



LSO

LSO Live

BRITTEN PETER GRIMES
Sir Colin Davis

London Symphony Orchestra

Glenn Winslade
Janice Watson
Anthony Michaels-Moore
Catherine Wyn-Rogers
Jill Grove
James Rutherford
Jonathan Lemalu
London Symphony Chorus



BENJAMIN BRITTEN (1913–76)

Peter Grimes, Op 33 (1945)

An opera in three acts and a prologue derived from a poem by George Crabbe

Words by Montagu Slater

Music by Benjamin Britten, Op 33

Published by Boosey & Hawkes Ltd

Glenn Winslade *tenor* **PETER GRIMES** a fisherman

Janice Watson *soprano* **ELLEN ORFORD** a widow, school mistress of the Borough

Anthony Michaels-Moore *baritone* **CAPTAIN BALSTRODE** retired merchant skipper

Jill Grove *alto* **AUNTIE** landlady of 'The Boar'

Sally Matthews *soprano* **FIRST NIECE**

Alison Buchanan *soprano* **SECOND NIECE**

Christopher Gillett *tenor* **BOB BOLES** fisherman and methodist

James Rutherford *baritone* **SWALLOW** a lawyer

Catherine Wyn-Rogers *mezzo* **MRS SEDLEY** a widow of an East India Company factor

Ryland Davies *tenor* **REV HORACE ADAMS** the Rector

Nathan Gunn *baritone* **NED KEENE** apothecary and quack

Jonathan Lemalu *baritone* **HOBSON** carrier

Sir Colin Davis conductor

LONDON SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

LONDON SYMPHONY CHORUS

Joseph Cullen chrous director

James Mallinson producer

Neil Hutchinson and **Jonathan Stokes** for *Classic Sound Ltd* balance engineers

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Chaz Jenkins cover photography

CD 1 – PROLOGUE and ACT I**Total** 55'06"**PROLOGUE**

[1]	Peter Grimes! (<i>Hobson, Swallow, Peter, Sedley, Chorus, Ellen</i>)	7'21"	p32
[2]	The truth ... the pity ... (<i>Peter, Ellen</i>)	1'46'	p34

ACT I

[3]	Interlude I	3'49"	p34
[4]	Oh, hang at open doors ... (<i>Chorus, Auntie, Boles, Balstrode, Rector, Nieces, Sedley, Keene, Swallow, Peter</i>)	6'17"	p34
[5]	I'll give a hand ... (<i>Balstrode, Keene, Auntie, Boles, Hobson</i>)	4'47"	p35
[6]	Let her among you without fault (<i>Ellen, Hobson, Sedley, Keene</i>)	2'30"	p37
[7]	Look, the storm cone! (<i>Balstrode, Chorus, Keene, Boles</i>)	2'46"	p37
[8]	And do you prefer the storm ... ? (<i>Balstrode, Peter</i>)	6'15"	p38
[9]	Interlude II	4'33"	p39
[10]	Past time to close! (<i>Auntie, Sedley, Balstrode, Boles, Nieces, Chorus</i>)	4'23"	p39
[11]	We live and let live ... (<i>Balstrode, Chorus, Keene, Auntie, Sedley, Nieces</i>)	3'18"	p41
[12]	Now the Great Bear and Pleiades (<i>Peter, Chorus, Nieces, Boles, Balstrode, Auntie</i>)	4'08"	p42
[13]	For peace sake ... Old Joe has gone fishing ... (<i>Balstrode, Keene, Auntie, Peter, Hobson, Ellen, Boles, Nieces, Chorus</i>)	3'52"	p42

CD 2 – ACT II**Total** 48'32"**Act 2**

[1]	Interlude III	2'26"	p44
[2]	Glitter of waves (<i>Ellen</i>)	1'48"	p44
[3]	Now that the daylight fills the sky (<i>Chorus, Rector, Ellen, Peter</i>)	11'42"	p44

4	Fool to let it come to this! (<i>Auntie, Keene, Boles, Sedley, Balstrode, Chorus, Swallow, Nieces, Rector, Ellen</i>)	5'14"	p46
5	We planned that their lives ... (<i>Ellen, Rector, Sedley, Boles, Keene, Swallow, Nieces, Auntie, Balstrode, Hobson, Chorus</i>)	5'12'	p48
6	From the gutter ... (<i>Nieces, Auntie, Ellen</i>)	4'27"	p49
7	Interlude IV	5'22"	p49
8	Go there! (<i>Peter</i>)	3'04"	p49
9	In dreams I've built myself ... (<i>Peter, Boles, Rector, Swallow, Keene, Chorus</i>)	6'51"	p50
10	The whole affair gives Borough talk ... (<i>Swallow, Rector</i>)	2'23"	p51

CD 3 – ACT III

Total 39'05"

Act III

1	Interlude V	4'31"	p52
2	Assign your prettiness to me (<i>Swallow, Nieces, Keene, Sedley, Chorus, Rector, Ellen, Balstrode</i>)	8'49"	p52
3	Embroidery in childhood ... (<i>Ellen, Balstrode</i>)	5'02"	p54
4	Mr Swallow ... (<i>Sedley, Auntie, Swallow, Hobson, Chorus</i>)	5'31"	p54
5	Interlude VI	2'42"	p56
6	Grimes! ... Steady. There you are. Nearly Home. (<i>Chorus, Peter</i>)	5'07"	p56
7	Peter, we've come to take you home (<i>Ellen, Chorus, Peter, Balstrode</i>)	2'23"	p56
8	To those who pass the Borough sounds betray (<i>Chorus, Swallow, Auntie, Boles</i>)	4'58"	p57

TOTAL

142'43"

Benjamin Britten (1913–1976)
Peter Grimes, Op 33 (1945)

Throughout his life, Britten was deeply influenced by the sea. He was born in the East Anglian fishing port of Lowestoft, and after a brief three-year period spent in the USA during the early years of the Second World War, he felt increasingly drawn back to his home territory. He and his partner Peter Pears returned to England in April 1942, and eventually settled on the Suffolk coast at Aldeburgh – first in a converted windmill at Snape, a few miles inland on the Alde estuary, then at a house on Crag Path, facing the North Sea, and finally at the Red House. The unique atmosphere of this bleak, windswept coastline, and the quintessentially English, inward-looking nature of Aldeburgh's small, tightly-knit community, infused Britten's works from the start, none more so than his first full-scale opera.

The idea for *Peter Grimes* came to Britten in the summer of 1941, while he and Pears were in America. They read an article on the 19th-century Suffolk poet George Crabbe, whose poem *The Borough* described life in a small East Anglian fishing village (clearly based on Aldeburgh). One of the main characters is Peter Grimes, a psychotic fisherman who mistreats his boy apprentices and is cast out by a vengeful community. Britten – whose homosexuality put him at odds with the Establishment and encouraged him to empathize with other social outcasts and scapegoats – instantly realized 'where he belonged and what he lacked', and saw a potential opera in Crabbe's poem. Over the next nine months he and Pears worked on a draft synopsis in which Grimes is transformed from a straightforward villain into a much more complex personality – an 'outsider', driven to violence by his rejection from the community. By the time Pears and Britten returned to Britain, the plan was more or less complete. Montagu Slater agreed to write the libretto, and in February 1945 Britten announced that he had finished the score.

The premiere, at the newly re-opened Sadler's Wells Theatre in Islington on 7 June 1945, with a cast headed by Pears as Grimes and Joan Cross as Ellen Orford, was one of the most sensational operatic events of the century. Coinciding with a postwar sense of national renaissance, the work was ecstatically received, hailed as a masterpiece, and as the finest opera by a native Briton since Purcell. It inaugurated Britten's career as a major 20th-century opera composer, and put Britain firmly back on the international musical map.

Britten assimilated elements from masters such as Verdi, Richard Strauss, and even Alban Berg (notably in the *Wozzeck*-like use of fragmentary dance tunes as a background to the opening scene of Act III), and fashioned them into an original, distinctively English voice. *Peter Grimes* is essentially a traditional 'number opera', with clearly defined arias, ensembles and choruses, held together by a web of recurring musical motifs. There are three principal 'character groups': the tormented anti-hero and Ellen Orford, the gentle schoolmistress who loves him and hopes to save him from himself; the 'Borough' – the censorious, gossiping community of fisherfolk and petty-minded officials; and the North Sea itself, whose changing moods reflect the travails and emotions of the human protagonists. Grimes's status as an outsider is underlined by his inability to communicate: he has his own personal vision (eloquently stated in his Act I Scene 2 aria 'Now the Great Bear and Pleiades'), but his clumsy attempt to join his neighbours in the round 'Old Joe has gone fishing' simply destroys the pulse and throws everybody out. His mental disintegration and the extremes of his unstable personality are vividly portrayed in the second scene of Act II, which is virtually an extended solo scena. Ellen, although she can empathize with Grimes, is nonetheless a member of the Borough community: when the men set off in pursuit of the fisherman, she joins in a reflective quartet with three other women, meditating on life's vicissitudes. The townsfolk operate as a chorus, sardonic, vindictive and finally threatening.

The acts are linked by atmospheric orchestral interludes, later published independently as *Four Sea Interludes*. The first of these, 'Dawn', links the Prologue to Act I. Influenced by Debussy's *La mer*, its calm serenity, with high violins contrasted against gurgling woodwind and brass chorales, evokes the grey sea-mist of early morning, with the waves lapping against the shingle and fishing boats riding peacefully at anchor. Scene 2 of Act I, set in The Boar Inn, is underpinned by a ferocious storm. All fishing communities fear the unleashed power of wind and sea, and Britten's powerful evocation of howling winds and lashing waves (easily the equal of Wagner's *Flying Dutchman* Overture or the storm which opens Verdi's *Otello*) terrifyingly mirrors the emotional hostility generated within the closed doors of the village tavern.

Act II opens with another sea interlude, depicting a sunny Sunday morning, as church bells briskly summon the populace to worship. Britten shows himself a master of dramatic irony: against this deceptively peaceful, normal background, Ellen's fears of Grimes's latent violence are gradually confirmed, and the townsfolk emerge from their Sunday service to denounce him with chilling ferocity. The sinister orchestral passacaglia which prefaces the second scene of Act II, initiated by a solo viola, is based on their savage 'Grimes is at his exercise' motif. Britten reserves his masterstroke for the final scene, in which the orchestra is completely silent. The final tragedy is played out against the background of an intermittent fog-horn and the distant shouts of the search party. When the orchestra re-enters, it is with a reminiscence of the 'Dawn' music, as reports of a boat sinking off the coast are dismissed as 'one of those rumours'.

Programme note © Wendy Thompson

Synopsis

The setting is the Borough, a small fishing town on the East Anglian Coast of England. The time is about 1830.

Peter Grimes, a fisherman whose temperament and character have put him at odds with the village community around him, is suspected of brutal treatment towards his boy apprentices, one of whom has died at sea in tragic circumstances. He remains isolated by pride and ambition, concerned only that hard work may enable him to make enough money to put a stop to gossip, obtain the community's respect and perhaps marry the sympathetic widow and schoolmistress, Ellen Orford, who tries to understand his character and problems. She supports him with practical help when he obtains a new apprentice from the workhouse, but signs soon appear that Grimes's concern with material success has overcome his consideration for others. Another accident causes the new apprentice's death. The Borough is roused by vindictive anger to hound down the man who becomes mentally unbalanced by the way everything he does turns out for the worst. On the advice of Balstrode, a retired merchant skipper with a lifetime of seafaring experience, Grimes accepts a silent martyrdom. The Borough resumes its daily routine, already forgetful of its outcast.

PROLOGUE

A coroner's inquest in the Moot Hall

Fisherfolk and townspeople of the Borough are assembling for an inquest into the death at sea of William Spode, a boy apprenticed to the fisherman Peter Grimes whose personality and past conduct have set him apart from the community around him. When Swallow, a lawyer and mayor of the Borough takes his place as coroner, Grimes is called to the witness box by Hobson, the town carrier and constable. Swallow informs the court of the purpose of the inquest, asks if Grimes wishes to give evidence and, after the oath is administered, invites him to tell the court what happened in his own words. Grimes

needs constant prompting before the story is told: an attempt to sail to London with a catch too big to sell locally; the wind turning against him out of sight of land; the drinking water running out and the boy becoming ill and dying in the boat. Grimes also recalls the reactions of various other Borough worthies he met when, having thrown his catch overboard, he brought back the boy's body. The prologue introduces a number of other characters including Ellen Orford, the widow and schoolmistress who helped him. For lack of evidence a verdict of accident is recorded, but Swallow manages to imply that he considers Grimes at least partly to blame and advises him not to get another apprentice unless he also gets a woman to look after the boy. Grimes declares that this is what he intends – but not until he has stopped the gossip about him. When ordered to stand down he rages 'You wash your hands. The case goes on in people's minds'. He asks to stand trial to clear himself, but the court is abruptly cleared, leaving him alone with Ellen. She has recognised the touches of visionary spirit and traces of warmth under the fisherman's gruff exterior. Ellen talks of the possibility of a more hopeful future, while Grimes rails against his predicament before apparently responding to her offer of friendship.

Orchestral Interlude

The sea lapping the shingle in a calm grey dawn

ACT I

Scene 1 A fish market

A fish market is in progress by the shore, where the fisherfolk sing of their daily round and its vicissitudes. Auntie, landlady of The Boar Inn, invites the returning fishermen to slake their thirst, to the pious wrath of Bob Boles, a local Methodist. Captain Balstrode, a retired merchant skipper, notices the first signs of a possible storm out at sea: 'The wind is holding back the tide. If it veers round, watch for your lives'. Others come to market and greet each other: Mrs Sedley, a rich merchant's widow who thrives on gossip; the Rector; the apothecary, Ned Keene; and Auntie's two

nieces who are among the chief attractions at The Boar. Suddenly the voice of Grimes is heard calling for a hand with his boat. Boles announces the general refusal, but Balstrode goes to help and is joined by Keene. After the boat is secured, Keene tells Grimes that he has been to the workhouse and bought a new apprentice for him – all Grimes has to do is fetch the boy. Hobson is asked to collect the boy on his carrier's rounds. He at first makes excuses that the cart is full, but agrees when Ellen Orford, in the face of the crowd's resentment, volunteers to go with him and look after the boy. Mrs Sedley, concerned for her supply of medicines and laudanum, is told by Keene that Hobson is bringing fresh stocks and she can collect them in The Boar that evening. Balstrode spots the storm cone hoisted further along the shore, and calls a warning, which is taken up in chorus as the market is hastily stowed away, and preparations are made to secure lives and possessions against one more onslaught of wind and tide. Grimes remains detached from the rest, and Balstrode takes the chance to suggest he should leave the locality and venture further afield as a seaman. The fisherman replies that he is rooted here, and declares his ambition first to make enough money to give himself respectability in the eyes of the community, then to marry Ellen and set up house and shop. Balstrode advises him to ask Ellen to marry him now, but Grimes remains truculent, and Balstrode fears that worse may happen.

Orchestral Interlude

The storm breaks in its full fury

Scene 2 *Inside The Boar Inn later the same day*
Mrs Sedley arrives to wait for Keene, and Auntie sourly comments that she is not much of a customer for a publican. Balstrode enters, soon followed by Boles with news of flooding north of the town. The two frightened nieces run in to report that the wind has blown out their bedroom windows. Balstrode is boisterously scornful and Auntie resents some of his remarks. Boles tipsily chases one of the nieces and is restrained by Balstrode,

whose admonitions are taken up by the rest of the company. Ned Keene appears and tells of a landslide at the cliff behind Grimes's hut. When Mrs Sedley complains that the carrier is late, Keene tells her she will still have to wait if she wants her drugs. The next arrival is Grimes, drenched by the storm and wild-eyed. Mrs Sedley faints at the sight of him, and Auntie is persuaded to provide brandy when Keene assures her that he will charge Mrs Sedley for it later.

The presence of Grimes inhibits the general conviviality, but he is oblivious of this and begins musing aloud, expressing in 'Now the Great Bear and Pleiades' the loneliness of the fisherman who must often have only the stars for company, seemingly aware of his own tragedy in his final question: 'Who can turn skies back and begin again?' The people around declare he must be either mad or drunk and, when Boles begins to preach, a fight threatens. After Auntie's plea to keep the peace and not risk her being committed to the Assizes, the situation is calmed by Balstrode calling for a song. Keene starts a round which is taken up by the rest of the company. Even Grimes makes a halting attempt to join in and almost wrecks the round, but its momentum is regained until the sudden arrival of Ellen with the new apprentice. Hobson says a bridge has collapsed and they almost had to swim across. They are offered some refreshment, but Grimes will not give the boy time to get warm or dry before hustling him away, watched by a worried Ellen and followed by scornful comments from the crowd about the fisherman's 'home'.

ACT II

Orchestral Interlude

The sparkle of sunlight on waves, and the pealing of church bells

Scene 1 *A summer Sunday morning*

While the people in their Sunday best make their way to church, Ellen and the new apprentice (John) linger by the shore. She sings of the 'Glitter of waves and

glitter of sunlight', and decides to miss church and stay by the sea, asking the boy to talk to her while she knits. He says nothing, however, and Ellen speculates instead on his former life in the workhouse. She brings up the matter of Grimes's former apprentice, and assures the boy that they determined a fresh start would be made. But then – observed by Mrs Sedley hurrying past, late for church – Ellen notices a recent tear in the boy's coat, and a bruise on his neck and sadly comments, 'Well it's begun'. All this has the background accompaniment of the church service, through organ voluntary, opening hymn, prayers and responses, and as the congregation begins the Benedicite, Grimes enters and roughly calls the boy away. He has seen a shoal of fish, and angrily refuses Ellen's pleas to let the boy have his day of rest.

