimely beautiful 'Epilogue' [22], a fitting meditative reflection on the kaleidoscopic melange of flirtatiousness, uncertainty, lovesickness and regret that characterises the first four songs. The inexorable unfolding of the music, from the meandering, tonally ambiguous opening to its ecstatically affirmative ending, gloriously reflects the gradual realisation of the text, 'Love and Life: A Song' from *Poems on Several Occasions* (c. 1680) by John Wilmot, Second Earl of Rochester (1647–80). The poem encapsulates a somewhat wistful acceptance that ultimately 'The present moment's all my lot': the past is but memory; and the future, not yet assigned to recollection, is uncertain. Faithfulness and truth in the immediate moment, then, is 'all that Heaven allows'. Gál's progressive tonality leads through the minor-mode opening of the middle stanza, each voice imitating in turn a new musical motif for 'The time that is to come', anticipating and gradually transforming into a more major tonality; but only at the final cadence of the song is true resolution granted.

### **Three Lyrics to Poems by Thomas Moore for mixed voices and piano (1942)**

These choral songs date from 1942, the middle of the war years, when there was no immediate prospect of performance, let alone publication. But composition seems to have had a cathartic role for Gál, and he produced some of his finest work in that bleak year, including his Second Symphony, Op. 53, and his Sonata for Viola and Piano, Op. 101 (the disparity in opus numbers notwithstanding – his works were given an opus number only on publication).

Gál introduces the piano once more to expand his expressive palette in these settings of three contrasting texts, from the rich-keyed, densely textured ‘Sacred Song’, through the more delicately scored ‘Echo’, to the madrigal-like treatment of ‘Cupid’s Lottery’, with its nod to the humour discernible in much of his music. Often referred to as Ireland’s national bard, akin to Burns in Scotland or Shakespeare in England, Thomas Moore (1779–1852) was a controversial and colourful figure whose poetry serves Gál’s disarmingly sophisticated choral writing very well.

The setting of ‘Sacred Song’ [23] is one of Gál’s finest and most deeply felt creations, imbued with a profound sense of sincerity that pervades the piano and vocal lines alike. Moore’s poem ‘This world is all a fleeting show’ had been described in *The Monthly Review; or Literary Journal* simply ‘as a string of happy Horatian reflections on the brevity and instability of earthly enjoyments.’<sup>9</sup> In Gál’s hands, the text assumes a far deeper significance, receiving as sensitive a musical response as can be found in any of his choral works. The bold, full-toned introduction from the piano, Baroque-like in its contrapuntal gravitas and biting false relations, bears the kernel of the thematic material to follow, expressed first by unison altos for the entire initial verse with a melody that elegantly conveys the vicissitudes of Moore’s contrasting textual images. Angular imitative vocal entries for ‘deceitful shine, deceitful flow’ are underpinned by foreboding octaves and cross-rhythms in the piano before the soprano voices finally reach a high B flat on the word ‘Heaven’ before the texture briefly subsides. An extraordinary

<sup>9</sup> Anon., ‘A Series of Sacred Songs, Duets, and Trios; the Words by Thomas Moore, Esq. The Music composed and selected by Sir John Stevenson, Mus. Doc., and Mr. Moore’, reviewed in *The Monthly Review; or Literary Journal, Enlarged*, Vol. XC (September–December 1819), pp. 414–15.

economy of resources and style enables Gál to set the second and third stanzas with music derived almost entirely from that initial piano kernel, and yet crafted into something uniquely apposite for the text in question. The closing passage – ‘There’s nothing calm but Heaven!’ – brings the music full circle in a serenely transcendent apotheosis in the sweet major mode, in contrast to the opening. The piano then has the final word, leading the listener through the Bach-like contrapuntal opening material to rest in the profoundly affecting home key of E flat minor.

‘Echo’ [24], by contrast, opens in ethereal but tranquil mood, the hypnotic rising octave figure and brief, ambiguous cadential digression in the piano part introducing an almost enchanted, mythical air befitting the dream-like poem, which comes from Volume 8 (1821) of Moore’s most important and celebrated achievement, *Irish Melodies* (ten volumes, 1807–34). Gál’s musical echo is delicately achieved, the lower and upper voices in turn cautiously offering the opening text ‘How sweet the answer Echo makes’, answered by deliciously reflective piano figurations. A beautifully shifting lyricism infuses ‘to music at night’ with an almost exotic, faraway atmosphere, the sound increasing and falling away to nothing via a gently lilting hemiola effect at the cadence. A change of key from B major to A flat major and a new pulsating trochaic rhythm illustrate ‘the sigh in youth sincere’ that opens the final stanza, but the pervading chromaticism undermines any real sensation of harmonic stability, perpetuating the otherworldly atmosphere. An expressive musical sigh followed by a breathtakingly beautiful harmonic sequence conjure exquisitely the words ‘breathed back again’, heralding the return of the opening material. The hemiola figure recedes into nothingness, the singers being asked to sing *pppp* (as quietly as possible), leaving the piano postlude, as ethereal as at the outset, to bring the whole to an enigmatic close.