To the accompaniment of the Creed, Ellen now questions Grimes about the bruise, wonders if they were right to try a fresh start and, met only by his mounting anger, despairingly declares they have failed. Grimes cries out and strikes blindly at Ellen. He hurries the boy away. The quarrel has been observed by Auntie, Keene and Boles, who comment 'Grimes is at his exercise!' As the organ brings Matins to an end, the people make their way from church and become involved in the developing fracas around Ellen. Auntie tries to comfort Ellen but the people, now openly hostile, criticise Ellen for bothering with Grimes. The tension mounts to a mass cry of 'Murder!', whereupon the Rector suggests to Swallow that they should interrogate Grimes in his hut and asks Balstrode to come with them. Hobson is sent to fetch his drum and to summon men to follow them to the hut. They move off in procession and the women drift away in their wake, leaving Ellen, Auntie and the two nieces reflecting on women's relations with their menfolk.

Orchestral Interlude

A passacaglia – variations on an insistently repeated ground bass theme – the men of the Borough make their way to confront Grimes

Scene 2 *Peter Grimes's hut – a converted boat by a steep cliff*

Grimes roughly hustles the boy in and throws him his sea-going gear. He tells him to hurry and starts to bully him, but then restrains himself. He sees the sea boiling with the shoal he spotted and declares he will fish the sea dry to get enough money to earn the Borough's respect and enable him to marry Ellen. He again belabours the boy, then muses on his dreams for the future. The distant beat of Hobson's drum intrudes and, for a moment, Grimes sees the dead apprentice there with him, as he was in the boat on the day of the tragedy. He now becomes aware of the approaching procession from the town. Turning to the boy, he accuses him of telling tales to Ellen, orders him to gather up the fishing gear and sends him over the cliff on a rope, but while Grimes is distracted by the procession the boy plunges out of sight to his death. Grimes climbs down after him as the Rector and the others enter the hut. Finding it tidily kept and no sign of disturbance, the visitors decide to leave believing that the affair can be forgotten. Balstrode lingers, doubtful, peers down to where Grimes and the boy descended, obviously sees something has happened below and starts to climb down himself.

ACT III

Orchestral Interlude

Calm summer moonlight

An evening dance and after

Against a background of dancing and revelry next to the inn, Auntie's nieces are seeking to escape some unwelcome male attention. They combine to evade Swallow and, after he leaves, one of them flirts with Keene. Mrs Sedley pounces on Keene, tells him that Grimes and his apprentice have not been seen for two days and that she has evidence of murder. Keene declines to take up her suspicions and escapes to The Boar. A hornpipe is played by the dance band, while one of the fishermen begins a clog dance, and some older citizens decide to make for home; they include

the Rector, who joins the chorus of 'Goodnight'. Mrs Sedley stays behind as Ellen comes to look for Balstrode. They meet, and Ellen asks if Grimes's boat is in. Balstrode answers that it has been in for over an hour but there is no sign of Grimes. Ellen shows him the boy's jersey she has found on the shore. She feels they can do no more to help Grimes, but Balstrode says they must not desert him and they agree to wait until he returns.

As the dance band begins a galop, Mrs Sedley calls loudly for Swallow and tells him that Grimes's boat is in. The mayor in turn summons Hobson and orders him, as Borough constable, to take what help he needs to find Grimes. Hobson summons the rest of the men and, with mounting public anger voiced in threatening chorus, 'Him who despises us, we'll destroy', the crowd cry the victim's name in unison and disperse to hunt him down.

Orchestral Interlude

Wisp of sea mist cloud the scene

Grimes enters in an unbalanced frame of mind. He sings distractedly of what he has suffered, the music recalling particular episodes of his deranged thoughts. Ellen and Balstrode find him and realise what has happened. Balstrode, knowing that Grimes must sacrifice himself, tells the fisherman what he must do, and goes to lend a last hand with the boat.

Dawn breaks, and the Borough prepares its daily routine to the strains of the first chorus. Swallow mentions a coastguard report that a boat is sinking far out to sea, but beyond reach. The matter arouses little comment, and the Borough continues its life indifferent to what has happened.

Synopsis © Noël Goodwin

Benjamin Britten (1913–1976)

Britten received his first piano lessons from his mother, who encouraged her son's earliest efforts at composition. In 1924 he heard Frank Bridge's tone-poem *The Sea* and began to study composition with him three years later. In 1930 he gained a scholarship to the Royal College of Music, where he studied composition with John Ireland and piano with Arthur Benjamin. Britten attracted wide attention when he conducted the premiere of his *Simple Symphony* in 1934. He worked for the GPO Film Unit and various theatre companies, collaborating with such writers as WH Auden and Christopher Isherwood. His lifelong relationship and working partnership with Peter Pears developed in the late 1930s. At the beginning of the Second World War, Britten and Pears remained in the USA; on their return, they registered as conscientious objectors and were exempted from military service. The first performance of the opera *Peter Grimes* in 1945 opened the way for a series of magnificent stage works mainly conceived for the English Opera Group. In June 1948 Britten founded the Aldeburgh Festival of Music and the Arts, for which he subsequently wrote many new works. By the mid-1950s he was generally regarded as the leading British composer, helped by the international success of operas such as *Albert Herring*, *Billy Budd* and *The Turn of the Screw*. One of his greatest masterpieces, the *War Requiem*, was first performed on 30 May 1962 for the festival of consecration of St Michael's Cathedral, Coventry, its anti-war message reflecting the composer's pacifist beliefs. A remarkably prolific composer, Britten completed works in almost every genre and for a wide range of musical abilities, from those of schoolchildren and amateur singers to such artists as Mstislav Rostropovich, Julian Bream and Peter Pears.

Profile © Andrew Stewart

Benjamin Britten (1913–1976)
Peter Grimes, Op 33 (1945)

Tout au long de sa vie, Britten fut profondément influencé par la mer. Né dans un petit port de pêche d'Est-Anglie, Lowestoft, il fit un séjour de trois ans aux États-Unis durant les premières années de la Seconde Guerre mondiale, après quoi il se sentit irrésistiblement poussé à revenir sur ses terres natales. Britten et son compagnon, Peter Pears rentrèrent en Angleterre en avril 1942, s'installant finalement sur la côte du Suffolk, à Aldeburgh – tout d'abord dans un moulin à vent réaménagé à Snape, à quelques kilomètres à l'intérieur des terres sur l'estuaire de l'Alde, puis dans une maison sur le sentier des douaniers, face à la mer du Nord, et enfin à la Maison rouge. L'atmosphère unique de cette côte morne, balayée par le vent, et la nature fondamentalement anglaise, repliée sur elle-même de la petite communauté très soudée d'Aldeburgh imprègnèrent dès le commencement les œuvres de Britten, avec un sommet dans ce qui constitua son premier véritable opéra.

L'idée de *Peter Grimes* vint à Britten au cours de l'été 1941, tandis que Pears et lui se trouvaient en Amérique. Ils lurent un article sur un poète du XIX^e siècle originaire du Suffolk, George Crabbe, dont le poème *The Borough* (*Le Bourg*) décrivait la vie dans un petit village de pêcheurs d'Est-Anglie (clairement inspiré par Aldeburgh). L'un des personnages principaux est Peter Grimes, un pêcheur psychotique qui maltraite ses mousses et se fait rejeter par une communauté vindicative. Britten – que son homosexualité avait mis à l'écart de l'establishment, l'encourageant à une certaine compassion envers d'autres parias et boucs émissaires de la société – comprit immédiatement « quelle était sa place et ce qui lui manquait », et vit dans le poème de Crabbe un opéra potentiel. Dans les neuf mois qui suivirent, Pears et lui travaillèrent à l'esquisse d'un synopsis dans lequel Grimes se transforma, de simple voyou, en une personnalité beaucoup plus complexe : un exclu poussé à la violence par le fait que la communauté

l'ait rejeté. À l'époque où Pears et Britten regagnèrent la Grande-Bretagne, le déroulement était plus ou moins définitif. Montagu Slater accepta de rédiger le livret et, en février 1945, Britten annonça que la partition était achevée.

La création eut lieu le 7 juin 1945 au Sadler's Wells Theatre d'Islington, qui venait de rouvrir, avec Pears en Grimes et Joan Cross en Ellen Orford. Ce fut l'un des événements lyriques les plus sensationnels du siècle. Coïncidant avec le sentiment de renaissance nationale d'après guerre, l'ouvrage fut accueilli triomphalement, salué comme un chef-d'œuvre et comme le plus bel opéra composé par un Britannique de souche depuis Purcell. Britten fut propulsé au rang de l'un des compositeurs lyriques majeurs du XX^e siècle, et la Grande-Bretagne faisait un retour éclatant sur la carte musicale internationale.

Britten assimila des éléments issus de maîtres comme Verdi, Richard Strauss et même Alban Berg (notamment l'utilisation de danses fragmentaires comme arrière-plan dans la première scène de l'acte III, à la manière de *Wozzeck*), et les fondaient en un langage original et typiquement anglais. Pour l'essentiel, *Peter Grimes* se comporte comme le traditionnel « opéra à numéros », avec des airs, des ensembles et des chœurs clairement délimités, reliés ensemble par un réseau de motifs musicaux récurrents. On peut définir trois grands « groupes de personnages » : le rôle titre, anti-héros tourmenté, et Ellen Orford, la douce maîtresse d'école qui l'aime et espère le sauver de lui-même ; le « Bourg » – communauté de pêcheurs et de notables mesquins prompt à la censure et aux ragots ; et la mer du Nord elle-même, dont les humeurs changeantes reflètent les douleurs et les émotions des personnages humains. Le statut de paria de Grimes est souligné par son incapacité à communiquer : il possède sa propre vision des choses (présentée avec éloquence dans son air à la scène 1 de l'acte I « Now the Great Bear and Pleiades »), mais lorsqu'il tente maladroitement de se joindre à ses voisins dans la ronde « Old Joe has

gone fishing », son intervention jette un froid et tout le monde s'en va. La désintégration de son esprit et les extrêmes atteints par sa personnalité instable sont peints avec vivacité dans la seconde scène de l'acte II, qui est en quelque sorte une longue scène solo. Bien qu'elle réussisse à compatir avec Grimes, Ellen n'en est pas moins un membre de la communauté du Bourg : lorsque les hommes partent à la poursuite du pêcheur, elle se joint aux réflexions de trois autres femmes dans un quatuor méditant sur les vicissitudes de la vie. La foule des habitants fait office de chœur, sardonique, vindicatif et enfin menaçant.

Les actes sont reliés entre eux par des interludes symphoniques brossant l'atmosphère, que Britten publia indépendamment par la suite sous le titre de *Four Sea Interludes (Quatre Interludes marins)*. Le premier d'entre eux, « Dawn » (Aurore), relie le prologue à l'acte I. Influencé par *La Mer* de Debussy, ce morceau à la calme sérénité évoque, avec ses violons dans l'aigu contrastant avec le gargouillement des vents et les chorals de cuivres, la brume marine du petit matin, les vagues clapotant sur les galets et les bateaux de pêche oscillant tranquillement au bout de leur ancrage. La scène 2 de l'acte I, située dans l'auberge du Sanglier, est sous-tendue par une tempête furieuse. Toute l'assemblée des pêcheurs et des marins tremble devant la force incontrôlable du vent et de la mer, et l'évocation puissante faite par Britten des vents hurlants et des vagues qui s'entrechoquent (que l'on peut aisément comparer à l'*ouverture du Vaisseau fantôme* de Wagner ou à la tempête qui ouvre l'*Otello* de Verdi) reflète d'une manière terrifiante l'hostilité qui s'installe dans le huis clos de l'auberge du village.

L'acte II débute par un autre interlude marin, peignant un dimanche matin ensoleillé, tandis que les cloches de l'église appellent vivement la population à l'office. Britten se montre alors comme un maître de l'ironie dramatique : sur cet arrière-fond à la tranquillité trompeuse, les craintes d'Ellen concernant la violence

latente de Grimes sont progressivement confirmées, et les habitants, à la sortie de l'office dominical, dénoncent ses agissements avec une férocité effrayante. La sinistre passacaille orchestrale qui prélude à la seconde scène de l'acte II, entonné par l'alto solo, repose sur un motif sauvage énoncé auparavant, « Grimes est à l'œuvre ! » Britten garde son coup de maître pour la scène finale, dans laquelle l'orchestre reste complètement silencieux. La tragédie finale se déroule sur le fond sonore d'une corne de brume intermittente et des cris accompagnant la traque. Quand l'orchestre se manifeste de nouveau, c'est sur une réminiscence de la musique de « l'Aurore », tandis que la nouvelle d'un bateau coulant est balayée d'un revers de manche – c'est encore « l'une de ces rumeurs ».

Notes de programme© Wendy Thompson

Traduction : Claire Delamarche

Synopsis

La scène se déroule vers 1839 au Bourg, petite ville sur la côte d'Est-Anglie, en Angleterre.

Peter Grimes, un pêcheur que son tempérament et son caractère ont placé à l'écart de la communauté villageoise, est soupçonné de traitement brutal à l'égard de ses mousses, dont l'un est mort en mer dans des circonstances tragiques. Orgueilleux et ambitieux, il vit isolé, et sa seule préoccupation est de travailler dur afin de gagner assez d'argent pour faire taire les commérages, gagner le respect de la communauté et peut-être épouser la charmante maîtresse d'école, la veuve Ellen Orford, qui tente de comprendre son caractère et ses problèmes. Elle lui manifeste son soutien en l'aidant matériellement lorsqu'il obtient un nouveau mousse de l'orphelinat. Mais bientôt se manifestent des signes indiquant que, chez Grimes, l'obsession du succès matériel prend le pas sur le souci de son prochain. Un autre accident entraîne la mort du nouvel apprenti. Une colère vengeresse s'empare du Bourg, qui veut chasser Grimes ; la santé mentale de celui-ci commence à vaciller, car tout ce qu'il entreprend tourne à la catastrophe. Sur le conseil de Balstrode, capitaine de marine marchande à la retraite, qui s'appuie sur l'expérience de toute une vie de marin, Grimes accepte de marcher en silence vers son sacrifice. Le Bourg retourne à sa routine quotidienne : il a déjà oublié le sort de celui dont il a fait un paria.

PROLOGUE

L'Enquête du coroner au Moot Hall

Les pêcheurs et les citadins du Bourg se rassemblent pour enquêter sur la mort en mer de William Spode, jeune mousse du pêcheur Peter Grimes, que sa personnalité et sa conduite passée ont mis au ban de la communauté. Swallow, homme de loi et maire du Bourg, prend place en tant que coroner, et Grimes est appelé dans le box des témoins par Hobson, voiturier public et agent de police. Swallow informe la cour du but de l'enquête. Il demande à Grimes s'il veut

témoigner et, après la prestation de serment, l'invite à raconter à la cour par lui-même ce qui s'est passé. Il faut sans cesse exhorter Grimes à poursuivre le récit : la tentative de gagner Londres à la voile avec une prise trop grosse pour être vendue sur place ; le vent qui se retourne contre lui et l'éloigne de la côte ; l'eau potable qui vient à manquer, le garçon qui tombe malade et meurt sur le bateau. Grimes rappelle également la réaction de différents autres notables du Bourg qu'il rencontra lorsque, ayant jeté sa prise par-dessus bord, il ramena le corps du mousse. Le prologue présente un certain nombre d'autres personnages, notamment la veuve Ellen Orford, maîtresse d'école, qui lui vient en aide. Par manque de preuves, le verdict conclut à un accident. Swallow réussit toutefois à sous-entendre que Grimes est à blâmer au moins en partie ; il lui conseille de ne plus accueillir de mousse tant qu'il ne prendra pas également une femme pour veiller sur le garçon. Grimes déclare que telle est son intention – mais pas avant d'avoir mis un terme aux ragots sur son compte. Lorsqu'on lui demande de descendre, il fulmine : « Vous vous en lavez les mains. L'affaire suit son cours dans l'esprit des gens. » Il demande un procès afin d'être lavé de tout soupçon, mais la cour est brutalement renvoyée, et il reste seul avec Ellen. Sous l'apparence bourru du pêcheur, elle a reconnu les signes d'un esprit visionnaire et de la chaleur humaine. Elle évoque la possibilité d'un futur plus riant ; Grimes se plaint de se trouver dans une situation difficile, puis semble accepter l'amitié que lui offre Ellen.

Interlude symphonique

La mer clapotant sur les galets, par une aurore calme et pâle

ACTE I

Scène 1 *Un marché au poisson*

Un marché au poisson se déroule en bord de mer, et les pêcheurs y chantent leur périple quotidien et ses vicissitudes. Auntie, propriétaire de l'auberge The Boar (Au Sanglier), invite les pêcheurs de retour à

venir étancher leur soif, malgré les pieuses réprimandes de Bob Boles, un méthodiste local. Balstrode, capitaine de marine marchande à la retraite, remarque quelques signes avant-coureurs d'une possible tempête en mer : « Le vent fait reculer la marée. S'il commence à tourner, prenez garde à vos vies. » D'autres personnes arrivent au marché et tous se saluent : Mrs Sedley, veuve d'un riche commerçant, qui se repaît de commérages ; le Révérend ; l'apothicaire, Ned Keene ; et les deux nièces d'Auntie, qui comptent parmi les attractions majeures de l'auberge. On entend soudain la voix de Grimes : il demande des bras pour l'aider à haler son bateau. Boles lui fait savoir que tout le monde refuse, mais Balstrode va l'aider, rejoint par Keene. Une fois le bateau en sécurité, Keene dit à Grimes qu'il s'est rendu à l'orphelinat et lui a acheté un nouveau moussu – Grimes n'a plus qu'à aller chercher le jeune garçon. Il demande à Hobson de passer le prendre à l'occasion d'une de ses tournées. Hobson prétexte tout d'abord que la charrette est pleine, mais il accepte lorsque Ellen Orford se porte volontaire, malgré l'hostilité de l'assemblée, pour l'accompagner et veiller sur l'enfant. Mrs Sedley, dont la préoccupation est d'être fournie en remèdes et en laudanum, apprend par Keene que Hobson va lui apporter de nouvelles réserves et qu'elle pourra les récupérer le soir même à l'auberge. Balstrode remarque que le cœur de la tempête s'approche de la côte, et il lance un appel à la vigilance. Tout le monde lui fait écho dans un chœur ; le marché se vide rapidement et l'on fait en sorte de protéger les biens et les personnes contre cette nouvelle attaque du vent et de la mer. Grimes demeure à l'écart de ce mouvement, et Balstrode en profite pour lui suggérer de quitter la ville et de tenter sa chance au loin comme marin. Le pêcheur lui rétorque que c'est ici que se trouvent ses racines et que son ambition première est de gagner suffisamment d'argent pour acquérir une respectabilité aux yeux de la communauté, puis épouser Ellen, fonder un foyer et ouvrir un commerce. Balstrode lui conseille de demander dès à présent la main d'Ellen mais, comme Grimes reste agressif, il pense désormais que le pire est à craindre.