The text of the final song of the group, ‘Cupid’s Lottery’ [25], was originally a song-interlude from Moore’s libretto for *M. P.; Or, The Blue Stocking*, a comic opera in three acts, the plot of which revolves around a corrupt Member of Parliament defrauding his own brother and becoming ‘involved’ with a ‘bluestocking’ (an intellectual woman of the English Blue Stocking Society) by the name of Lady Bab Blue. Gál’s sense of fun suffuses this delightful setting, which is full of vibrant energy and yet simultaneously refined and

graceful. The mischievous six-bar piano introduction welcomes the top three voices, where the main melody lends the song an unstoppable forward impulse from the outset. As the poem reveals the ever more capricious details of Cupid's 'knavish trade' (Gál substituted Moore's original 'Jewish trade', for obvious reasons), so the musical tension is coquettishly heightened by a pedal-note passage (repeated a semitone higher a few bars later), over which the sopranos and altos describe 'kisses that weren't very hard to win' because 'he who won the eyes of fun was sure to have the kisses' too. At the end of the song a final energetic iteration of the 'lottery' theme bursts forth from a dramatic *crescendo*, the sopranos soaring above in descant-like triumph. But it is the basses who have the final word, reminding the listener whimsically that 'a Lottery in Cupid's court there used to be', against which the other voices sustain a jaunty *pianissimo* chord.

It is worth noting that whereas all the works composed before 1933 were published within a few years of composition (as their near-consecutive opus numbers make clear) and were widely performed from the outset, the Lodge and Thomas Moore settings remained unpublished and seemingly unperformed. Even with *Spätlese*, published as Op. 91, performances do not appear to have materialised – a reflection of a post-war musical culture that became increasingly inimical to the values represented by Gál's music, but which is waiting to be rediscovered in the 21st century.

## Texts and Translations

### *Drei Lieder nach Gedichten von Rainer Maria Rilke, Op. 31*

#### [1] No. 1, Advent

Es treibt der Wind im Winterwalde  
die Flockenherde wie ein Hirt  
und manche Tanne ahnt, wie balde  
sie fromm und lichterheilig wird,  
und lauscht hinaus. Den weissen Wegen  
streckt sie die Zweige hin, bereit  
und wehrt dem Wind und wächst entgegen  
der einen Nacht der Herrlichkeit.

#### [2] No. 2, Adagio

Der Abend ist mein Buch. Ihm prangen  
die Deckel purpurn in Damast;  
ich löse seine goldnen Spangen  
mit kühlen Händen, ohne Hast.

Und lese seine erste Seite,  
beglückt durch den vertrauten Ton, –  
und lese leiser seine zweite,  
und seine dritte träum ich schon

#### [3] No. 3, Sankt Nepomuk

Grosse Heilige und kleine  
feiert jegliche Gemeine;  
hölzern und von Steine feine,  
grosse Heilige und kleine.

### *Three Songs to Poems by Rainer Maria Rilke*

*In wintry woods the wind is driving  
the flock of snowflakes, shepherd-like,  
and many a fir-tree feels how soon then  
by lights it will be sanctified,  
and listens well. To the white pathways  
it stretches out its branches wide  
to brave the wind and grow – to live for  
that single blissful holy night.*

—translation by Bertram Kottmann

*The evening is my book. Its lining  
displays the crimson damask's flush;  
I open buckles, golden shining,  
with fingers cool, without a rush.*

*And read the first one of its pages,  
with joys that so familiar seem –  
the second, then, of gentler ages,  
the third one I already dream.*

—translation by Walter A. Aue

#### *Saint Nepomuk*

*Many saints both great and small  
Now are praised by one and all;  
Stone and wooden, fine ones all  
Are these saints both great and small.*

Heilge Annen und Kathrinen,  
die im Traum erschienen ihnen,  
baun sie sich und dienen ihnen,  
heilgen Annen und Kathrinen.

Wenzel lass ich auch noch gelten,  
weil sie selten ihn bestellten;  
denn zu viele gelten selten –  
nun, Sankt Wenzel lass ich gelten.

Aber diese Nepomucken!  
Von des Torgangs Lucken gucken  
und auf allen Brucken spucken  
lauter, lauter Nepomucken!

*Drei Gesänge, Op. 37*

[4] No. 1, Der römische Brunnen  
*Conrad Ferdinand Meyer*

Aufsteigt der Strahl und fallend giesst  
Er voll der Marmorschale Rund,  
Die, sich verschleiernd, überfließt  
In einer zweiten Schale Grund;

Die zweite gibt, sie wird zu reich,  
Der dritten wallend ihre Flut,  
Und jede nimmt und gibt zugleich  
Und strömt und ruht.

*Holy Annas and Cathrines  
They have seen them in their dreams  
Now they build them and esteem  
Holy Anna and Cathrine.*

*Wenceslas is all right, too,  
For he rarely gets his due;  
As, indeed, do all too few –  
Yes, Saint Wenceslas will do.*

*But those dreadful Nepomuks!  
Peeping out of all the nooks,  
Haunting bridges like many spooks,  
Loads and loads of Nepomuks!*

—translation by Anthony Fox

*The Roman Fountain*

*Up springs the spout and, falling, fills  
To brim the marble basin's round,  
Which, under veiling, over spills  
Into a second basin's ground;*

*The second one, too rich now, runs  
Into the third its falling waves,  
And each one takes and gives at once  
And streams and stays.*

—translation by Rolf-Peter Will

5] No. 2, Am Abend

*Johann Christian Günther*

Abermal ein Teil vom Jahre,  
abermal ein Tag vollbracht:  
Abermal ein Brett zur Bahre  
und ein Schritt zur Gruft gemacht.

Also nähert sich die Zeit  
nach und nach der Ewigkeit;  
also müssen wir auf Erden  
zu dem Tode reifer werden.

6] No. 3, Wiegenlied

*Clemens Brentano*

Singet leise, leise, leise,  
singt eine flüsternd Wiegenlied;  
von dem Monde lernt die Weise,  
der so still am Himmel zieht.

Singt ein Lied so süß gelinde,  
wie die Quelle auf den Kieseln,  
wie die Bienen um die Linde  
summen, murmeln, flüstern, rieseln.

*In the Evening*

*Once again part of the year,  
Once again a day is done:  
One more board upon the bier  
Nearer to the tomb we've gone.*

*Now comes near the time when we  
Draw close to eternity;  
So on earth we must attend  
To be ready for our end.*

—translation by Anthony Fox

*Cradle Song*

*Softly, softly, softly singing,  
sing a whispering lullaby;  
now the moon the tune is bringing,  
moving quietly in the sky.*

*Sing a song as sweet and mild  
like the water in the stream,  
like the bees around the linden  
humming, murmuring in a dream.*

—translation by Anthony Fox

### Spätlese, Op. 91

[7] No. 1, Bruder Augustin  
*Eduard von Bauernfeld*

Bruder Lustig, der vor langer,  
Langer Zeit gelebt in Wien,  
Einen Gassenhauer sang er:  
„O du lieber Augustin!“

Sehr beliebt beim grossen Haufen  
War der Bruder Augustin,  
Konnte musizieren, saufen,  
Und dann sang er: „s Geld ist hin!“ –

Seitdem sind die lieben Wiener  
Lauter Brüder Augustiner!

[8] No. 2, Abendlied  
*Clemens Brentano*

Wie so leis die Blätter wehn  
In dem lieben stillen Hain,  
Sonne will schon schlafen gehn,  
Lässt ihr goldnes Hemdelein  
Sinken auf den grünen Rasen  
Wo die schlanken Hirschen grasen  
In dem roten Abendschein.

In der Quellen klarer Flut  
Treibt kein Fischlein mehr sein Spiel,

### Late Harvest

*Brother Augustine*

*Long ago in old Vienna,  
A merry monk was often seen.  
He sang a song in lusty tenor:  
‘O you dearest Augustine!’*

*People found him most amusing.  
Augustine was quite content,  
He’d make music, and go boozing,  
Then he’d sing: ‘The money’s spent!’ –*

*Since then Viennese have been  
Known as ‘Brothers Augustine’.*

—translation by Anthony Fox

*Evening Song*

*How the leaves so softly blow  
In the dear and silent wood,  
Now the sun to rest will go,  
Let its golden cloak and hood  
Sink into the meadow’s haze  
Where the slender deer now graze  
In the red of evening’s glow.*

*In the cool springs’ sparkling flow  
Fishes now no longer race,*

Jedes sucht, wo es ruht,  
Sein gewöhnlich Ort und Ziel  
Und entschlummert überm Lauschen  
Auf der Wellen leises Rauschen  
Zwischen bunten Kieseln kühl.

Schlank schaut auf der Felsenwand  
Sich die Glockenblume um,  
Denn verspätet über Land  
Will ein Bienchen mit Gesumm,  
Sich zur Nachtherberge melden  
In den blauen, zarten Zelten,  
Schlüpft hinein und wird ganz stumm.

9 No. 3, Nachtgesang

*Franz Grillparzer*  
Ruhe umhüllt  
Mit säuselndem Flügel  
Täler und Hügel,  
Selige Ruh';

Und dem Schlummer,  
Dem lieblichen Kinde,  
Leise und linde  
Flüstert sie zu:

„Weisst du ein Auge,  
Wachend in Kummer,  
Lieblicher Schlummer,  
Drücke mir's zu!“

*Each one to its rest must go  
Seeking its familiar place,  
Sleeping, listening to the rustle  
Of the water's gentle bustle  
Flowing through its stony space.*

*Slender on the rocky face  
Now the bluebell gazes round,  
For belated in that place  
Comes a bee, with buzzing hum,  
Looking for its nightly bower  
In the blue and tender flower,  
Slips inside and then is dumb.*