Interlude symphonique

La tempête éclate dans toute sa fureur

Scène 2 A l'intérieur de l'auberge du Sanglier, plus tard dans la même journée

Mrs Sedley vient attendre Keene, et Auntie fait remarquer avec aigreur que cette femme n'est pas vraiment une bonne cliente pour l'auberge. Balstrode fait son entrée, bientôt suivi par Boles, qui apporte la nouvelle d'une inondation au nord de la ville. Les deux nièces font irruption ; effrayées, elles racontent que le vent a soufflé les fenêtres de leur chambre à coucher. Balstrode réagit avec le plus grand mépris et Auntie s'offusque de certaines de ses remarques. Un peu éméché, Boles tente de séduire une des nièces et est mis en garde par Balstrode, dont les remontrances s'adressent à toute l'assemblée. Ned Keene apparaît ; il raconte que le rocher derrière la cabane de Grimes a subi un glissement de terrain. Tandis que Mrs Sedley se plaint du retard du voiturier, Keene lui dit qu'elle devra encore patienter si elle veut ses médicaments. Grimes entre à son tour, trempé par la tempête et dans un état d'agitation extrême. A sa vue, Mrs Sedley s'évanouit. Auntie se laisse persuader de lui faire boire de l'eau-de-vie lorsque Keene lui assure qu'il fera payer la note plus tard à Mrs Sedley.

La présence de Grimes jette un froid parmi l'assemblée, mais il n'en a cure et commence à méditer à voix haute, exprimant dans « Now the Great Bear et Pleiades » la solitude du pêcheur qui n'a souvent que les étoiles pour compagnes ; manifestement conscient de sa propre tragédie, il termine par cette question : « Qui peut inverser le cours des étoiles et recommencer à zéro ? » Les gens autour de lui déclarent qu'il est soit fou, soit ivre et, lorsque Boles commence à prêcher, une bagarre menace d'éclater. Auntie appelle tout le monde au calme, afin de ne pas risquer de se retrouver aux assises. Balstrode ramène la sérénité en lançant l'idée d'une chanson. Keene entonne une ronde, reprise par toute l'assemblée. Grimes essaye de s'y joindre, non sans hésitation, et il n'est

pas loin de tout ruiner. Mais le chœur retrouve son élan jusqu'à l'entrée soudaine d'Ellen et du nouveau mousse. Hobson annonce que le pont s'est effondré et qu'ils ont presque dû traverser à la nage. On leur offre des rafraîchissements. Grimes refuse néanmoins d'accorder à l'enfant le temps de se réchauffer ou de se sécher. Il le jette dehors, sous le regard inquiet d'Ellen et les commentaires méprisants de la foule à propos du « foyer » du pêcheur.

ACTE II

Interlude symphonique

Le soleil fait scintiller les vagues, et l'on entend les cloches sonner

Scène 1 *Un dimanche matin d'été*

Tandis que les gens endimanchés se dirigent vers l'église, Ellen et le nouveau mousse (John) s'attardent au bord de la mer. S'émerveillant devant le scintillement des vagues et des rayons du soleil (« Glitter of waves and glitter of sunlight »), elle décide de ne pas assister à l'office et demande au garçon de lui faire la conversation pendant qu'elle tricote. Mais il reste muet, et Ellen remplit le silence en faisant des spéculations sur la vie qu'il menait à l'orphelinat. Elle évoque l'affaire du précédent mousse et assure à l'enfant qu'elle et Grimes ont décidé de prendre un nouveau départ. Sous les yeux de Mrs Sedley, qui se hâte vers l'église car elle est en retard, Ellen remarque alors un accroc récent dans le manteau de John, une meurtrissure à son coup ; elle fait ce triste commentaire : « Eh bien ! nous y sommes. » La scène se déroule avec, en arrière-fond, l'office religieux : morceau d'orgue, hymne introductif, prières et répons. Au moment où l'assemblée entonne le béneдикte, Grimes fait irruption et appelle brutalement le mousse. Il a repéré un banc de poissons et repousse avec colère les supplications d'Ellen, qui lui demande de laisser le garçon profiter de son jour de repos.

Sur fond de Credo, Ellen interroge à présent Grimes à propos de l'ecchymose, se demande s'ils avaient raison d'essayer de prendre un nouveau départ et, ne

rencontrant que sa colère croissante, déclare d'une voix désespérée qu'ils ont échoué. Grimes se met à hurler et à frapper aveuglément Ellen. Il emmène le garçon à toute hâte. Auntie, Keene et Boles, qui ont observé la querelle, font ce commentaire : « Grimes est à l'œuvre ! » Tandis que l'orgue annonce la fin de l'office, les gens sortent de l'église et se mêlent au tohu-bohu qui naît autour d'Ellen. Auntie essaye de la reconforter mais les gens, qui dévoilent à présent une franche hostilité, la critique d'être ainsi que Grimes la source de problèmes. La tension monte jusqu'au cri massif de « A mort ! ». Le Révérend suggère à Swallow d'aller interroger Grimes dans sa cabane et demande à Balstrode de les accompagner. On envoie Hobson chercher son tambour afin d'ameuter des hommes pour les suivre jusqu'à la cabane. La procession se met en marche et les femmes suivent nonchalamment leurs pas, laissant Ellen, Auntie et les deux nièces à leurs réflexions sur les femmes et leurs relations avec leurs maris.

Interlude symphonique

Passacaille (variations sur une basse obstinée répétée avec insistance) : les hommes du Bourg vont affronter Grimes chez lui

Scène 2 *La cabane de Peter Grimes (un bateau reconverti au sommet d'une falaise abrupte)*

Grimes pousse brutalement le mousse à l'intérieur et lui jette sa tenue de mer. Il lui dit de se dépêcher et commence à le menacer, mais finalement se retient. Voyant le banc qu'il a repéré faire bouillonner les flots, il déclare qu'il va pêcher jusqu'à ce que la mer soit asséchée, afin de gagner suffisamment d'argent pour conquérir l'estime du Bourg et être en mesure d'épouser Ellen. Il recommence à maltraiter l'enfant, puis se laisse aller à ses rêveries sur l'avenir. On entend soudain les roulements du tambour de Hobson et, pendant un instant, Grimes a la vision du mousse mort à ses côtés, comme ce fut le cas sur le bateau le jour de la tragédie. Il prend conscience

que la procession s'approche. Se tournant vers John, il l'accuse d'avoir raconté des histoires à Ellen, lui ordonne de rassembler le matériel de pêche et de descendre la falaise au bout d'une corde. Mais Grimes est distrait par l'arrivée des hommes et l'enfant s'écrase, mort, au pied du rocher. Grimes est en train de descendre à son tour lorsque le Révérend et les autres hommes pénètrent dans la hutte. Comme ils la trouvent rangée avec soin et n'y découvrent aucun signe suspect, les visiteurs décident de s'en retourner, croyant l'affaire close. Balstrode s'attarde un peu, en proie au doute ; il regarde en bas vers l'endroit où Grimes et le mousse sont descendus et, se rendant compte que quelque chose a manifestement eut lieu, descend à son tour la falaise.

ACT III

Interlude symphonique

Calmé clair de lune d'été

Une soirée de danse et ce qui suit

Malgré l'ambiance de danse et de fête aux portes de l'auberge, les nièces d'Auntie n'ont qu'une idée : échapper à l'attention que leur prodigue un importun. Elle réussissent à fausser compagnie à Swallow et, après son départ, l'une d'elle badine avec Keene. Mrs Sedley bondit sur celui-ci et lui apprend que Grimes et son mousse sont invisibles depuis deux jours ; pour elle, il est évident qu'un meurtre a été commis. Keene refuse d'abonder dans le sens de ses soupçons et s'éclipse à l'intérieur de l'auberge. Une troupe de danseurs se lance dans un hornpipe. L'un des pêcheurs commence une danse en sabots et quelques citoyens âgés décident de rentrer chez eux. Parmi eux se trouve le Révérend, qui se joint au chœur des « Bonne nuit ». Mrs Sedley reste sur place. Ellen arrive, à la recherche de Balstrode. Elle le trouve et lui demande si le bateau de Grimes est à quai. Balstrode répond qu'il est rentré depuis plus d'une heure mais que l'on n'a aucune trace de son propriétaire. Ellen lui montre le tricot de l'enfant, qu'elle a trouvé sur la plage. Elle pense qu'il n'y a plus

rien à faire pour aider Grimes, mais Balstrode répond qu'il ne faut pas l'abandonner et ils tombent d'accord pour attendre son retour.

Tandis que la troupe de danseurs commence un galop, Mrs Sedley appelle Swallow d'une voix forte et lui dit que le bateau de Grimes est à quai. A son tour, le maire interpelle Hobson et lui ordonne, en tant qu'agent de police municipal, de trouver de l'aide pour localiser Grimes. Hobson fait appel à tous les hommes restants et, tandis que la colère croissante de l'assemblée se traduit par un chœur menaçant, « Him who despises us, we'll destroy », la foule crie le nom de la victime à l'unisson et se disperse pour le traquer.

Interlude symphonique

Des nappes de brume marine couvrent la scène

Grimes entre, en proie à une agitation extrême. Il chante complètement affolé tout ce qu'il a enduré, et la musique évoque quelques épisodes particuliers de ses pensées insensées. Ellen et Balstrode le trouvent et comprennent ce qui est arrivé. Conscient du fait que Grimes doit à présent se sacrifier, Balstrode lui dit quelle conduite adopter et va lui donner un dernier coup de main pour mettre son bateau à la mer.

L'aurore se lève, et le Bourg reprend ses activités quotidiennes aux accents d'un premier chœur. Swallow parle d'un rapport de garde-côte selon lequel un bateau serait en train de sombrer au large, hors de portée. L'affaire ne suscite guère de commentaires et le Bourg reprend son train-train, indifférent à l'événement.

Synopsis © Noël Goodwin

Traduction : Claire Delamarche

Benjamin Britten (1913–1976)

C'est la mère de Britten qui lui donna ses premières leçons de piano et encouragea ses toutes premières tentatives en matière de composition. En 1924, il entendit le poème symphonique *The Sea* (La Mer) de Frank Bridge et, trois ans plus tard, il devenait son élève de composition. En 1930, une bourse lui ouvrit les portes du Royal College of Music, où il étudia la composition avec John Ireland et le piano avec Arthur Benjamin. Britten attira une large attention en dirigeant la création de sa *Simple Symphony* en 1934. Il travailla pour la GPO Film Unit et diverses troupes de théâtre, collaborant avec des écrivains comme W. H. Auden et Christopher Isherwood. La relation personnelle et professionnelle qui l'unit tout au long de sa vie à Peter Pears prit son essor à la fin des années 1930. Au début de la Seconde Guerre mondiale, Britten et Pears s'établirent aux États-Unis ; à leur retour, ils furent inscrits comme objecteurs de conscience et exemptés de service militaire. La création de l'opéra *Peter Grimes*, en 1945, ouvrit la voie à une série d'ouvrages scéniques magnifiques, conçus pour la plupart à l'intention de l'English Opera Group. En juin 1948, Britten fonda le Festival de musique et d'arts d'Aldeburgh, pour lequel il écrivit par la suite de nombreuses œuvres nouvelles. Au milieu des années 1950, on le considérait généralement comme le chef de file des compositeurs britanniques, position consolidée par le succès international d'opéras comme *Albert Herring*, *Billy Budd* ou *The Turn of the Screw* (Le Tour d'écrou). L'un de ses plus grands chefs-d'œuvre, le *War Requiem*, fut créé le 30 mai 1962 lors des festivités accompagnant la consécration de la cathédrale St. Michael de Coventry ; son message anti-guerre reflétait les convictions pacifistes de son auteur. Compositeur remarquablement prolifique, Britten s'illustra dans presque tous les genres et écrivit pour un large éventail de talents musicaux, depuis les écoliers et les chanteurs amateurs jusqu'à des artistes comme Mstislav Rostropovitch, Julian Bream ou Peter Pears.

Portrait © Andrew Stewart

Traduction : Claire Delamarche

Benjamin Britten (1913–1976)
Peter Grimes, Op 33 (1945)

Das Meer beeinflusste Benjamin Britten ein ganzes Leben lang. Er wurde im Fischerort Lowestoft in East Anglia geboren. Nach seinem dreijährigen Aufenthalt in den USA zu Beginn des II. Weltkriegs fühlte er sich zunehmend wieder zu seiner Heimatgegend zurückgezogen. Er und sein Partner Peter Pears kehrten im April 1942 nach England zurück und ließen sich schließlich an der Küste von Suffolk bei Aldeburgh nieder – zuerst in einer umgebauten Windmühle in der Nähe von Snape, ein paar Kilometer landeinwärts entlang der Alde-Mündung, dann in einem Haus am Crag Path mit Blick auf die Nordsee, und am Ende im Red House. Die einzigartige Atmosphäre dieses kargen, vom Wind geprägten Küstenstreifens und die typisch englische introvertierte Art von Aldeburghs kleiner, eng verflochtener Gemeinde fanden in Britzens Werken von Anfang an ihren Niederschlag, und in keinem so stark wie in seiner ersten abend füllenden Oper.

Britten hatte die Idee für *Peter Grimes* im Sommer des Jahres 1941, als er und Pears in Amerika weilten. Sie lasen einen Artikel über den im 19. Jahrhundert in Suffolk lebenden Dichter George Crabbe, dessen Verserzählung *The Borough* das Leben in einem kleinen Fischerort in East Anglia (eindeutig auf Aldeburgh Bezug nehmend) beschreibt. Eine der Hauptpersonen ist Peter Grimes, ein psychisch kranker Fischer, der seine als Hilfskräfte angestellten Jungen misshandelt und von einer rachesüchtigen Gemeinde ausgestoßen wird. Britten – der durch seine Homosexualität außerhalb der konventionellen Gesellschaft stand und dadurch Verständnis für andere von der Gesellschaft Ausgestoßene oder Beschuldigte hatte – erkannte sofort, „wo er hingehörte und was ihm fehlte“. In Crabbes Verserzählung sah er eine potentielle Oper. In den folgenden neun Monaten arbeiteten er und Pears an einem Entwurf für eine Opernhandlung, in der Grimes von einem einfachen Schurken in eine erheblich komplexere Persönlichkeit verwandelt

wurde – in einen Außenseiter, der aufgrund der Ablehnung durch die Gemeinde zur Gewalt getrieben wird. Als Pears und Britten nach Großbritannien zurückkehrten, war der Plan so gut wie fertig. Montagu Slater erklärte sich bereit, das Libretto zu schreiben, und im Februar 1945 ließ Britten wissen, dass er die Partitur abgeschlossen hatte.

Die Uraufführung im neu eröffneten Sadler's Wells Theatre in Islington/ London am 7. Juni 1945 mit einer von Peter Pears als Grimes und Joan Cross als Ellen Orford angeführten Besetzung war eines der sensationellsten Opernereignisse des Jahrhunderts. Eingebettet in die Nachkriegseuphorie über Großbritanniens erfolgreichen Widerstand wurde das Werk ekstatisch aufgenommen, als Meisterwerk verkündet und zur besten Oper eines gebürtigen Briten seit Purcell erklärt. Mit dieser Oper begann Britzens Laufbahn als entscheidender Opernkomponist des 20. Jahrhunderts, und dank ihres Erfolgs verschaffte sich Britten wieder einen festen Platz in der internationalen Musikszene.

Britten verarbeitete Elemente von solchen Meistern wie Giuseppe Verdi, Richard Strauss und sogar Alban Berg (besonders in dem an *Wozzeck* erinnernden Einsatz von Tanzliedfragmenten als Hintergrund-musik zum ersten Bild des III. Akts) und verwebte sie zu einer originellen, typisch englischen Musik-sprache. Peter Grimes ist im Grunde eine traditionelle Nummernoper mit klar abgegrenzten Arien, Ensembles und Chören, die von einem Netz wiederkehrender musikalischer Motive zusammen-gehalten werden. Man findet unter den Charakteren drei Hauptgruppen: der geplagte Antiheld und die sanfte Gemeindelehrerin Ellen Orford, die ihn liebt und hofft, ihn vor sich selbst zu retten; die Stadt Borough – eine kitzelnde, klatschende Gemeinde aus Fischern und kleingeistigen Beamten; und die Nordsee selbst, deren wechselnde Stimmungen die Sorgen und Gefühle der beteiligten Menschen widerspiegeln. Grimes' Außenseiterstellung wird von seinen Kommunikationsschwierigkeiten noch

verschlimmert: er hat seinen eigenen Zukunftsplan (überzeugend in seiner Arie aus dem zweiten Bild des I. Akts „Now the Great Bear and Pleiades“ [Nun der große Wagen und das Siebengestirn] dargelegt). Aber bei seinem unbeholfenen Versuch, in den neben ihm gesungenen Kanon „Old Joe has gone fishing“ [Der alte Joe ist fischen gegangen] einzustimmen, zerstört er schlicht das Rhythmusgefühl und wirft alle aus dem Takt. Sein psychischer Abbau und die Extreme seiner labilen Persönlichkeit werden im zweiten Bild des II. Akts anschaulich dargestellt. Eigentlich ist dieses Bild ein ausgedehnter Monolog. Obwohl Ellen Verständnis für Grimes aufbringen kann, ist sie dennoch ein Gemeindemitglied von Borough: Als die Männer sich aufmachen, um den Fischer zur Rechenschaft zu ziehen, stimmt sie zusammen mit drei anderen Frauen ein nachdenkliches Quartett an, in dem sie über die Schicksals-schläge des Lebens sinnieren. Die Bürger der Stadt agieren als Chor: sardonisch, rachesüchtig und schließlich drohend.