—translation by Anthony Fox

*Night Song*

*Night envelops,  
with fluttering wing,  
the valleys and hills,  
bidding them to rest;*

*And to Sleep,  
that lovely child,  
softly and mildly  
she whispers:*

*'If you know an eye  
that is awake from grief,  
O lovely Sleep,  
Close it for me!'*

„Fühlst du sein Nahen?  
Ahnest du Ruh’?  
Alles deckt Schlummer,  
Schlumm’re auch du!“

[10] No. 4, Grabschrift

*Marie von Ebner-Eschenbach*

Im Schatten dieser Weide ruht  
Ein armer Mensch, nicht schlimm noch gut.  
Er hat gefühlt mehr als gedacht,  
Hat mehr geweint als er gelacht;  
Er hat geliebt und viel gelitten,  
Hat schwer gekämpft und – nichts erstritten.  
Nun liegt er endlich sanft gestreckt,  
Wünscht nicht zu werden aufgeweckt.  
Wollt Gott an ihm das Wunder tun,  
Er bäte: Herr, o lass mich ruhn!

[11] No. 5, Trutzlied

*Daniel Stoppe*

Ich esse mein Brot  
Mit Kummer und Not,  
Mit Sorgen, mit Borgen,  
und weine doch nicht.  
Ja reisst mir das Strickchen  
Der Hoffnung entzwei,  
So hab ich doch immer  
Courage dabei.

*‘Do you feel its closeness?  
Do you sense peace?’  
Sleep spreads over everything,  
Sleep, then sleep too!*

—translation by Emily Ezust

*Epitaph*

*In the shade of this willow rests  
A poor man, neither bad nor good.  
He felt more than he thought,  
He cried more than he laughed;  
He loved and suffered much,  
Fought hard and – achieved nothing.  
Now he lies stretched out at peace,  
Does not wish to be awoken.  
If God wished a miracle for him  
He would pray: Lord, let me rest!*

—translation by Stephen Muir;  
revised by Anthony Fox

*Song of Defiance*

*I eat up my bread  
With worry and want,  
With sorrow and borrow,  
And yet do not weep.  
And if my hope’s thread  
Is torn into two,  
For ever I still  
My courage will keep.*

Der Bursche verlacht  
Die Grillen der Nacht,  
Mit Klagen und Zagen  
Wird doch nichts getan,  
Indem doch das Glücke  
Den Willen behält,  
Es bleibet am Ende  
Doch alls in der Welt.

Ihr Mädchen, lebt wohl!  
Im Walde kling'ts hohl.  
Die Triebe der Liebe  
Verdamm ich zwar nicht:  
Doch hab' ich die Meinung  
Und bleibe dabei,  
Dass Liebe die grösste  
Beschwerlichkeit sei.

[12] No. 6, Der faule Schäfer  
*Johann Wolfgang von Goethe*

Es war ein fauler Schäfer,  
Ein rechter Siebenschläfer,  
Ihn kümmerte kein Schaf.

Ein Mädchen konnt ihn fassen,  
Da war der Tropf verlassen,  
Fort Appetit und Schlaf!

*The youth may deride  
The thoughts of the night,  
With squalling and stalling  
Will nothing be done,  
But yet since good fortune  
The will can sustain,  
All things in the world  
In the end will remain.*

*You maidens, farewell!  
The forest sounds hollow.  
The urges of love  
I do not condemn:  
But I have my opinion  
which still I maintain,  
That love is the biggest  
Most arduous strain.*

—translation by Anthony Fox

*The Lazy Shepherd*

*There was a shepherd lazy,  
He slept and slept like crazy,  
Was not concerned with sheep.*

*He then fell for a maiden,  
With gloom he then was laden,  
Gone appetite and sleep!*

Es trieb ihn in die Ferne,  
Des Nachts zählt er die Sterne,  
Er klagt und härt sich brav.

Nun da sie ihn genommen,  
Ist alles wieder kommen,  
Durst, Appetit und Schlaf.

***Two Madrigals to Poems by Thomas Lodge***

[13] No. 1, Her Rambling  
My mistress, when she goes  
to pull the pink and rose  
along the river bounds,  
and trippeth on the grounds,  
and runs from rocks to rocks  
with lovely scattered locks,  
whilst amorous wind doth play  
with hairs so golden gay,  
the water waxeth clear,  
and fishes draw her near,  
the sirens sing her praise,  
sweet flowers perfume her ways,  
and Neptune, glad and fain,  
yields up to her his reign.

*It drove him then afar;  
By night he'd count each star,  
His grief would do its worst.*

*But since she him has taken,  
Now all can reawaken,  
Sleep, appetite and thirst.*

—translation by Anthony Fox

[14] No. 2, Carpe Diem

Pluck the fruit and taste the pleasure,  
Youthful lordings, of delight;  
Whilst occasion gives you seizure,  
Feed your fancies and your sight:  
After death, when you are gone,  
Joy and pleasure is there none.

Here on earth nothing is stable,  
Fortune's changes well are known;  
Whilst as youth doth then enable  
Let your seeds of joy be sown:  
After death, when you are gone,  
Joy and pleasure is there none.

Feast it freely with your lovers,  
Blithe and wanton sweets do fade;  
Whilst that lovely Cupid hovers  
Round about this lovely shade,  
Sport it freely one to one,  
After death is pleasure none.

Now the pleasant spring allureth,  
And both place and time invites,  
Out, alas! what heart endureth  
To disclaim his sweet delights.  
After death, when you are gone,  
Joy and pleasure is there none.

### **Drei Porträtstudien, Op. 34**

[15] No. 1, Der Fromme

*Wilhelm Busch*

Es ging der fromme Herr Kaplan,  
Nachdem er bereits viel Gutes getan,  
In stiller Betrachtung der schönen Natur  
Einst zur Erholung durch die Flur.

Und als er kam an den Waldessaum,  
Da rief der Kuckuck lustig vom Baum:  
„Wünsche guten Abend, Herr Kollege!“

Der Storch dagegen, nicht weit vom Wege,  
Steigt in der Wiese auf und ab  
Und spricht verdriesslich: „Plapperapapp!

Gäb's lauter Pfaffen lobesam,  
Ich wäre längst schon flügellahm!“

Man sieht, dass selbst der frömmste Mann  
Nicht allen Leuten gefallen kann.

[16] No. 2, Der Weise

*Wilhelm Busch*

Es stand vor eines Hauses Tor  
Ein Esel mit gespitztem Ohr,  
Er kaute sich sein Bündel Heu  
Gedankenvoll und still entzwei.

### **Three Portrait Studies**

*The Pious One*

*The pious chaplain took a stroll  
When done with saving many a soul,  
In silent enjoyment of nature green,  
He walked relaxing through the scene.*

*And when he came to the edge of the wood,  
The cuckoo called as loud as he could,  
'My dearest colleague, I wish you good day!'*

*The stork, however, from not far away,  
Just strode around to screech and flap,  
And peevishly say 'Plapperapapp!*

*If all the priests were good as you,  
My wings would have no work to do!'*

*You see that even the most pious chappie  
Can never make all people happy.*

—translation by Anthony Fox

*The Wise One*

*Before a house there stood one day  
A donkey with a pile of hay,  
Which silently he slowly chewed,  
In thoughtful and in pensive mood.*

Nun kommen da und bleiben stehn  
Der nasenweisen Buben zween,  
Die auch sogleich, indem sie lachen,  
Verhasste Redensarten machen.

Womit man denn bezwecken wollte,  
Dass sich der Esel ärgen sollte,—

Doch dieser hochehrfahne Greis  
Beschrieb nur einen halben Kreis,  
Verhielt sich stumm und zeigte itzt  
Die Seite wo der Wedel sitzt.

[17] No. 3, Der Unvorsichtige  
*Wilhelm Busch*

Es flog einmal ein muntres Fliegel  
Zu einem vollen Honigtiegel.

Da tunkt es mit Zufriedenheit  
Den Rüssel in die Flüssigkeit.

Nachdem es dann genug geschleckt,  
Hat es die Flüglein ausgereckt  
Und möchte sich nach oben schwingen.

Allein das Bein im Honigseim  
Sitzt fest als wie in Vogelleim.  
Nun fängt das Fliegel an zu singen:

*Now came along two cheeky boys  
Who laughed and made a lot of noise.  
They used detestable expressions,  
Committing many indiscretions.*

*This clearly was a hateful ploy  
The peaceful donkey to annoy,—*

*But this experienced old beast,  
Was not unsettled in the least;  
The youths he silently dispatched  
By showing where the tails attached.*

*—translation by Anthony Fox*

*The Careless One*

*Once there saw a merry fly  
A honey-pot while passing by.*

*It dipped then, with the greatest pleasure  
Its snout into the liquid treasure.*

*It tried, when it had had enough,  
To fly from all this sticky stuff,  
And so stretched out each little wing.*

*Regrettably its little feet  
Were stuck fast in the honey sweet.  
And now the fly began to sing:*

Ach, lieber Himmel, mach mich frei  
Aus dieser süßen Sklaverei!

Ein Freund von mir, der dieses sah,  
Der seufzte tief und rief: Ja, ja!

***Songs of Youth, Op. 75***

[18] No. 1, Crabbèd Age and Youth  
*Anon., attrib. Shakespeare*

Crabbèd age and youth cannot live together:  
Youth is full of pleasance, age is full of care;  
Youth like summer morn, age like winter  
weather;  
Youth like summer brave, age like winter bare.  
Youth is full of sport, age's breath is short;  
Youth is nimble, age is lame;  
Youth is hot and bold, age is weak and cold;  
Youth is wild, and age is tame.  
Age, I do abhor thee; youth, I do adore thee;  
O, my love, my love is young!  
Age, I do defy thee: O, sweet shepherd, hie  
thee,  
For methinks thou stay'st too long.