Die Akte werden durch bildhafte, später gesondert als Four Sea Interludes veröffentlichte Orchesterzwischenspiele verbunden. Das erste dieser Zwischenspiele „Dawn“ [Sonnenaufgang] verbindet den Prolog mit dem I. Akt. Es zeigt Einflüsse von Debussys *La mer*. Hier stehen sich hohe Violinen mit Choralen gegenüber, die von gluckenden Holz- und Blechbläsern gespielt werden. So entsteht bei ruhiger Gelassenheit der Eindruck von grauem Dunstschleier über dem Meer früh am Morgen, während die Wellen über den Kiesstrand spülen und die im Hafen fest verankerten Fischerboote der friedlichen Wellenbewegung folgen. Das zweite, sich im Krug „Zum Hai“ abspielende Bild des I. Akts wird von einem schrecklichen Sturm vorbereitet. Alle Fischergemeinden fürchten das Entladen dieser Macht von Wind und Meer, und Brittens gewaltige Beschworung von heulenden Winden und peitschenden Wellen (die Wagners Overtüre zum *Fliegenden Holländer* oder dem einleitenden Sturm in Verdis *Otello* nichts nachsteht) spiegelt mit Schrecken die emotionale Feindschaft wider, die sich hinter den verschlossenen Türen der Dorfschenke formiert.

Der II. Akt beginnt mit einem weiteren Sea Interlude. Hier wird ein sonniger Sonntagmorgen musikalisch abgebildet, wenn die Kirchenglocken die Gemeinde energisch zum Gottesdienst rufen. Britten stellt hier sein hervorragendes Talent für dramatische Ironie unter Beweis: auf einem täuschend friedlichen, normalen Hintergrund wird zum einen Ellens Furcht vor Grimes' latenter Gewalt nach und nach bestätigt. Zum anderen prangern ihn die vom Gottesdienst kommenden Bürger der Stadt mit beklemmender Feindseligkeit an. Die unheilvolle, von einer Solobratsche eingeleitete Orchesterpassacaglia, die dem zweiten Bild des II. Akts vorangeht, beruht auf dem wilden Rufmotiv der Menge „Grimes is at his exercise“ [Grimes kann es nicht lassen]. Seinen besten Einfall hebt sich Britten für das Finale auf. Dort lässt er das Orchester auf einmal völlig schweigen. Der Höhepunkt der Tragödie ereignet sich so nur in Begleitung eines mit Unterbrechungen ertönenden Nebelhorns und der aus der Ferne vernehmbaren Rufe des Suchtrupps. Wenn das Orchester wieder einsetzt, verarbeitet es Material aus der „Dawn“-Musik, während die Nachrichten über das Sinken eines Boots draußen auf dem Meer als „wieder so ein Gerücht“ abgetan werden.

Einführungstext © Wendy Thompson

Übersetzung aus dem Englischen: Elke Hockings

Handlung

Der Handlungsort ist Borough, ein kleiner Fischerort an der englischen Küste von East Anglia. Die Zeit ist ca. 1830.

Peter Grimes, ein Fischer, der sich aufgrund seines Temperaments und Charakters mit der ihn umgebenden Dorfgemeinde uneins ist, steht unter Verdacht, seine als Hilfskräfte angestellten Jungen brutal zu behandeln. Einer der Jungen war auf hoher See unter tragischen Umständen umgekommen. Der auch durch seinen eigenen Stolz und Ehrgeiz isolierte Grimes trachtet nur danach, durch harte Arbeit genug Geld zu verdienen, um dem Klatsch ein Ende zu setzen, von der Gemeinde respektiert zu werden und womöglich die sympathische Witwe und Gemeindegeliebte, Ellen Orford, zu heiraten, die versucht, seinen Charakter und Probleme zu verstehen. Sie unterstützt ihn mit praktischer Hilfe, als er einen neuen Jungen aus dem Waisenhaus anstellt, aber bald gibt es Zeichen, dass Grimes' Streben nach materiellem Erfolg seine Rücksichtnahme auf andere überrollt. Ein weiterer Unfall verursacht den Tod des neuen Gehilfen. Die Stadt Borough ist von rachesüchtigem Zorn erfüllt und verfolgt den Mann, der durch die Art, wie sich alles, was er tut, zum Schlechten wendet, psychisch aus dem Gleichgewicht gerät. Auf Balstrodes Rat, ein ehemaliger Handelskapitän mit lebenslanger Seefahrts-erfahrung, akzeptiert Grimes eine stille Selbstopferung. Die Stadt Borough nimmt ihre alltäglichen Geschäfte wieder auf und beginnt schon, den Ausgestoßenen zu vergessen.

PROLOG

Gerichtsverhandlung zur Feststellung der Todesursache im Stadthausaal

Die Fischer und Einwohner der Stadt Borough sind zu einer Gerichtsverhandlung zur Feststellung der Todesursache des auf hoher See gestorbenen William Spodes versammelt. William Spode war ein Junge, der beim Fischer Peter Grimes als Hilfskraft angestellt

war. Grimes unterscheidet sich aufgrund seines Charakters und bisherigen Verhaltens von der ihn umgebenden Gemeinde. Als Swallow, Rechtsanwalt und Bürgermeister von Borough, seinen Platz als Untersuchungsrichter einnimmt, wird Grimes vom Fuhrmann und Konstable Hobson in den Zeugenstand gebeten. Swallow informiert das Gericht vom Ziel der Verhandlung, fragt Grimes, ob er eine Aussage machen möchte und bittet ihn, nachdem der Eid abgenommen wurde, dem Gericht mit seinen eigenen Worten zu erzählen, was passiert war. Nur zögernd erzählt Grimes die ganze Geschichte bis zum Ende: ein Versuch, mit einem für den örtlichen Markt zu großen Fang nach London zu segeln; außer Sichtweite des Landes wendet sich der Wind gegen ihn; das Trinkwasser wird alle und der Junge wird krank und stirbt an Bord. Grimes berichtet auch über die Reaktionen einiger großer Persönlichkeiten der Stadt, die er traf, als er den Körper des Jungen zurückbrachte, nachdem er den Fang über Bord geworfen hatte. Der Prolog führt zudem eine Reihe weiterer Rollen ein, unter anderem die Witwe und Gemeindegeliebte Ellen Orford, die Grimes geholfen hatte. Aufgrund mangelnder Beweise wird die Todesursache als Unfall registriert, aber Swallow gelingt die Andeutung, dass Grimes zumindest teilweise Schuld trägt, und er rät ihm, nicht noch einen Jungen anzuheuern, es sei denn, er stellt auch eine Frau an, die auf den Jungen aufpasst. Grimes ruft aus, dass dies seine Absicht sei – aber nicht, bis er die Gerüchte über ihn widerlegt habe. Wenn er gebeten wird, den Zeugenstand zu verlassen, tobt er: „You wash your hands. The case goes on in people's minds“ [Sie waschen Ihre Hände. Der Fall arbeitet in den Köpfen der Leute weiter]. Er stellt einen Antrag auf eine Gerichtsverhandlung mit Jury, um sich des Verdachts zu entledigen, aber der Verhandlungssaal wird abrupt geräumt, und Grimes bleibt mit Ellen allein zurück. Sie hat unter der rauen Schale des Fischers Anflüge eines schwärmerischen Geists und Spuren menschlicher Wärme entdeckt. Ellen spricht von der Möglichkeit einer hoffnungsvolleren Zukunft, während

Grimes gegen seine missliche Lage wettet, bevor er scheinbar auf ihr Angebot einer Freundschaft reagiert.

Orchesterzwischenspiel

Das Meer spült über den Kiesstrand an einem ruhigen grauen Tag

I. AKT

1. Bild – Ein Fischmarkt

Im Hafen wird gerade ein Fischmarkt abgehalten. Dort singen die Fischersleute von ihren täglichen Runden und Schicksalsschlägen. Tantjen, Wirtin im Krug „Zum Hai“, animiert die zurückkehrenden Fischer, ihren Durst zu löschen, was den gottesfürchtigen Zorn von Bob Boles auf sich zieht, einem Anhänger der hiesigen Methodistengemeinde. Kapitän Balstrode, ehemaliger Kapitän eines Kauffahrers, bemerkt die ersten Zeichen eines heraufziehenden Unwetters draußen auf dem Meer: „The wind is holding back the tide. If it veers round, watch for your lives“ [Der Wind hält die Gezeiten zurück. Wenn der aufschwingt, wird es lebensgefährlich]. Andere kommen zum Markt und grüßen sich: Mrs. Sedley, die vom Tratsch und Klatsch lebende Witwe eines reichen Faktors, der Pastor, der Apotheker Ned Keene und Tantjens zwei Nichten, die zu den Hauptattraktionen des Krugs „Zum Hai“ gehören. Plötzlich hört man die Stimme von Grimes, der um Hilfe mit seinem Boot ruft. Boles verkündet seine grundsätzliche Ablehnung, aber Balstrode geht Grimes helfen. Ihm schließt sich Keene an. Nachdem das Boot verteuert ist, erzählt Keene Grimes, dass er im Waisenhaus war und einen neuen Jungen für ihn gekauft habe – Grimes bräuchte ihn nur abzuholen. Hobson wird gebeten, den Jungen auf seinen Fuhrhunden abzuholen. Zuerst versucht sich Hobson damit herauszureden, dass das Fuhrwerk voll sei. Er lässt sich aber schließlich überreden, wenn sich Ellen Orford trotz des Unwillens der Menge bereit erklärt, Hobson zu begleiten und auf den Jungen aufzupassen. Mrs. Sedley, die sich um ihren Vorrat an Medizin und Laudanum sorgt, erfährt von Keene, dass Hobson frische Ware bringen wird, die sie später am

Abend im Krug „Zum Hai“ abholen kann. Balstrode sieht den Sturmkegel nun nicht mehr weit entfernt über dem Strand und ruft eine Warnung aus, die vom Chor aufgenommen wird, der sich in aller Eile anschickt, den Markt abzubauen. Vorbereitungen werden getroffen, Leben und Eigentum gegen den Angriff von Wind und Gezeiten zu schützen. Grimes bleibt vom Rest abgesondert. Balstrode ergreift die Gelegenheit und rät ihm, die Gegend zu verlassen und als Seemann sein Glück zu versuchen. Der Fischer antwortet, er sei hier verwurzelt und erzählt von seinem Plan, genug Geld zu verdienen, dass er von der Gemeinde respektiert wird. Dann würde er Ellen heiraten, ein Haus bauen und einen Laden eröffnen. Balstrode legt ihm nahe, schon jetzt Ellen zu fragen, ob sie ihn heiraten möchte, aber Grimes bleibt bockig, und Balstrode fürchtet, dass womöglich Schlimmeres passieren wird.

Orchesterzwischenspiel

Der Sturm bricht in voller Stärke aus.

2. Bild – Im Krug „Zum Hai“ später am Tag

Mrs. Sedley erscheint, um auf Keene zu warten, und Tantjen bemerkt enttäuscht, dass Mrs. Sedley trotz Geld und Gesinnung keinen guten Kunden abgibt. Balstrode kommt kurz vor Boles in den Krug „Zum Hai“ mit der Nachricht von der Überflutung nördlich der Stadt. Die zwei verängstigten Nichten kommen rennend herein, um vom Wind zu berichten, der ihrer Schlafzimmerfenster herausgerissen habe. In rauer Art reagiert Balstrode verächtlich darauf, und Tantjen weist einige seiner Bemerkungen zurück. Leicht angetrunken versucht sich Boles einer der beiden Nichten zu nähern, wird aber von Balstrode zurückgehalten, in dessen Ermahnungen die restlichen Anwesenden einstimmen. Ned Keene erscheint und erzählt vom Erdrutsch am Kliff hinter Grimes' Hütte. Als Mrs. Sedley sich darüber beschwert, dass der Fuhrmann zu spät ist, gibt ihr Keene zu verstehen, dass sie eben warten müsse, wenn sie ihre Medizin haben möchte. Als Nächster tritt Grimes auf, vom

Sturm triefend nass und mit wildem Blick. Mrs. Sedley fällt bei seinem Anblick in Ohnmacht, und Tantien lässt sich überreden, einen Weinbrand zu gießen, allerdings nur, als Keene ihr versichert, dass er später Mrs. Sedley die Rechnung präsentieren wird. Grimes' Gegenwart dämpft die allgemeine Stimmung, aber der bemerkt das überhaupt nicht und beginnt laut vor sich herzuaplappen. In „Now the Great Bear and Pleiades“ [Nun der Große Wagen und das Siebengestirn] erzählt er von der Einsamkeit des Fischers, der sich oft mit der Gesellschaft der Sterne begnügen muss. Bei seiner letzten Frage scheint sich Grimes nicht bewusst zu sein, dass er hier die Tragik seiner eigenen Situation anspricht: „Who can turn skies back and begin again?“ [Wer kann das Geschick rückdrehen und von vorn beginnen?]. Die ihn umgebenden Personen erklären, er sei entweder verrückt oder betrunken. Wenn Boles zu predigen beginnt, droht eine Keilerei. Nach Tantjens Bitte, den Frieden zu halten und nicht zu riskieren, dass sie beim Schwurgericht landet, wird die Situation durch Balstrode gerettet, der ein Lied fordert. Keene beginnt einen Kanon, in den die restlichen Anwesenden einstimmen. Selbst Grimes versucht zögernd mitzusingen, bringt aber den Kanon fast zum Stillstand. Der Kanon kommt allerdings wieder in Schwung, bis Ellen plötzlich mit dem neuen Jungen auftaucht. Hobson erzählt, dass eine Brücke zusammengebrochen sei und sie, um ans andere Ufer zu kommen, fast schwimmen mussten. Ihnen wird eine Erfrischung angeboten, aber Grimes lässt dem Jungen nicht genug Zeit, um wieder warm und trocken zu werden, bevor er ihn fortzerrt. Ellen schaut besorgt zu. Darauf äußert die Menge verächtliche Bemerkungen über das „Haus“ des Fischers.

II. AKT

Orchesterzwischenspiel

Das Funkeln des Sonnenlichts auf den Wellen, und das Läuten der Glocken

1. Bild – Ein Sonntagmorgen im Sommer

Während sich die Menschen in ihrer Sonntagsgarderobe auf den Weg zur Kirche machen, wollen Ellen und der

neue Junge (John) am Strand. Sie singt über „Glitter of waves and glitter of sunlight“ [das Funkeln der Wellen und Funkeln des Sonnenlichts] und entscheidet sich, den Gottesdienst ausfallen zu lassen und am Meer zu bleiben. Sie fragt den Jungen, ob er mit ihr spricht, während sie strickt. Er verliert aber kein Wort, und Ellen stellt sich stattdessen sein ehemaliges Leben im Waisenhaus vor. Sie erwähnt die Geschichte über Grimes' ehemaligen Hilfsjungen und versichert John, dass sie fest entschlossen seien, einen neuen Anfang zu machen. Aber dann – von Mrs. Sedley beobachtet, die verspätet zum Gottesdienst an ihnen vorüber eilt – bemerkt Ellen einen frischen Riss im Mantel des Jungen und einen blauen Fleck an dessen Hals und sagt traurig: „Well it's begun“ [Nun, ein Anfang ist gemacht]. Im Hintergrund zu diesem Geschehen läuft die ganze Zeit der Gottesdienst mit Orgelvorspiel, erstem Kirchenlied, Gebeten und Wechselgesängen, und in dem Moment, wenn die Gemeinde mit dem Benedicite beginnt, tritt Grimes auf und ruft den Jungen grob fort. Grimes hat einen Fischschwarm gesehen und weist ärgerlich Ellens Vorschlag ab, dem Jungen seinen Ruhetag zu gönnen. Zur Begleitung des Glaubens-bekenntnisses stellt Ellen nun Grimes über den blauen Fleck zur Rede und fragt sich, ob sie Recht hatten, einen neuen Anfang zu versuchen. Sie trifft nur auf seinen wachsenden Zorn und erklärt verzweifelt, dass sie versagt haben. Grimes schreit auf und schlägt blindlings nach Ellen. Er zieht den Jungen hastig weg. Die Auseinandersetzung wurde von Tantien, Keene und Boles beobachtet, der bemerkt: „Grimes is at his exercise!“ [Grimes kann es nicht lassen!]. Beim Klang der Orgel, der die Morgenliturgie zum Abschluss bringt, verlassen die Leute die Kirche und werden in den zunehmenden Aufruhr um Ellen verwickelt. Tantjen versucht, Ellen zu trösten. Aber die nunmehr ganz offen feindlich gesinnte Menge kritisiert Ellen dafür, dass sie sich mit Grimes eingelassen hat. Die Spannung nimmt zu und führt zu einem Massenaufschrei: „Mord!“, worauf der Pastor dem Bürgermeister Swallow vorschlägt, sie sollten doch Grimes in seiner Hütte befragen. Sie bitten Balstrode um Begleitung. Hobson wird fortgeschickt, um seine Trommel zu holen und Männer

zu versammeln, damit sie alle zusammen zu Grimes' Hütte gehen. Einen Zug bildend treten sie ab, und die Frauen entfernen sich in ihrem Gefolge. Ellen, Tantjen und die zwei Nichten bleiben allein zurück und sinnieren über die Beziehungen der Frauen zu ihrem Mannsvolk.