[19] No. 2, Love is a Sickness  
*Samuel Daniel*  
Love is a sickness full of woes,  
All remedies refusing;  
A plant that with most cutting grows,

*Oh dearest heaven, set me free  
From this, the sweetest slavery!*

*A friend of mine saw its distress,  
And, sighing deeply, said: Oh, yes!*  
—translation by Anthony Fox

Most barren with best using,  
Why so?

More we enjoy it, more it dies;  
If not enjoy'd, it sighing cries—  
Heigh ho!

Love is a torment of the mind,  
A tempest everlasting;  
And Jove hath made it of a kind  
Not well, nor full, nor fasting.  
Why so?

More we enjoy it, more it dies;  
If not enjoy'd, it sighing cries—  
Heigh ho!

[20] No. 3, Tell me where is Fancy bred  
*William Shakespeare*  
Tell me where is Fancy bred,  
Or in the heart, or in the head?  
How begot, how nourishèd?  
Reply, reply.

It is engender'd in the eyes,  
With gazing fed; and Fancy dies  
In the cradle where it lies.  
Let us all ring Fancy's knell:  
I'll begin it, – Ding, dong, bell.

[21] No. 4, Capriccio

*Thomas Lodge*

Love in my bosom like a bee  
Doth suck his sweet;  
Now with his wings he plays with me,  
Now with his feet.  
Within my eyes he makes his nest,  
His bed amidst my tender breast;  
My kisses are his daily feast,  
And yet he robs me of my rest.  
Ah, wanton, will ye?

And if I sleep, then percheth he  
With pretty flight,  
And makes his pillow of my knee  
The livelong night.  
Strike I my lute, he tunes the string;  
He music plays if so I sing;  
He lends me every lovely thing;  
Yet cruel he my heart doth sting.  
Whist, wanton, still ye!

Else I with roses every day  
Will whip you hence,  
And bind you, when you long to play,

For your offence.  
I'll shut my eyes to keep you in,  
I'll make you fast it for your sin,  
I'll count your power not worth a pin.  
Alas! what hereby shall I win  
If he gainsay me?  
What if I beat the wanton boy  
With many a rod?  
He will repay me with annoy,  
Because a god.  
Then sit you safely on my knee,  
Then let thy bower my bosom be;  
Lurk in mine eyes, I like of thee.  
O Cupid, so thou pity me,  
Spare not, but play thee!

[22] No. 5, Epilogue

*John Wilmot, Earl of Rochester*

All my past life is mine no more,  
The flying hours are gone,  
Like transitory dreams giv'n o'er,  
Whose images are kept in store  
By memory alone.

The time that is to come, is not;  
How can it then be mine?  
The present moment's all my lot;  
And that, as fast as it is got,  
My love, is only thine.  
Then talk not of inconstancy,

False hearts, and broken vows;  
If I, by miracle, can be  
This live-long minute true to thee,  
'Tis all that Heaven allows.

*Three Lyrics to Poems by Thomas Moore*

[23] No. 1, Sacred Song

This world is all a fleeting show  
For man's illusion given;  
The smiles of joy, the tears of woe,  
Deceitful shine, deceitful flow,—  
There's nothing true but Heaven!

And false the light on glory's plume,  
As fading hues of even;  
And Love, and Hope, and Beauty's bloom,  
Are blossoms gather'd for the tomb,—  
There's nothing bright but Heaven!

Poor wanderers of a stormy day,  
From wave to wave we're driven,  
And fancy's flash and reason's ray  
Serve but to light the troubled way,—  
There's nothing calm but Heaven!

[24] No. 2, Echo

How sweet the answer Echo makes  
To music at night,  
When, roused by lute or horn, she wakes,

And far away, o'er lawns and lakes,  
Goes answering light.

Yet Love hath echoes truer far  
And far more sweet,  
Than e'er, beneath the moonlight's star  
Of horn, or lute, or soft guitar,  
The songs repeat.

'Tis when the sigh in youth sincere,  
And only then,—  
The sigh, that breathed for one to hear,  
Is by that one, that only dear,  
Breathed back again!

[25] No. 3, Cupid's Lottery

A Lottery, a Lottery,  
In Cupid's court there used to be;  
Two roguish eyes  
The highest prize  
In Cupid's scheming Lottery;  
And kisses, too,  
As good as new,  
Which weren't very hard to win,  
For he who won  
The eyes of fun  
Was sure to have the kisses in.

A Lottery, a Lottery...

This Lottery, this Lottery  
In Cupid's court went merrily,  
And Cupid played  
A knavish trade  
In this his scheming Lottery;  
For hearts, we're told,  
In shares were sold

To many a fond believing drone,  
And cut the hearts  
In sixteen parts  
So well, each thought the whole his own.

A Lottery, a Lottery...

## TONY FOX (1943–2021): A TRIBUTE

by Stephen Muir

Tony Fox's contribution to the 'Hans Gál: Music for Voices' project has been immense, and Borealis is honoured to dedicate this recording to his memory. Dr Anthony Fox studied Modern Languages at Edinburgh University, followed by postgraduate studies in Phonetics and a Ph.D. (*A Comparative Study of English and German Intonation*). It was in Edinburgh that he met Hans Gál's daughter, Eva, whom he married in 1968.

Music became a key part of Tony's life. He dedicated himself, alongside his wife, to the music of Hans Gál, creating the first post-war lists of Gál's works, archiving historical documents, typesetting music, translating numerous texts, creating an extensive bilingual Hans Gál website, setting up the Hans Gál Society, co-writing/translating the composer's biography and internment diary<sup>1</sup> and much more.

These activities ran alongside his 36-year 'day job' as Senior Lecturer and long-time Head of Department of Linguistics at Leeds University, during which time he wrote four scholarly books. A fifth – the first volume of an extensive linguistic history of Europe – remains complete in manuscript form.

<sup>1</sup> Hans Gál, *Music behind Barbed Wire: A Diary of 1940*, Toccata Press, London, 2014.



*Tony Fox (1943–2021)*

His exceptional verse translations of Gál's German texts (to be found in album and programme booklets and in some of the scores themselves) are perhaps his most joyous legacy. Retaining most of the original metrical and rhyming patterns, his expertise in linguistics and phonetics also enabled him to preserve even some aspects of alliteration, assonance and word-play. It is no exaggeration to say that without Tony's devotion to the cause it would be almost impossible to record much of Gál's 'Music for Voices', and for that we are grateful beyond words. He was one of a kind, and is sorely missed.

## **Borealis: A Chamber Choir for the North**

Borealis is a professional chamber choir based in the north of England, drawing membership from among the finest singers in or from the north. Our mission is to give performances of the highest quality, building audiences across northern England while also touring further afield and abroad. Alongside the standard choral repertoire, we aim to present ambitious and exciting programmes and similarly innovative recordings, often bringing to light composers who have not received the recognition they deserve.

This, Borealis' third recording, embodies this mission, and is the second in a series comprising the complete 'Music for Voices' of Austrian-Jewish *émigré* composer Hans Gál (1890–1987). Gál has featured prominently in our concert programmes, notably the Gala Evening at the Grassington Festival, 2019.<sup>1</sup> Borealis delved further into the repertoire of composers displaced by the Second World War in its second recording, *Robert FÜRSTENTHAL, Complete Choral Music, Volume One* (TOCC 0648, released in August 2022; a further Fürstenthal album is in preparation).

Although Borealis was formally established as recently as 2016, most of our singers are or have been leading members of the most accomplished and longstanding ensembles of the region, including the Clothworkers Consort of Leeds, Orion Chamber Choir, and Manchester Chamber Choir, among others. United as a single choir of 16–20 singers, and directed by Bridget Budge and Stephen Muir, these voices combine to produce a uniquely rich yet agile sound, a perfect blend of youthful vibrancy built upon a solid bedrock of experience.

<sup>1</sup> For more information on the conception and development of the *Music for Voices* project, cf. Stephen Muir's posting on the Toccata Blog, 'Songs of Love, Sorrow and Satire (and not forgetting the Baboon!): Recording Hans Gál's Music for Voices', at <https://toccataclassics.com/recording-hans-gals-music-for-voices/>.

**Bridget Budge** was born in Devon, and after falling in love with music at school, went on to read music at Trinity College, Cambridge, where she was a Choral Exhibitioner under the late Richard Marlow. She went on to specialise in solo singing, subsequently studying at both the Guildhall School of Music, London, and latterly the Royal College of Music, where she was the recipient of several prizes. After early forays into opera (Cambridge Handel Opera Group, Scottish Opera), she decided to concentrate, as a contralto, on concert repertoire, performing as a soloist in oratorio and recital programmes throughout the UK and Germany. She has recorded with the Geoffrey Mitchell Choir in London and has also performed worldwide as a member of the West Deutscher Rundfunkchor and Berliner Rundfunkchor under such conductors as Claudio Abbado, James Levine, Pierre Boulez, Karlheinz Stockhausen, Neeme Järvi and Semyon Bychkov.

Latterly, in addition to occasional solo appearances in recital and with the Black Dyke Brass Band, she has been much in demand as a vocal coach (Huddersfield Choral Society, Mirfield Community of the Resurrection), concert facilitator (Square Chapel for the Arts, Halifax, Brighthouse Festival), Music Director (Pennine Spring Festival, Halifax Chamber Choir), and since moving to Yorkshire has gone on to establish several choirs, including Orion and Borealis.



Born in Zambia in 1972, **Stephen Muir** gained B.Mus. and Ph.D. degrees in music from Birmingham University, specialising in singing and percussion at Birmingham Conservatoire, and studying conducting under George Hurst at Canford. As Senior Lecturer (Associate Professor) in Music at the University of Leeds, his research focuses on choral repertoire and performance, nineteenth-century Russian music and Jewish liturgical music in the diaspora, particularly in Southern Africa. From 2014 to 2018 he was Principal Investigator for the £1.8m AHRC-funded international research project *Performing the Jewish Archive* (ptja.leeds.ac.uk), resulting in performances in Sydney, Cape Town and Prague and, closer to home, in the Wigmore Hall in London, and at the Holocaust Memorial Day Annual Commemoration of the British Parliament.