Orchesterzwischenspiel

Eine Passacaglia – Variationen über ein unablässig wiederholtes Basso-ostinato-Thema – Die Männer von Borough begeben sich auf den Weg, um Grimes zur Rechenschaft zu ziehen

2. Bild – Die Hütte von Peter Grimes – ein umgestürztes Boot an einem steilen Kliff

Grimes schubst den Jungen grob in die Hütte und wirft ihm seine Fischerkleidung zu. Er fordert ihn auf, sich zu beeilen und beginnt ihn zu tyrannisieren, lässt dann aber davon ab. Es sieht das Meer mit dem von ihm entdeckten Fischeschwarm schier kochen und erklärt, er würde das Meer sogar leer fischen, wenn er damit den Respekt der Gemeinde gewinnen und Ellen heiraten könnte. Er beginnt wieder, den Jungen zu schikanieren. Dann hängt er seinen Zukunfts träumen nach. Aus der Ferne erklingt der Schlag von Hobsons Trommel, und für einen Moment sieht Grimes den toten Jungen vor sich, wie er an jenem tragischen Tag im Boot lag. Grimes bemerkt jetzt den aus der Stadt heranziehenden Menschenzug. Sich dem Jungen zuwendend beschuldigt er ihn, Ellen Unwahrheiten erzählt zu haben und befiehlt ihm, die Fischerausrüstung zusammenzusammeln und über das Kliff an einem Seil herunterzuklettern. Aber während Grimes' Aufmerksamkeit von dem herannahenden Zug in Anspruch genommen ist, stürzt der Junge unbemerkt zu Tode. Grimes klettert nach ihm an dem Seil herunter. Da betreten der Pastor und die Anderen die Hütte. Weil sie alles aufgeräumt vorfinden und kein Zeichen einer Störung sehen, entscheiden sie sich zur Umkehr und glauben, dass sich damit die Angelegenheit erledigt habe. Balstrode zögert zweifelnd und wirft einen Blick nach unten, wo Grimes und der Junge heruntergeklettert waren. Offensichtlich sieht er, dass dort unten etwas geschehen ist und beginnt selber herunterzuklettern.

III. AKT

Orchesterzwischenspiel

Mondlicht in einer ruhigen Sommernacht

Ein Tanzabend und danach

Auf dem Hintergrund von Tanzen und Feiern neben dem Krug „Zum Hai“ versuchen Tantjens Nichten der unwillkommenen Aufmerksamkeit einiger Männer zu entkommen. Sie verbinden sich, um Swallow abzuschütteln, und nachdem der gegangene ist, flirtet eine von ihnen mit Keene. Mrs. Sedley stürzt sich auf Keene und erzählt ihm, dass Grimes und sein Junge seit zwei Tagen nicht mehr gesehen wurden und dass sie Beweise für Mord hat. Keene zieht es vor, ihren Verdacht zu ignorieren und verschwindet in den Krug „Zum Hai“. Die Tanzkapelle stimmt einen Hornpipetanz an, und einer der Fischer beginnt einen Holzschuhtanz. Einige ältere Bürger entscheiden sich zum Nachhausegehen. Zu ihnen gehört der Pastor, der in den Chor „Goodnight“ [Gute Nacht] einstimmt. Mrs. Sedley bleibt zurück. Da kommt Ellen auf ihrer Suche nach Balstrode vorbei. Ellen und Balstrode treffen sich, und Ellen erkundigt sich, ob Grimes' Boot im Hafen sei. Balstrode antwortet, es sei schon seit über einer Stunde dort, aber von Grimes gäbe es keine Spur. Ellen zeigt ihm die wollene Jacke des Jungen, die sie am Strand gefunden hat. Sie glaubt nicht mehr, etwas für Grimes tun zu können, aber Balstrode hält sie an, ihn jetzt nicht im Stich zu lassen, und sie einigen sich zu warten, bis Grimes wieder auftaucht.

Wenn die Tanzkapelle einen Galopp beginnt, ruft Mrs. Sedley laut nach Swallow und berichtet ihm über die Rückkehr von Grimes' Boot. Der Bürgermeister wiederum lässt den als Konstable von Borough eingesetzten Hobson kommen und befiehlt ihm, Grimes zu finden, koste es, was es wolle. Hobson ruft die restlichen Männer zusammen, und mit anschwellendem öffentlichen Zorn, der sich im Chor „Him who despises us, we'll destroy“ [Wer uns verachtet, den zerstören wir] artikuliert, ruft die Menge den Namen des Opfers im Unisono. Dann treten sie auf der Suche nach ihm nacheinander ab.

Orchesterzwischenspiel

Dunstschleier vom Meer vernebeln das Bild

Grimes tritt in einem psychisch labilen Zustand auf. Er singt verworren über das, was er gelitten hat. Die Musik ruft gewisse Episoden seiner geistesgestörten Gedanken in Erinnerung. Ellen und Balstrode finden ihn und begreifen, was geschehen ist. Balstrode, der weiß, dass sich Grimes opfern muss, sagt dem Fischer, was er zu tun habe, und hilft ihm ein letztes Mal mit seinem Boot.

Der Morgen bricht an, und die Stadt Borough beginnt beim Klang des ersten Chors mit ihren alltäglichen Geschäften. Swallow erwähnt eine Nachricht der Küstenwache, in der von einem sinkenden Boot weit draußen auf dem Meer berichtet wurde, dem allerdings nicht geholfen werden konnte, weil es außer Reichweite war. Die Angelegenheit wird nicht weiter diskutiert, und in Borough geht das Leben ungeachtet des Geschehenen weiter.

Handlung © Noël Goodwin

Übersetzung aus dem Englischen: Elke Hockings

Benjamin Britten (1913–1976)

Britten erhielt anfänglich Klavierunterricht von seiner Mutter, die ihn auch zu seinen ersten Kompositionsversuchen ermunterte. 1924 hörte er Frank Bridges Tongedicht *The Sea*, und drei Jahre später begann der Komponist jenes Werkes Britten in Komposition zu unterweisen. Ein Stipendium zum Studium am Royal College of Music erwarb Britten 1930. Dort studierte er bei John Ireland Komposition und bei Arthur Benjamin Klavier. 1934 zog Britten mit der von ihm dirigierten Uraufführung seiner *Simple Symphony* große Aufmerksamkeit auf sich. Er erhielt Aufträge vom GPO Film Unit [damalige Filmabteilung des britischen Hauptpostamts] und diversen Theatern, wo er unter anderem mit solchen Schriftstellern wie W. H. Auden und Christopher Isherwood zusammenarbeitete. Seine ein Leben lang währende persönliche Verbindung und Zusammenarbeit mit Peter Pears begann in den späten dreißiger Jahren. Zu Beginn des II. Weltkriegs blieben Britten und Pears in den USA. Als sie nach England zurückkehrten, meldeten sie sich als Wehrdienstverweigerer aus Gewissensgründen und wurden nicht eingezogen. Die Uraufführung der Oper *Peter Grimes* 1945 steht am Anfang einer Reihe von hervorragenden Musiktheaterwerken des Komponisten, von denen die meisten für die English Opera Group entstanden. Im Juni 1948 gründete Britten das Aldeburgh Festival of Music and the Arts, für das er viele neue Werke komponieren sollte. Seit den mittelfünfziger Jahren wird er im Allgemeinen als der führende britische Komponist angesehen, nicht zuletzt dank der internationalen Erfolge solcher Opern wie *Albert Herring*, *Billy Budd* und *The Turn of the Screw* [Der Widerspenstigen Zähmung]. Eines von Brittens größten Meisterwerken, das *War Requiem*, wurde am 30. Mai 1962 zur Einweihungsfeier der St. Michael's Cathedral von Conventry uraufgeführt. Die im Werk enthaltene Botschaft gegen den Krieg spiegelt die pazifistische Haltung des Komponisten wider. Britten war ein erstaunlich produktiver Komponist und schrieb Werke für fast alle Gattung sowie für Interpreten mit

den unterschiedlichsten musikalischen Fähigkeiten, angefangen bei Schulkindern und Amateursängern bis zu solchen Künstlern wie Mstislaw Rostropowitsch, Julian Bream und Peter Pears.

Kurzbiographie ©Andrew Stuart

Übersetzung aus dem Englischen: Elke Hockings

LIBRETTO

by Monatgu Slater
New corrected edition 1979
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CD 1

PROLOGUE

*Interior of the Moot Hall arranged as for Coroner's inquest.
Coroner, Mr Swallow, at table on dais, clerk at table below.
A crowd of townspeople in the body of the hall is kept back by
Hobson acting as Constable. Mr Swallow is the leading lawyer of
the Borough and at the same time its Mayor and its Coroner.
A man of unexceptionable career and talents he nevertheless
disturbs the burgesses by his air of a man with an arrière-pensée.*

1 HOBSON Peter Grimes!

Peter Grimes steps forward from among the crowd.

SWALLOW *(reading)* Peter Grimes, we are here to investigate the cause of death of your apprentice William Spode, whose body you brought ashore from your boat, the *Boy Billy*, on the 26th ultimo. Do you wish to give evidence?

Peter nods.

Will you step into the box. Peter Grimes. Take the oath.
After me. 'I swear by Almighty God'

PETER 'I swear by Almighty God'

SWALLOW 'That the evidence I shall give'

PETER 'That the evidence I shall give'

SWALLOW 'Shall be the truth'

PETER 'Shall be the truth'

SWALLOW 'The whole truth and nothing but the truth.'

PETER 'The whole truth and nothing but the truth.'

SWALLOW Tell the court the story in your own words.

Peter is silent.

You sailed your boat round the coast with the intention of putting in at London. Why did you do this?

PETER We'd caught a huge catch, too big to sell here.

SWALLOW And the boy died on the way?

PETER The wind turned against us, blew us off our course. We ran out of drinking water.

SWALLOW How long were you at sea?

PETER Three days.

SWALLOW What happened next?

PETER He died lying there among the fish.

SWALLOW What did you do?

PETER Threw them all overboard, set sail for home.

SWALLOW You mean you threw the fish overboard? ...
When you landed did you call for help?

PETER I called Ned Keene.

SWALLOW The apothecary here? *(indicating Ned)*
Was there anybody else called?

PETER Somebody brought the parson.

SWALLOW You mean the Rector, Mr Horace Adams?
The Rector steps forward. Swallow waves him back.

All right, Mr Adams.

He turns back to Peter.

Was there a certain amount of excitement?

PETER Bob Boles started shouting.

SWALLOW There was a scene in the village street from which you were rescued by our landlady?

PETER Yes. By Auntie.

SWALLOW We don't call her that here ... You then took to abusing a respectable lady.

Peter glares.

Answer me ... You shouted abuse at a certain person?

Mrs Sedley pushes forward. Mrs Sedley is the widow of a retired factor of the East India Company and is known locally as 'Mrs Nabob'. She is 65, self-assertive, inquisitive, unpopular.

SEDLEY Say who! Say who!!

SWALLOW Mrs Sedley here.

PETER I don't like interferers.

A slight hubbub among the spectators resolves itself into a chorus which is more like the confused muttering of a crowd than something fully articulate.

CHORUS When women gossip, the result
Is someone doesn't sleep at night.

HOBSON Silence!

SWALLOW Now tell me this. Who helped you carry the boy home? The schoolmistress, the widow, Mrs Ellen Orford?

Renewed hubbub. Ellen steps forward to Swallow.

WOMEN'S CHORUS O when you pray you shut your eyes
And then can't tell the truth from lies.

HOBSON Silence!

SWALLOW Mrs Orford, as the schoolmistress, the widow, how did you come into this?

ELLEN I did what I could to help.

SWALLOW Why should you help this kind of fellow – callous, brutal and coarse? (to Grimes) There's something here perhaps in your favour. I'm told you rescued the boy from drowning in the March storms.

Peter is silent.

Have you something else to say?

No? – Then I have.

Peter Grimes, I here advise you – do not get another boy apprentice. Get a fisherman to help you – big enough to stand up for himself. Our verdict is – that William Spode, your apprentice, died in accidental circumstances. But that's the kind of thing people are apt to remember.

CHORUS But when the crowner sits upon it,
Who can dare to fix the guilt?

HOBSON Silence! Silence!

Peter has stepped forward and is trying to speak.

PETER Your honour! Like every other fisherman I have to hire an apprentice. I must have help –

SWALLOW Then get a woman help you look after him.

PETER That's what I want – but not yet –

SWALLOW Why not?

PETER Not till I've stopped people's mouths.

The hubbub begins again.

SWALLOW (making a gesture of dismissal)
Stand down! Clear the court. Stand down!

PETER 'Stand down' you say. You wash your hands.

The case goes on in people's minds
The charges that no court has made
Will be shouted at my head.

Then let me speak, let me stand trial,
Bring the accusers into the hall.
Let me thrust into their mouths,
The truth itself, the simple truth.

CHORUS When women gossip, the result
Is someone doesn't sleep at night.
But when the crowner sits upon it,
Who can dare to fix the guilt?

HOBSON Clear the court!

Swallow rises with slow dignity. Everybody stands up while he makes his ceremonial exit. The crowd then begins to go out.

Peter and Ellen are left alone.

[2] PETER The truth – the pity – and the truth.

ELLEN Peter, come away!

PETER Where the walls themselves
Gossip of inquest.

ELLEN But we'll gossip, too,
And talk and rest.

PETER While Peeping Toms
Nod as you go.
You'll share the name
Of outlaw, too.

ELLEN Peter, we shall restore your name.
Warned by the new esteem
That you will find.

PETER Until the Borough hate
Poisons your mind.

ELLEN There'll be new shoals to catch:
Life will be kind.

PETER Ayl! only of drowning ghosts:
Time will not forget:
The dead are witness
And Fate is Blind.

ELLEN Unclouded,
The hot sun
Will spread his rays around.

BOTH My/Your voice out of the pain,
Is like a hand
That you/I can feel and know:
Here is a friend.

They walk off slowly.

[3] INTERLUDE I: Dawn

ACT I

Scene 1

Street by the sea: Moot Hall exterior with its outside staircase, next door to which is The Boar. Ned Keene's apothecary's shop is at the street corner. On the other side breakwaters run down to the sea.

It is morning, before high tide, several days later.

Two fishermen are turning the capstan, hauling in their boat. Prolonged cries as the boat is hauled ashore. Women come from mending nets to take the fish baskets from other fishermen who now disembark.

Captain Balstrode sits on the breakwater looking out to sea through his glass. Balstrode is a retired merchant sea-captain, shrewd as a travelled man should be, but with a general sympathy that makes him the favourite rentier of the whole Borough. He chews a plug of tobacco while he watches.

[4] CHORUS Oh hang at open doors the net, the cork,
While squalid sea-dames at their mending work.
Welcome the hour when fishing through the tide
The weary husband throws his freight aside.

FISHERMEN O cold and wet and driven by the tide,
Beat your tired arms against your tarry side.
Find rest in public bars where fiery gin
Will aid the warmth that languishes within.

Several fishermen cross to The Boar where Auntie stands in the doorway.

FISHERMAN Auntie!

AUNTIE Come in gentlemen, come in.

BOLES Her vats flow with poisoned gin!

Boles the Methodist fisherman stands aside from all this dram drinking.

FISHERMAN (pointing and laughing) Boles has gone Methody!

AUNTIE A man should have
Hobbies to cheer his private life.

Fishermen go into The Boar. Others remain with their wives at the nets and boats.

WOMEN'S CHORUS Dabbling on shore half-naked sea-boys crowd,
Swim round a ship, or swing upon a shroud:
Or in a boat purloined with paddles play
And grow familiar with the watery way.

While the second boat is being hauled in, boys are scrambling over the first.

BALSTRODE Shoo, you little barnacles!
Up your anchors, hoist your sails!

Balstrode chases them from the boat. A more respectable figure now begins, with much hat-raising, his morning progress down the High Street. He makes straight for The Boar.

FISHERMAN (*touching cap*) Dr Crabbe.

BOLES (*pointing as the swing door closes*) He drinks 'Good Health' to all diseases!

ANOTHER FISHERMAN Storm?

A FEW FISHERMEN Storm?

They shade their eyes looking out to sea.

BALSTRODE (*glass to his eye*)

A long way out. Sea-horses.

The wind is holding back the tide.

If it veers round, watch for your lives.

CHORUS OF FISHERS And if the spring tide eats the land again
Till even the cottages and cobbled walls of fishermen
Are billets for the thievish waves which take
As if in sleep, thieving for thieving's sake –

The Rector comes down the High Street. He is followed as always by the Borough's second most famous rentier, the widow, Mrs Sedley. From The Boar come the two 'nieces' who give Auntie

her nickname. They stand in front of the pub taking the morning sun. Ned Keene, seeing Mrs Sedley, pops out of his shop door.

RECTOR (*right and left*) Good morning, good morning!

NIECES Good morning!

SEDDLEY Good morning, dear Rector.

KEENE Had Auntie no nieces we'd never respect her.

SWALLOW Good morning! Good morning!

NIECES Good morning!

SEDDLEY Good morning, your worship, Mr Swallow.

AUNTIE (*to Keene*) You jeer, but if they wink you're eager to follow!

The Rector and Mrs Sedley continue towards the Church.

KEENE (*to Auntie*) I'm coming tonight to see your nieces.

AUNTIE The Boar is at its patron's service.

BOLES God's storm will drown your hot desires!

BALSTRODE God stay the tide, or I shall share your fears.

CHORUS For us sea-dwellers, this sea-birth can be
Death to our gardens of fertility.
Yet only such contemptuous springtide can
Tickle the virile impotence of man.

PETER (*calls off*) Hi! Give us a hand! Haul the boat!

BOLES (*shouts back*) Haul it yourself, Grimes!

PETER (*off*) Hi! Somebody bring the rope!

Nobody does. Presently he appears and takes the capstan rope himself and pulls it after him (off) to the boat. Then he returns. The fishermen and women turn their backs on him and slouch away awkwardly.

BALSTRODE (*going to capstan*)

[5] I'll give a hand, the tide is near the turn.

KEENE We'll drown the gossips in a tidal storm.

Peter Grimes goes back to the boat. Balstrode and Keene turn the capstan.

AUNTIE *(at the door of The Boar)*

Parsons may moralise and fools decide,
But a good publican takes neither side.

BALSTRODE O haul away! The tide is near the turn.

KEENE Man invented morals but tides have none.

BOLES *(with arms akimbo watching their labour)*

This lost soul of a fisherman must be
Shunned by respectable society.

Oh let the captains hear, the scholars learn:
Shielding the sin, they share the people's scorn.

AUNTIE I have my business. Let the preachers learn
Hell may be fiery but the pub won't burn.

BALSTRODE AND KEENE The tide that floods will ebb, the tide,
the tide will turn.

The boat is hauled up. Grimes appears.

KEENE Grimes, you won't need help from now.
I've got a prentice for you.

BALSTRODE A workhouse brat?

KEENE I called at the workhouse yesterday.

All you do now is fetch the boy.

We'll send the carter with a note.

He'll bring your bargain on his cart.

(shouting) Jim Hobson, we've a job for you.

HOBSON *(entering)* Cart's full sir. More than I can do.

KEENE Listen, Jim. You'll go to the workhouse
And ask for Mr Keene his purchase.
Bring him back to Grimes.

HOBSON Cart's full sir. I have no room.

KEENE Hobson, you'll do what there is to be done.

It is near enough to an argument to attract a crowd. Fishermen and women gather round. Boles takes his chance.

BOLES Is this a Christian country?

Are Pauper children so enslaved
That their bodies go for cash?

KEENE Hobson, will you do your job?

Ellen Orford has come in. She is a widow of about 40. Her children have died, or grown up and gone away, and in her loneliness she has become the Borough school mistress. A hard life has not hardened her. It has made her the more charitable.

HOBSON I have to go from pub to pub

Picking up parcels, standing about.

My journey back is late at night.

Mister, find some other way

To bring your boy back.

CHORUS He's right. Dirty jobs!

HOBSON Mister, find some other way ...

ELLEN Carter! I'll mind your passenger.

CHORUS What! And be Grimes' messenger? You?

ELLEN Whatever you say, I'm not ashamed.
Somebody must do the job.

The carter goes from pub to pub,

Picking up parcels, standing about.

The boy needs comfort late at night,

He needs a welcome on the road,

Coming here strange he'll be afraid.

I'll mind your passenger!

KEENE Mrs Orford is talking sense.

CHORUS Ellen – you're leading us a dance,
Fetching boys for Peter Grimes,
Because the Borough is afraid
You who help will share the blame.

ELLEN Whatever you say ...

- [6] Let her among you without fault
Cast the first stone
And let the Pharisees and Sadducees
Give way to none.
But whosoever feels his pride
Humbled so deep
There is no corner he can hide
Even in sleep!
Will have no trouble to find out
How a poor teacher
Widowed and lonely finds delight
In shouldering care.
(as she moves up the street)
Mr Hobson, where's your cart?
I'm ready.

HOBSON Up here, ma'am. I can wait.

The crowd stands round and watches. Some follow Ellen and Hobson. On the edge of the crowd are other activities.

SEDLEY (to Keene) Have you my pills?

KEENE I'm sorry ma'am.

SEDLEY My sleeping draught?

KEENE The laudanum
Is out of stock, and being brought
By Mr Carrier Hobson's cart.
He's back tonight.

SEDLEY Good Lord, good Lord –

KEENE Meet us both at this pub, The Boar
Auntie's we call it. It's quite safe.

SEDLEY I've never been in a pub in my life.

KEENE You'll come?

SEDLEY All right.

KEENE Tonight?

SEDLEY All right.

She moves off up the street.

KEENE If the old dear takes much more laudanum
She'll land herself one day in Bedlam!

BALSTRODE (looking seaward through his glass)

- [7] Look! the storm cone!
The wind veers
In from the sea
At gale force.

CHORUS Look out for squalls!

The wind veers
In from the sea
At gale force.
Make your boat fast!
Shutter your windows!
And bring in all the nets!

ALL Now the flood tide
And the sea-horses
Will gallop over
The eroded coast
Flooding, flooding
Our seasonal fears.
Look! the storm cone!
The wind veers.
A high tide coming
Will eat the land
A tide no breakwaters can withstand.
Fasten your boats. The springtide's here
With a gale behind.

CHORUS Is there much to fear?

KEENE Only for the goods you're rich in:
It won't drown your conscience, it might flood your kitchen.

BOLES God has his ways which are not ours:
His high tide swallows up the shores.
Repent!

KEENE And keep your wife upstairs.

ALL O Tide that waits for no man
Spare our coasts!

There is a general exeunt – mostly through the swing doors of The Boar. Dr Crabbe's hat blows away, is rescued for him by Ned Keene who bows him into the pub. Finally only Peter and Balstrode are left, Peter gazing seaward, Balstrode hesitating at the pub door.

BALSTRODE And do you prefer the storm
To Auntie's parlour and the rum?

8 **PETER** I live alone. The habit grows.

BALSTRODE Grimes, since you're a lonely soul
Born to blocks and spars and ropes
Why not try the wider sea
With merchantman or privateer?

PETER I am native, rooted here.

BALSTRODE Rooted by what?

PETER By familiar fields,
Marsh and sand,
Ordinary streets,
Prevailing wind.

BALSTRODE You'd slip these moorings if you had the mind.

PETER By the shut faces
Of the Borough clans;
And by the kindness
Of a casual glance.

BALSTRODE You'll find no comfort there.
When an urchin's quarrelsome
Brawling at his little games,
Mother stops him with a threat,
'You'll be sold to Peter Grimes!'

PETER Selling me new apprentices,
Children taught to be ashamed

Of the legend on their faces –
'You've been sold to Peter Grimes!'

BALSTRODE Then the Crowner sits to
Hint, but not to mention crimes,
And publishes an open verdict
Whispered about this 'Peter Grimes'.
Your boy was workhouse starved –
Maybe you're not to blame he died.

PETER Picture what that day was like
That evil day.

We strained into the wind
Heavily laden,
We plunged into the wave's
Shuddering challenge
Then the sea rose to a storm
Over the gunwales,
And the boy's silent reproach
Turned to illness.
Then home
Among fishing nets
Alone, alone, alone
With a childish death!

BALSTRODE This storm is useful. You can speak your mind
And never mind the Borough commentary.
There is more grandeur in a gale of wind
To free confession, set a conscience free.

PETER They listen to money
These Borough gossips
I have my visions
Fiery visions.
They call me dreamer
They scoff at my dreams
And my ambition.
But I know a way
To answer the Borough
I'll win them over.

BALSTRODE With the new prentice?

PETER We'll sail together.

These Borough gossips

Listen to money

Only to money:

I'll fish the sea dry,

Sell the good catches –

That wealthy merchant

Grimes will set up

Household and shop

You will all see it!

I'll marry Ellen!

BALSTRODE Man – go and ask her

Without your booty,

She'll have you now.

PETER No – not for pity! ...

BALSTRODE Then the old tragedy

Is in store:

New start with new prentice

Just as before.

PETER What Peter Grimes decides

Is his affair.

BALSTRODE You fool, man, fool!

The wind has risen. Balstrode is shouting above it.

Peter faces him angrily.

PETER Are you my conscience?

BALSTRODE Might as well

Try shout the wind down as to tell

The obvious truth.

PETER Take your advice –

Put it where your money is.

BALSTRODE The storm is here. O come away.

PETER The storm is here and I shall stay.

The storm is rising. Auntie comes out of The Boar to fasten the shutters, in front of the windows. Balstrode goes to help her. He looks back towards Peter, then goes into the pub.

PETER What harbour shelters peace?

Away from tidal waves, away from storm

What harbour can embrace

Terrors and tragedies?

With her there'll be no quarrels,

With her the mood will stay,

A harbour evermore

Where night is turned to day.

The wind rises. He stands a moment as if leaning against the wind.

INTERLUDE II: Storm

Scene 2

- [9] *Interior of The Boar, typical main room of a country pub. No bar. Upright settles, tables, log fire. Auntie is admitting Mrs Sedley. The gale has risen to hurricane force and Auntie holds the door with difficulty against the wind which rattles the windows and howls in the chimney. They both push the door closed.*

AUNTIE Past time to close!

SEDLEY He said half-past ten.

- [10] **AUNTIE** Who?

SEDLEY Mr Keene.

AUNTIE Him and his women!

SEDLEY You referring to me?

AUNTIE Not at all, not at all.

What do you want?

SEDLEY Room from the storm.

AUNTIE That is the sort of weak politeness

Makes a publican lose her clients.

Keep in the corner out of sight.

Balstrode and a fisherman enter. They struggle with the door.

BALSTRODE Phew, that's a bitch of a gale all right.

AUNTIE *(nodding her head towards Mrs Sedley)* Sh-h-h.

BALSTRODE Sorry. I didn't see you, missis.

You'll give the regulars a surprise.

AUNTIE She's meeting Ned.

BALSTRODE Which Ned?

AUNTIE The quack.

He's looking after her heart attack.

BALSTRODE Bring us a pint.

AUNTIE It's closing time.

BALSTRODE You fearful old female – why should you mind?

AUNTIE The storm!

Bob Boles and other fishermen enter. The wind howls through the door and again there is difficulty in closing it.

BOLES Did you hear the tide

Has broken over the Northern Road?

He leaves the door open too long with disastrous consequences.

A sudden gust howls through the door, the shutters of the window fly open, a pane blows in.

BALSTRODE Get those shutters.

AUNTIE O-o-o-o-o!

BALSTRODE You fearful old female, why do you
Leave your windows naked?

AUNTIE O-o-o-o-o!

BALSTRODE Better strip a niece or two
And clamp your shutters!

The two 'nieces' run in. They are young, pretty enough though a little worn, conscious that they are the chief attraction of The Boar. At the moment they are in mild hysterics, having run downstairs

in their night clothes, though with their unusual instinct for precaution they have found time to don each a wrap. It is not clear whether they are sisters, friends or simply colleagues: but they behave like twins, as though each has only half a personality and they cling together always to sustain their self-esteem.

NIECES Oo! Oo!

It's blown our bedroom windows in.

Oo! we'll all be drowned.

BALSTRODE Perhaps in gin.

NIECES I wouldn't mind if it didn't howl.

It gets on my nerves.

BALSTRODE D'you think we

Should stop our storm for such as you –

Coming all over palpitations!

'Oo! Oo!'

Auntie, get some new relations.

AUNTIE *(taking it ill)* Loud man, I never did have time

For the kind of creature who spits in his wine.

A joke's a joke and fun is fun,

But say your grace and be polite for all that we have done.

NIECES For his peace of mind.

SEDLEY This is no place for me!

AUNTIE Loud man, you're glad enough to be

Playing your cards in our company.

A joke's a joke and fun is fun,

But say your grace and be polite for all that we have done.

NIECES For his peace of mind.

SEDLEY This is no place for me!

AUNTIE Loud man – !

Some more fishermen and women come in. Usual struggle with the door.

FISHERMAN There's been a landslide up the coast.

BOLES (*rising unsteadily*) I'm drunk. Drunk!

BALSTRODE You're a Methody wastrel.

BOLES (*staggering to one of the Nieces*) Is this a niece of yours?

AUNTIE That's so.

BOLES Who's her father?

AUNTIE Who wants to know?

BOLES I want to pay my best respects
To the beauty and misery of her sex.

BALSTRODE Old Methody, you'd better tune
Your piety to another hymn.

BOLES I want her!

BALSTRODE Sh-h-h.

AUNTIE Turn that man out.

BALSTRODE He's the local preacher.
He's lost the way of carrying liquor.
He means no harm.

BOLES No, I mean love!

BALSTRODE Come on, boy!

*Boles hits him. Mrs Sedley screams. Balstrode quietly
overpowers Boles and sits him in a chair.*

[11] We live and let live, and look
We keep our hands to ourselves.

*Boles struggles to his feet. Balstrode sits him down again,
laying the law down.*

Pub conversation should depend
On this eternal moral;
So long as satire don't descend
To fisticuff or quarrel.
We live and let live, and look
We keep our hands to ourselves.

*And while Boles is being forced into his chair again, the
bystanders comment:*

CHORUS We live and let live, and look
We keep our hands to ourselves.

BALSTRODE We sit and drink the evening through
Not deigning to devote a
Thought to the daily cud we chew
But buying drinks by rota.

ALL We live and let live, and look
We keep our hands to ourselves.

*Door opens. The struggle with the wind is worse than before as
Ned Keene gets through.*

KEENE Have you heard the cliff is down
Up by Grimes's hut?

AUNTIE Where is he?

SEDLEY Thank God you've come!

KEENE You won't blow away.

SEDLEY The carter's over half an hour late!

BALSTRODE He'll be later still: the road's under flood.

SEDLEY I can't stay longer. I refuse.

KEENE You'll have to stay if you want your pills.

SEDLEY With drunken females and in brawls!

KEENE They're auntie's nieces, that's what they are,
And better than you for kissing, ma.
Mind that door!

ALL Mind that door!

*The door opens again. Peter Grimes has come in. Unlike the rest
he wears no oilskins. His hair looks wild. He advances into the
room shaking off the raindrops from his hair. Mrs Sedley faints.
Ned Keene catches her as she falls.*

KEENE Get the brandy, aunt.

AUNTIE Who'll pay?

KEENE Her. I'll charge her for it.

As Peter moves forward the others shrink back.

CHORUS Talk of the devil and there he is
And a devil he is, and a devil he is.
Grimes is waiting his apprentice.

KEENE This widow's as strong as any two
Fishermen I have met.
Everybody's very quiet!

No-one answers. Silence is broken by Peter, as if thinking aloud.

12 **PETER** Now the Great Bear and Pleiades
Where earth moves
Are drawing up the clouds
Of human grief
Breathing solemnity in the deep night.
Who can decipher
In storm or starlight
The written character
Of a friendly fate—
As the sky turns, the world for us to change?
But if the horoscope's
bewildering
Like a flashing turmoil
Of a shoal of herring
Who can turn skies back and begin again?

Silence again. Then muttering in undertones.

CHORUS He's mad or drunk.
Why's that man here?

NIECES His song alone would sour the beer.

CHORUS His temper's up.
O chuck him out.

NIECES I wouldn't mind if he didn't howl.

CHORUS He looks as though he's nearly drowned.

BOLES (*staggering up to Grimes*) You've sold your soul, Grimes.

BALSTRODE Come away.

BOLES Satan's got no hold on me.

BALSTRODE Leave him alone, you drunkard.

He goes to get hold of Boles.

BOLES I'll hold the gospel light before
The cataract that blinds his eyes.

PETER (*as the drunk stumbles up to him*) Get out.

Grimes thrusts Boles aside roughly and turns away.

BOLES His exercise
Is not with men but killing boys.

Boles picks up a bottle and is about to bring it down on Grimes's head when Balstrode knocks it out of his hand and it crashes in fragments on the floor.

AUNTIE For God's sake, help me keep the peace.
D'you want me up at the next Assize?

13 **BALSTRODE** For peace sake, someone start a song.

Keene starts a round.

AUNTIE That's right, Ned!

ALL Old Joe has gone fishing and
Young Joe has gone fishing and
You Know has gone fishing and
Found them a shoal.
Pull them in in handfals,
And in canfuls,
And in panfuls
Bring them in sweetly,
Gut them completely,
Pack them up neatly,
Sell them discretely,
Oh, haul away.

Peter comes into the round: the others stop.

PETER When I had gone fishing
When he had gone fishing
When You Know'd gone fishing
We found us Davy Jones.
Bring him in with horror!
Bring him in with terror!
And bring him in with sorrow!
Oh, haul away.

This breaks the round, but the others recover in a repeat.

At the climax of the round the door opens to admit Ellen Orford, the Boy and the Carrier. All three are soaking, muddy and bedraggled.

HOBSON The bridge is down, we half swam over.

KEENE And your cart? Is it seaworthy?

*The women go to Ellen and the Boy. Auntie fusses over them.
Boles reproaches.*

ELLEN We're chilled to the bone.

BOLES (*to Ellen*) Serves you right, woman.

AUNTIE My dear
There's brandy and hot water to spare.

NIECES Let's look at the boy.

ELLEN (*rising*) Let him be.

NIECES Nice sweet thing.

ELLEN (*protecting him*) Not for such as you.

PETER Let's go. You ready?

AUNTIE Let them warm up
They've been half drowned.

PETER Time to get off.

AUNTIE Your hut's washed away.

PETER Only the cliff.
Young prentice, come.

The Boy hesitates. Ellen leads him to Peter.

ELLEN Goodbye, my dear, God bless you.
Peter will take you home.

ALL Home? Do you call that home?

Peter takes the boy out of the door into the howling storm.

1 **INTERLUDE III:** *Sunday Morning*

ACT II

Scene 1

Scene as in Act I. The Street, some weeks later. A fine sunny morning with church bells ringing. Some of the villagers are standing outside the church door. The Street is deserted till Ellen and Grimes's new boy, John, come in against the stream of villagers crossing towards the church. Ellen is carrying a work-basket. She sits down between a boat and a breakwater and takes her knitting from the basket. One or two latecomers cross and hurry into the church.