He has worked extensively in the UK as a singer, percussionist and conductor, including recordings and broadcasts for BBC Radio 3 and Classic FM.

With the Leeds Baroque Choir and Orchestra under the direction of Peter Holman, he has sung the roles of Bach's Evangelist on several occasions, and recently appeared alongside trumpeter Crispian Steele-Perkins as timpanist for the debut of the new hand-crafted kettle drums of Leeds Baroque. He is Assistant Director of The Clothworkers Consort of Leeds, and Co-Founder/Director of Borealis.



**Ian Buckle** maintains a varied freelance career as soloist, chamber musician, orchestral pianist and teacher. He is the artistic director of Pixels Ensemble, formed in 2016. He enjoys longstanding associations with the Royal Liverpool Philharmonic and the John Wilson Orchestra, appearing as soloist on numerous occasions, and has played concertos with the Royal Philharmonic, Opera North and Sinfonia Viva. He has been the pianist of Ensemble 10/10 since its inception and regularly plays orchestral piano with the BBC Philharmonic. He frequently collaborates with poets and readers, most recently Andrew Motion, Roger McGough and Deryn Rees-Jones, in recitals of piano

music and poetry, in *Shropshire and Other Lads*, a celebration of A. E. Housman, *Anthem for Doomed Youth*, a commemoration of the First World War, and *Philip Larkin's England*.

His recordings include transcriptions for cello and piano with Jonathan Aasgaard; and sonatas by Mendelssohn, Montgeroult, Viotti and Weber with the violinist Sophie Rosa, recently released on Rubicon Classics. His live performance of Gershwin's *New York Rhapsody* at the Royal Albert Hall features on Warner Classics' *The Best of the John Wilson Orchestra*, and he and duo-partner Richard Casey are soloists in Saint-Saëns' *Carnival of the Animals* with the RLPO and Vasily Petrenko (also on Warner Classics).

Ian Buckle teaches at the University of Liverpool and is an examiner with ABRSM.  
[www.pixelsensemble.org](http://www.pixelsensemble.org)



## Singers

### *Sopranos*

Hannah Peace  
Nicki Sapiro  
Alison West  
Sarah Wickham

### *Altos*

Ruth Aldred  
Naomi Barker\*  
Emily Beringer  
Anya Chomacki\*  
Connie Reif  
Ruth Taylor

### *Tenors*

Martin Barry  
Sam Hubbard  
Stephen Muir  
Christopher  
Trenholme

### *Basses*

Stuart O'Hara  
Benjamin Palmer  
Andrew Tawn  
Robert Webb

\* [18]–[22] only

## Principal Project Supporters

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# HANS GÁL Music for Voices, Volume Two

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<i>Drei Lieder nach Gedichten von Rainer Maria Rilke, Op. 31</i> (1928)	<b>7:38</b>
1 No. 1 Advent	1:41
2 No. 2 Adagio	3:46
3 No. 3 Sankt Nepomuk	2:11
<i>Drei Gesänge, Op. 37</i> (1929–30)	<b>9:30</b>
4 No. 1 Der römische Brunnen	1:45
5 No. 2 Am Abend	3:50
6 No. 3 Wiegenlied	3:55
<i>Spätlese, Op. 91</i> (1966)	<b>14:02</b>
7 No. 1 Bruder Augustin	2:14
8 No. 2 Abendlied	3:35
9 No. 3 Nachtgesang	2:38
10 No. 4 Grabschrift	2:24
11 No. 5 Trutzlied	1:44
12 No. 6 Der faule Schäfer	1:27
<i>Two Madrigals to Poems by Thomas Lodge</i> (1939–40)	<b>6:15</b>
13 No. 1 Her Rambling	2:46
14 No. 2 Carpe Diem	3:29
<i>Drei Porträtstudien, Op. 34</i> (1929)	<b>7:33</b>
15 No. 1 Der Fromme	2:12
16 No. 2 Der Weise	2:56
17 No. 3 Der Unvorsichtige	2:25
<i>Songs of Youth, Op. 75</i> (1959)	<b>15:06</b>
18 No. 1 Crabbèd Age and Youth	3:02
19 No. 2 Love is a Sickness	1:53
20 No. 3 Tell me where is Fancy bred	2:07
21 No. 4 Capriccio	4:21
22 No. 5 Epilogue	3:43
<i>Three Lyrics to Poems by Thomas Moore</i> (1942)	<b>11:55</b>
23 No. 1 Sacred Song	4:09
24 No. 2 Echo	5:01
25 No. 3 Cupid's Lottery	2:45

## Borealis

Ian Buckle, piano 1–3 15–17 23–25

Bridget Budge 1–17 23–25 and Stephen Muir 18–22, directors

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