2 **ELLEN** Glitter of waves

And glitter of sunlight
Bid us rejoice
And lift our hearts on high.
Man alone
Has a soul to save,
And goes to church
To worship on a Sunday.

The organ starts a voluntary in church, off.

Shall we not go to church this Sunday
But do our knitting by the sea?
I'll do the work, you talk.

Hymn starts in church.

3 **CHORUS** (*off*) Now that the daylight fills the sky

We lift our hearts to God on high
That he in all we do or say
Would keep us free from harm today.

ELLEN Nothing to tell me,
Nothing to say? Then shall I
Tell you what your life was like?
See if I'm right. I think
You liked your workhouse with its grave

Empty look. Perhaps you weren't
So unhappy in your loneliness?

When first I started teaching
The life at school to me seemed bleak and empty
But soon I found a way of knowing children –
Found the woes of little people
Hurt more, but are more simple.

She goes on with her work. John says nothing.

CHORUS May he restrain our tongues from strife
And shield from anger's din our life
And guard with watchful care our eyes
From earth's absorbing vanities.

ELLEN John, you may have heard the story
Of the prentice Peter had before.

CHORUS So we, when this day's work is done
And shades of night return once more
... Amen.

ELLEN But when you came, I
Said, Now this is where we
Make a new start. Every day
I pray it may be so.

Morning prayer begins and the Rector's voice is heard from the church.

RECTOR Wherefore I pray and beseech you, as many as are here
present, to accompany me with a pure heart and humble voice,
saying after me, Almighty ...

CONGREGATION Almighty and most merciful Father;
We have erred and strayed from thy ways like lost sheep.
The church service continues through the ensuing scene.

ELLEN There's a tear in your coat. Was that done
Before you came?
Badly torn.

Mrs Sedley stops to listen on her way to church.

That was done recently.
Take your hand away.
Your neck, is it? John, what
Are you trying to hide?

RECTOR AND CHOIR *(in church)*

O Lord, open Thou our lips;
And our mouth shall shew forth thy praise.
O God make speed to save us;
O Lord make haste to help us.

Ellen undoes the neck of the boy's shirt.

ELLEN A bruise.
Well... It's begun.

RECTOR AND CHOIR Glory be to the Father and to the Son
and to the Holy Ghost;
As it was in the beginning is now...

ELLEN Child, you're not too young to know
Where roots of sorrow are
Innocent you've learned how near
Life is to torture.

RECTOR AND CHOIR Praise ye the Lord;
The Lord's name be praised.

ELLEN Let this be a holiday,
Full of peace and quietness
While the treason of the waves
Glitters like love.
Storm and all its terrors are
Nothing to the heart's despair.
After the storm will come a sleep
Like oceans deep.

CHOIR O all ye works of the Lord, bless ye the Lord;
O ye Sun and Moon, bless ye the Lord;
O ye Winds of God, bless ye the Lord,
Praise Him and magnify Him for ever.

Peter Grimes comes in excitedly from the harbour.

O ye Light and Darkness, bless ye the Lord;
O ye Nights and Days, bless ye the Lord;
O ye Lightnings and Clouds, bless ye the Lord,
Praise Him and magnify Him for ever.

PETER Come boy.

ELLEN Peter – what for?

CHOIR O ye Wells, bless ye the Lord;
O ye Seas and Floods, bless the Lord;
O ye Whales and all that move in the waters,
Praise Him and magnify Him for ever.

PETER I've seen a shoal. I need his help.

ELLEN But if there were then all the boats
Would fast be launching.

PETER I can see
The shoals to which the rest are blind.

CHOIR O all ye Fowls of the Air, bless ye the Lord;
O all ye Beasts and Cattle, bless ye the Lord;
O ye Children of Men, bless ye the Lord,
Praise Him and magnify Him for ever.

ELLEN This is a Sunday, his day of rest.

PETER This is whatever day I say it is!
Come boy!

ELLEN You and John have fished all week
Night and day without a break
Painting boat, mending nets, cleaning fish,
Now let him rest.

PETER Come boy!

ELLEN But your bargain...

PETER My bargain?

ELLEN His weekly rest.

PETER He works for me, leave him alone, he's mine.

ELLEN Hush, Peter, Hush!

CHOIR O ye Servants of the Lord, bless ye the Lord;
O ye holy and humble, bless ye the Lord;
Ananias, Azarias and Misael, bless ye the Lord,
Praise Him and magnify Him for ever.

As it was in the beginning is now and ever shall be,
World without end. Amen.

*The sound dies down. In church the lesson is being read.
Ellen speaks to Peter, away from the boy.*

ELLEN This unrelenting work
This grey, unresting industry,
What aim, what future, what peace
Will your hard profits buy?

PETER Buy us a home, buy us respect
And buy us freedom from pain
Of grinning at gossips' tales.
Believe in me, we shall be free!

CHOIR I believe in God the Father Almighty,
Maker of heaven and earth:
And in Jesus Christ his only Son our Lord,
Who was conceived... *(fades into background)*

ELLEN Peter, tell me one thing, where
The youngster got that ugly bruise?

PETER Out of the hurly burly!

ELLEN O your ways
Are hard and rough beyond his days.
Peter, were we right in what we planned
To do? Were we right, were we right?

PETER Take away your hand.
My only hope depends on you.
If you – take it away – what's left?

Ellen moves unhappily away from him.

ELLEN Were we mistaken when we schemed
To solve your life by lonely toil?

PETER Wrong to plan?

Wrong to try?
Wrong to live?
Right to die?

ELLEN Were we mistaken when we dreamed
That we'd come through and all be well?

PETER Wrong to struggle?
Wrong to hope?
Then the Borough's
Right again?

ELLEN Peter! You cannot buy your peace
You'll never stop the gossips' talk,
With all the fish from out the sea.
We were mistaken to have dreamed ...
Peter! We've failed. We've failed.

He cries out as if in agony, then strikes her. The basket falls.

CHOIR Amen.

PETER So be it! – And God have mercy upon me!
*The boy runs from him. Peter follows. Ellen watches, then goes
out the other way.*

*Behind closed doors and half-open windows neighbours have
been watching. Three now emerge. First Auntie, then Ned Keene,
finally Boles.*

4 AUNTIE Fool to let it come to this!
Wasting pity, squandering tears.

KEENE See the glitter in his eyes!
Grimes is at his exercise.

BOLES What he fears is that the Lord
Follows with a flaming sword.

AUNTIE You see all through crazy eyes.

ALL Grimes is at his exercise.

BOLES Where's the pastor of this flock
Where's the guardian shepherd's hook?

ALL Parson, lawyer, all at prayers.

The service is over and people gradually collect outside the church door.

KEENE, BOLES AND AUNTIE Now the church parade begins,
Fresh beginning for fresh sins.
Ogling with a pious gaze
Each one's at his exercise.

Dr Crabbe comes first.

AUNTIE Doctor!

KEENE Leave him out of it.

SEDLEY (*coming from church*) What is it?

KEENE Private business.

SEDLEY I heard two voices during psalms
One was Grimes, and one more calm.

BOLES While you worshipped idols there
The Devil had his Sabbath here.

SEDLEY Maltreating that poor boy again.

BALSTRODE Grimes is weatherwise and skilled
In the practice of his trade.
Let him be, let us forget
What slander can invent.

CHORUS What is it?

AUNTIE, BOLES AND KEENE What do you suppose?
Grimes is at his exercise.

*As people come out two by two they circulate the village green
singing their couplets as they reach the centre. First come
Swallow and a fellow lawyer.*

CHORUS What is it? What do you suppose?
Grimes is at his exercise.

FELLOW LAWYER Dullards build their self-esteem
By inventing cruelties.

SWALLOW Even so, the law restrains
Too impetuous enterprise.

FISHERWOMAN Fishing is a lonely trade
Single men have much to bear.

NIECES If a man's work cannot be made
Decent, let him stay ashore.

CHORUS (*over all*) What is it? What do you suppose?
Grimes is at his exercise.

Balstrode pauses by Ned as he walks round.

RECTOR My flock – oh what a weight is this
My burden pastoral.

SEDLEY But what a dangerous faith is this
That gives souls equality!

BALSTRODE When the Borough gossip starts
Somebody will suffer.

CHORUS What is it? What do you suppose?
Grimes is at his exercise.

*During the hubbub Boles climbs a little way up the steps of the
Moot Hall.*

BOLES People – ... No! I will speak...!
This thing concerns you all.

CHORUS (*crowding round Boles*) Whoever's guilty gets the rap
The Borough keeps its standards up.

BALSTRODE Tub-thumping.

BOLES This prentice system's
Uncivilised and unchristian.

BALSTRODE Something of the sort befits
Brats conceived outside the sheets.

BOLES Where's the parson in his black?
Is he here or is he not?
To guide a sinful straying flock?

CHORUS Where's the parson?

RECTOR Is it my business?

BOLES Your business to ignore
Growing at your door
Evils, like your fancy flowers?

CHORUS Evils!

RECTOR Calm now! Tell me what it is.

Ellen comes in. She is met by Auntie who has picked up Ellen's abandoned basket and its contents.

AUNTIE Ellen dear, see I've gathered
All your things. Come rest inside.

BOLES AND CHORUS She can tell you, Ellen Orford.
She helped him in his cruel games.

RECTOR (*holding his hand up for silence*) Ellen please.

ELLEN What am I to do?

BOLES AND CHORUS Speak out in the name of the Lord.

5 ELLEN We planned that their lives should
Have a new start,
That I, as a friend could
Make the plan work
By bringing comfort where
Their lives were stark.

RECTOR You planned to be worldly-wise
But your souls were dark.

ELLEN We planned this time to
Care for the boy;
To save him from danger
And hardship sore, and
Mending his clothes and giving him
Regular meals.

SEDLEY O little care you for the prentice
Or his welfare!

BOLES Call it danger, call it harship
Or plain murder!

KEENE But thanks to flinty hearts
Even quacks can make a profit!

NIECES Perhaps his clothes you mended
But you work his bones bare!

AUNTIE You meant just to be kind
And avert fear!

BALSTRODE You interfering gossips, this
Is not your business!

HOBSON Pity the boy!

SWALLOW You planned to heal sick souls
With bodily care.

ELLEN O pity those who try to bring
A shadowed life into the sun.

ELLEN, AUNTIE AND BALSTRODE O Lord, hard hearts!

CHORUS Who lets us down must take the rap
The Borough keeps its standards up.

ALL (*except Ellen, Auntie and Balstrode*)
Tried to be kind!
Murder!
Tried to be kind and to help!
Murder!

RECTOR Swallow – shall we go and see Grimes in his hut?

SWALLOW Popular feeling's rising.

RECTOR Balstrode, I'd like you to come.

BALSTRODE I warn you we shall waste our time.

RECTOR I'd like your presence just the same.

SEDLEY Little do the suspects know,
I've the evidence. I've a clue.

CHORUS Now we will find out the worst.

SWALLOW (*pointing to the Nieces who join the crowd*)
No ragtail no bobtail if you please.

BOLES (*pushing them away*)

Back to the gutter – you keep out of this.

RECTOR Only the men, the women stay.

SWALLOW Carter Hobson, fetch the drum.

Summon the Borough to Grimes's hut.

CHORUS To Grimes's hut!

To Grimes's hut!

Hobson sounds his drum and the men line up behind Swallow, the Rector and Mrs Sedley. Balstrode lags behind. Behind them come the rest of the crowd.

Now is gossip put on trial,
Now the rumours either fail
Or are shouted in the wind
Sweeping furious through the land.
Now the liars shiver, for
Now if they've cheated we shall know:
We shall strike and strike to kill
At the slander or the sin.
Now the whisperers stand out
Now confronted by the fact.
Bring the branding iron and knife:
What's done now is done for life.

The crowd has gone. Auntie, Nieces and Ellen remain.

6 NIECES From the gutter, why should we
Trouble at their ribaldries?

AUNTIE And shall we be ashamed because
We comfort men from ugliness?

ALL Do we smile or do we weep
Or wait quietly till they sleep?

AUNTIE When in storm they shelter here
And we soothe their fears away

NIECES We know they'll whistle their goodbyes
Next fine day and put to sea.

ELLEN On the manly calendar
We only mark heroic days.

ALL Do we smile or do we weep
Or wait quietly till they sleep?

ELLEN They are children when they weep
We are mothers when they strive
Schooling our own hearts to keep
The bitter treasure of their love.

ALL Do we smile or do we weep
Or wait quietly till they sleep?

7 INTERLUDE IV: Passacaglia

Scene 2

Grimes's hut is an upturned boat. It is on the whole shipshape, though bare and forbidding. Ropes coiled, nets, kegs and casks furnish the place. It is lighted by a skylight. There are two doors, one (back centre) opens on the cliff; the other downstage, opens on the road. The boy staggers into the room as if thrust from behind. Peter follows, in a towering rage. He pulls down the boy's fishing clothes which were neatly stacked on a shelf.

8 PETER Go there!
Here's your sea boots. Take those bright
And fancy buckles off your feet.

He throws the sea boots down in front of the boy.

There's your oilskin and sou'wester.
Stir your pins, we must get ready!
There's the jersey that she knitted,
With the anchor that she patterned.

He throws the clothes to the boy. They fall on the floor around him. The boy is crying silently. Peter shakes his shoulder.

I'll tear the collar off your neck.
Steady. Don't take fright, boy. Stop.

Peter opens the cliff-side door and looks out.

Look. Now is our chance!
The whole sea's boiling. Get the nets.
Come, boy!
They listen to money
These Borough gossips,
Only to money.
I'll fish the sea dry,
Flood the market.
Now is our chance to get a good catch
Get money to choke
Down rumour's throat.
I will set up
With house and home and shop
I'll marry Ellen,
I'll ...

*He turns to see the boy still sitting on the rope coil, weeping.
He tears off his coat and throws the jersey at him.*

Coat off! Jersey on! My boy
We're going to sea!

He gives the boy a shove, which knocks him over; he lies sobbing miserably. Peter changes tone and breaks into another song.

- [9] In dreams I've built myself some kindlier home
Warm in my heart and in a golden calm
Where there'll be no more fear and no more storm.
And she will soon forget her schoolhouse ways
Forget the labour of those weary days
Wrapped round in kindness like September haze.
The learned at their books have no more store
Of wisdom than we'd close behind our door.
Compared with us the rich man would be poor.
I've seen in stars the life that we might share:
Fruit in the garden, children by the shore,
A fair white doorstep, and a woman's care.
But dreaming builds what dreaming can disown.

Dead fingers stretch themselves to tear it down.
I hear those voices that will not be drowned
Calling, there is no stone
In earth's thickness to make a home,
That you can build with and remain alone.

Hobson's drum, at the head of the Borough procession, can be heard very distantly coming towards the hut. Peter doesn't notice.

Sometimes I see that boy here in this hut.
He's there now, I can see him, he is there!
His eyes are on me as they were that evil day.
Stop moaning boy. Water?
There's no more water. You had the last yesterday.
You'll soon be home
In harbour calm and deep.

In the distance can be heard the song of the neighbours coming up the hill.

CHORUS (off) Now! Now!

Peter rises, goes quickly to the street door, and looks out.

PETER There's an odd procession here.
Parson and Swallow coming near.

Suddenly he turns on the boy, who doesn't move.

Wait! You've been talking.
You and that bitch were gossiping.
What lies have you been telling?
The Borough's climbing up the road.
To get me. Me! O I'm not scared
I'll send them off with a flea in their ear.
I'll show them. Grimes ahoy!

CHORUS (off) ... Or are shouted in the wind
Sweeping furious through the land.

PETER You sit there watching me
And you're the cause of everything
Your eyes, like his are watching me
With an idiot's drooling gaze.

Will you move

Or must I make you dance?

The boy jumps up and begins dragging nets and other tackle through the cliff door.

CHORUS (*off*) Now confronted by the fact.

Bring the branding iron and knife:

What's done now is done for life.

PETER Step boldly. For here's the way we go to sea

Down the cliff to find that shoal

That's boiling in the sea.

Careful, or you'll break your neck

Down the cliff-side to the deck.

Rope in hand he drives the boy towards the cliff door.

CHORUS (*off*) Now the liars shiver, for

Now if they've cheated we shall know:

We shall strike and strike to kill

At the slander or the sin.

PETER I'll pitch the stuff down. Come on!

He pitches ropes and nets.

Now

Shut your eyes and down you go.

There is a knocking at the other door. Peter turns towards it, then retreats. Meanwhile the boy climbs out. When Peter is between the two doors the boy screams and falls out of sight. Peter runs to the cliff door, feels for his grip and then swings quickly after him. The cliff-side door is open. The street door still resounds with the Rector's knock. Then it opens and the Rector puts his head round the door.

RECTOR Peter Grimes! Nobody here?

SWALLOW What about the other door?

They go and look out. Silence for a moment.

RECTOR Was this a recent landslide?

SWALLOW Yes.

RECTOR It makes almost a precipice.

How deep?

SWALLOW Say forty feet.

RECTOR Dangerous to leave the door open.

KEENE He used to keep his boat down there.

Maybe they've both gone fishing.

RECTOR Yet

His hut is reasonably kept

Here's order. Here's skill.

Swallow draws the moral.

[10] SWALLOW The whole affair gives Borough talk its – shall

I say quietus? Here we come pell-mell

Expecting to find out – we know not what.

But all we find is a neat and empty hut.

Gentlemen, take this to your wives:

Less interference in our private lives.

RECTOR There's no point certainly in staying here,

And will the last to go please close the door.

They go out – all save Balstrode who hesitates, looks round the hut, sees the boy's Sunday clothes lying around, examines them, then goes to the path door to shut it. He goes up to the cliff-side door, looks out, and hurriedly climbs down the way Peter and the boy went.

1 **INTERLUDE V: Moonlight**

ACT III

Scene 1

Scene as in Act I, a few days later.

The time is summer evening. One of the season's subscription dances is taking place in the Moot Hall which is brightly lit and from which we can hear the band playing a polka and the rhythm of the dancers' feet. The Boar too is brightly lit and, as the dance goes on there will be a regular passage – of the males at any rate – from the Moot Hall to the Inn. The stage is empty but presently there is a little squeal and one of the Nieces scampers down the exterior staircase of the Moot Hall closely followed by Swallow. They haven't got very far before the other Niece appears at the top of the Moot Hall stairs.

2 *A Barn Dance is being played in the Moot Hall.*

SWALLOW (to Niece 1) Assign your prettiness to me,
I'll seal the deed and take no fee,
My signature, your graceful mark
Are witnessed by the abetting dark.

NIECES Together we are safe
As any wedded wife.
For safety in number lies
A man is always lighter
His conversation brighter
Provided that the tête-à-tête's in threes.

SWALLOW Assign your prettiness to me
I'll call it real property:
Your sister shan't insist upon
Her stay of execution.

NIECES Save us from lonely men,
They're like a broody hen
With habits but with no ideas;

But given choice of pleasures
They show their coloured feathers
Provided that the tête-à-tête's in threes.

SWALLOW I shall take steps to change her mind;
She has first option on my love.
If my appeal should be ignored
I'll take it to the House of Lords.

NIECES O pairing's all to blame
For awkwardness and shame,
And all these manly sighs and tears
Which wouldn't be expended
If people condescended
Always to have their tête-à-tête's in threes.

SWALLOW Assign your prettiness to me
We'll make an absolute decree
Of quiet enjoyment which you'll bless
By sending sister somewhere else.

NIECE 2 Ned Keene is chasing me, gives me no peace.

SWALLOW He went to The Boar to have a glass
Sister and I will join him there.
If you don't want Ned you'd better stay here.

He opens the Inn door. Niece 2 is about to enter when –

NIECE 1 They're all watching. I must wait
Till Auntie's turned her back.

She escapes to join her sister and leaves Swallow holding the door open.

SWALLOW Bah!

He goes into The Boar alone. The Barn Dance stops – applause.

The sisters are halfway up stairs when Ned Keene comes out of the Moot Hall at the top of the stairs. They fly, giggling, and hide behind one of the boats on the shore. (Three boats can be seen as at the end of Act I.)

KEENE (calling after them) Ahoy.

He is halfway to their hiding place when a peremptory voice stops him in mid career. Mrs Sedley is at the top of the Moot Hall stairs.

A slow Waltz starts from the Moot Hall.

SEDLEY Mr Keene! Can you spare a moment?
I've something to say that's more than urgent,
About Peter Grimes and that boy.

She is downstairs by now and has him buttonholed.

Neither of them was seen yesterday.
It's more than suspicion now, it's fact.
The boy's disappeared.

KEENE Do you expect me to act
Like a Bow Street runner or a constable?

SEDLEY At least you can trouble to hear what
I've got to say.
For two days I've kept my eyes open
For two days I've said nothing;
Only watched and taken notes
Pieced clue to clue and bit by bit
Reconstructed all the crime.
Everything points to Peter Grimes:
He is the murderer.

KEENE Old woman, you're far too ready
To yell blue murder.
If people poke their noses into others' business –
No! They won't get me to help them –
They'll find there's merry hell to pay!
You just tell me where's the body?

SEDLEY In the sea the prentice lies
Whom nobody has seen for days.
Murder most foul it is
Eerie I find it,
My skin's a prickly heat
Blood cold behind it!
In midnight's loneliness

And thrilling quiet
The history I trace
The stifling secret.
Murder most foul it is,
And I'll declare it.

KEENE (*getting bored, thirsty and angry*) Are you mad old woman
Or is it too much laudanum?

SEDLEY (*like a cross-examining counsel*)
Has Peter Grimes been seen?

KEENE He's away.

SEDLEY And the boy?

KEENE They're fishing, likely.

SEDLEY Has his boat been seen?

KEENE Why should it?

SEDLEY His hut's abandoned.

KEENE I'm dry. Good night.

The Waltz stops.

He breaks away from her grasp, goes into The Boar and bangs the door after him. Dr Crabbe emerges from The Boar. Mrs Sedley retires into the shadow of the boats.

A Hornpipe starts from the Moot Hall. The Rector and other burgesses come down the Moot Hall stairs.

BURGESS Come along, Doctor – (*indicating The Boar*)
We're not wanted there, we oldsters.

BURGESSES Good night – it's time for bed.
Good night! Good night! Good night,
good people, good night!

RECTOR I looked in a moment, the company's gay,
With pretty young women and youths on the spree;
So parched like my roses, but now the sun's down
I'll water my roses and leave you the wine.

BURGESSES Good night! Good night!

Good night, good people, good night!

RECTOR Good night, Dr Crabbe, all good friends good night.

Don't let the ladies keep company too late
My love to the maidens, wish luck to the men!
I'll water my roses and leave you the wine.

*The Rector, Dr Crabbe and the burgesses gradually disperse
to their houses.*

BURGESSES Good night! Good night! Good night,
good people, good night!

The Hornpipe fades out.

SEDDLEY *(still in the boat shadow, going on with her brooding)*

Crime, which my hobby is
Sweetens my thinking;
Men who can breach the peace
And kill convention –
So many guilty ghosts
With stealthy body
Trouble my midnight thoughts ...

*Ellen and Balstrode come up slowly from the beach. It is clear
they have been in earnest talk. As they approach Balstrode
shines his lantern on the name of the nearest boat: Boy Billy.
Mrs Sedley doesn't show herself.*

ELLEN Is the boat in?

BALSTRODE Yes! For more than an hour.
Peter seems to have disappeared
Not in his boat, not in his hut.

ELLEN *(holding out the boy's jersey)* This I found
Down by the tide-mark.

*It is getting dark. To see the garment properly Balstrode holds it
to his lantern.*

BALSTRODE The boy's?

3 ELLEN My brodered anchor on the chest.

Embroidery in childhood was
A luxury of idleness.
A coil of silken thread giving
Dreams of a silk and satin life.
Now my broidery affords
The clue whose meaning we avoid.
My hand remembered its old skill –
These stitches tell a curious tale.
I remember I was brooding
On the fantasies of children
And dreamt that only by wishing I
Could bring some silk into their lives.
Now my broidery affords
The clue whose meaning we avoid.

The jersey is wet. Balstrode wrings the water out.

BALSTRODE We'll find him, maybe give a hand.

ELLEN We have no power to help him now.

BALSTRODE We have the power. We have the power.
In the black moment
When your friend suffers
Unearthly torment
We cannot turn our backs.
When horror breaks one heart
All hearts are broken.

ELLEN AND BALSTRODE We shall be there with him.

BALSTRODE Nothing to do but wait
Since the solution
Is beyond life – beyond
Dissolution.

They go out together.

4 *The dance music starts up again. When they have gone Mrs
Sedley goes quickly to the Inn door.*

SEDLEY (*calling through the door*) Mr Swallow, Mr Swallow.
I want the lawyer Swallow.

AUNTIE (*coming to the door*) What do you want?

SEDLEY I want the lawyer Swallow.

AUNTIE He's busy.

SEDLEY Fetch him please, this is official.
Business about the Borough criminal.
Please do as I tell you.

AUNTIE My customers come here for peace,
For quiet, away from you
And all such nuisances.

SEDLEY This is an insult!

AUNTIE As long as I am here you'll find
That I always speak my mind.

SEDLEY I'll have you know your place.
You baggage!

AUNTIE My customers come here for peace,
They take their drink, they take their ease!

SWALLOW (*coming out*) What's the matter?
Tell me what's the matter?

AUNTIE (*going in and banging the door*) Good night!

SEDLEY (*pointing dramatically*) Look!

SWALLOW I'm short-sighted you know.

SEDLEY It's Grimes's boat, back at last!

SWALLOW That's different. (*shouting into The Boar*) Hey.
Is Hobson there?

HOBSON (*appearing*) Ay, Ay, sir.

SEDLEY Good, now things are moving; and about time too!

SWALLOW You're constable of the Borough,
Carter Hobson.

HOBSON Ay, Ay, sir.

SWALLOW As the mayor,
I ask you to find Peter Grimes.
Take whatever help you need.

HOBSON Now what I claims
Is he's out at sea.

SWALLOW (*pointing*) But here's his boat.

HOBSON Oh! We'll send a posse to his hut.

SWALLOW If he's not there, you'll search the shore,
The marsh, the fields, the streets, the Borough.

HOBSON Ay, Ay, sir.

He goes into The Boar hailing.

Hey there! Come out and help!
Grimes is around! Come on! Come on!

SEDLEY Crime – that's my hobby – is
By cities hoarded.
Rarely are country minds
Lifted to murder
The noblest of the crimes
Which are my study.
And now the crime is here
And I am ready!

*Hobson comes out with Boles and other fishermen. As the dance
band fades out, the people crowd out of the Moot Hall and The
Boar and congregate on the green.*

CHORUS Who holds himself apart
Lets his pride rise.
Him who despises us
We'll destroy.
And cruelty becomes
His enterprise
Him who despises us
We'll destroy.

(with Nieces, Mrs Sedley, Boles, Keene, Swallow and Hobson)

Our curse shall fall upon his evil day. We shall
Tame his arrogance.

We'll make the murderer pay for his crime.

Peter Grimes! Grimes!

The people, still shouting, scatter in all directions.

5 INTERLUDE VI

Scene 2

Scene as in Scene 1. Some hours later. The stage is quite empty – a thick fog. Foghorn and the cries of the searchers can be heard distantly.

6 VOICES Grimes!

Peter comes in, weary and demented.

PETER Steady. There you are. Nearly home.

What is home? Calm as deep water.

Where's my home? Deep in calm water.

Water will drink my sorrows dry

And the tide will turn.

VOICES Grimes!

PETER Steady. There you are. Nearly home.

The first one died, just died ...

The other slipped, and died ...

And the third will ...

'Accidental circumstances' ...

Water will drink his sorrows – my sorrows – dry

And the tide will turn.

VOICES Peter Grimes, Peter Grimes!

PETER Peter Grimes! Here you are! Here I am!

Hurry, hurry!

Now is gossip put on trial.

Bring the branding iron and knife

For what's done now is done for life ...

Come on! Land me!

'Turn the skies back and begin again.'

VOICES Peter Grimes!

PETER Old Joe has gone fishing and

Young Joe has gone fishing and

You'll know who's gone fishing when

You land the next shoal.

VOICES Peter Grimes!

PETER Ellen. Give me your hand.

There now – my hope is held by you,

If you leave me alone ...

Take away your hand!

The argument's finished,

Friendship lost,

Gossip is shouting,

Everything's said.

VOICES Peter Grimes!

PETER To hell with all your mercy

To hell with your revenge.

And God have mercy upon you.

VOICES Peter Grimes, Peter Grimes!

PETER Do you hear them all shouting my name?

D'you hear them?

Old Davy Jones shall answer:

Come home, come home!

VOICES *(close at hand)* Peter Grimes!

PETER *(roaring back at them)* Peter Grimes! Peter Grimes!

Ellen and Balstrode have come in and stand watching. Then Ellen goes up to Peter.

7 ELLEN Peter, we've come to take you home.

O come home out of this dreadful night.

See here's Balstrode. Peter don't you hear me?

Peter does not notice her and sings in a tone almost like prolonged sobbing. The voices shouting "Peter Grimes" can still be heard but more distantly and more sweetly.

PETER What harbour shelters peace

Away from tidal waves

Away from storms!

What harbour can embrace

Terrors and tragedies?

Her breast is harbour too –

Where night is turned to day.

BALSTRODE *(going up to Peter)*

Come on, I'll help you with the boat.

ELLEN No!

BALSTRODE Sail out till you lose sight of land, then sink the boat. D'you hear? Sink her.

Goodbye Peter.

Together they push the boat down the slope of the shore.

Balstrode comes back and waves goodbye. He takes Ellen who is sobbing quietly, calms her and leads her carefully down the main street home.

- [8] *Dawn comes to the Borough by a gentle sequence of sights and sounds. A candle is lighted and shines through a bare window. A shutter is drawn back.*

Hobson and his posse meet severally on the green by the Moot Hall. They gossip together, shake their heads, indicate the hopelessness of the search, extinguish their lanterns, and while some turn home, others go to the boats.

Nets are brought down from the houses by fisherwives. Cleaners open the front door of the Inn and begin to scrub the step.

Dr Crabbe comes from a confinement case with his black bag. He yawns and stretches; nods to the cleaners.

The Rector comes to early morning prayer. Mrs Sedley follows. Ned Keene draws the shutters of his shop.

CHORUS To those who pass the Borough sounds betray
The cold beginning of another day.

And houses sleeping by the waterside

Wake to the measured ripple of the tide.

Swallow comes out and speaks to the fishermen.

SWALLOW There's a boat sinking out at sea,
Coastguard reports.

FISHERMAN Within reach?

SWALLOW No.

FISHERMAN Let's have a look through the glasses.

Fishermen go with Swallow to the beach and look out. One of them has a glass.

CHORUS Or measured cadence of the lads who tow

Some entered hoy to fix her in their row,

Or hollow sound that from the passing bell

To some departed spirit bids farewell.

AUNTIE What is it?

BOLES Nothing I can see.

AUNTIE One of these rumours.

The Nieces emerge and begin to polish the brasses outside The Boar.

ALL In ceaseless motion comes and goes the tide

Flowing it fills the channel broad and wide

Then back to sea with strong majestic sweep

It rolls in ebb yet terrible and deep.



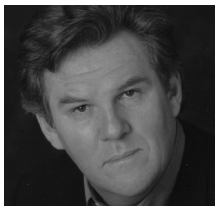
Sir Colin Davis conductor

Sir Colin is the London Symphony Orchestra's President and was the Orchestra's Principal Conductor between 1995 and 2006. He has recorded widely with Philips, BMG and Erato as well as LSO Live. His releases on LSO Live have won numerous prizes including Grammy and Gramophone Awards and have covered music by Berlioz, Dvořák, Elgar, and Sibelius among others. Sir Colin has been awarded international honours by Italy, France, Germany, and Finland and, in the Queen's Birthday Honours 2002, he was named a Member of the Order of the Companions of Honour. In 2002 Sir Colin received the Classical BRIT award for Best Male Artist, and in 2003 was given the Yehudi Menuhin Prize by the Queen of Spain for his work with young people. Sir Colin began his career at the BBC Scottish Orchestra, moving to Sadler's Wells in 1959. Following four years as Chief Conductor of the BBC Symphony Orchestra, he became Music Director of the Royal Opera House, Covent Garden in 1971 and Principal Guest Conductor of the Boston Symphony Orchestra in 1972. Between 1983 and 1992 he worked with the Bavarian Radio Symphony Orchestra. He was Principal Guest Conductor of the New York Philharmonic from 1998 through to the 2002/2003 season, and has been Honorary Conductor of the Dresden Staatskapelle since 1990.

Sir Colin est le président du London Symphony Orchestra et a été son chef principal de 1995 à 2006. Il a réalisé de nombreux enregistrements chez Philips, BMG et Erato, ainsi que chez LSO Live. Ses disques publiés chez LSO Live ont remporté de nombreuses distinctions, notamment des Grammy et Gramophone Awards, et l'on peut y entendre, entre autres, des œuvres de Berlioz, Dvořák, Elgar et Sibelius. Sir Colin a reçu des distinctions internationales en Italie, en France, en Allemagne et en Finlande et, l'occasion des Queen's Birthday Honours 2002, il a été nommé membre de l'ordre des Companions of Honour. Sir Colin a été

récompensé par les BRIT awards et, en 2003 la reine d'Espagne lui a remis le Prix Yehudi Menuhin pour son travail avec les enfants. Sir Colin a débuté au BBC Scottish Orchestra, passant en 1959 au Théâtre de Sadler's Wells, Londres. Après avoir été pendant quatre ans le Premier Chef du BBC Symphony Orchestra, il est devenu Directeur musical du Royal Opera House de Covent Garden en 1971 et Premier Chef invité du Boston Symphony Orchestra l'année suivante. De 1983 et 1992, il a travaillé avec l'Orchestre symphonique de la Radio Bavaroise et il a été Premier Chef invité du New York Philharmonic de 1998 la saison 2002/2003 et il est chef honoraire de la Staatskapelle de Dresde depuis 1990.

Sir Colin Davis ist Präsident des London Symphony Orchestras und war Chefdirigent des Orchesters zwischen 1995 und 2006. Er nahm umfangreich bei Philips, BMG, Erato und beim LSO Live-Label auf. Seine Einspielungen beim LSO Live-Label wurden häufig ausgezeichnet, zum Beispiel mit Grammy- und Gramophone-Preisen. Zu diesen Aufnahmen gehören Interpretationen von unter anderem Berlioz, Dvořák, Elgar und Sibelius. Sir Colin erhielt internationale Auszeichnungen in Italien, Frankreich, Deutschland und Finnland, und während der Titelverleihung zum Geburtstag der britischen Königin Elizabeth II. 2002 wurde er zum Mitglied des Ordens der Companions of Honour ernannt. Sir Colin sicherte sich diverse BRIT-Awards, und im Jahre 2003 erhielt er den Yehudi-Menuhin-Preis von der spanischen Königin für seine Arbeit mit jungen Menschen. Sir Colin begann seine Laufbahn beim BBC Scottish Orchestra. 1959 wechselte er zur Sadler's Wells Opera Company nach London. Nach vier Jahren als Chefdirigent des BBC Symphony Orchestra wurde er 1971 zum Musikdirektor des Royal Opera Houses Covent Garden ernannt und 1972 zum ersten Gastdirigenten des Boston Symphony Orchestra. Zwischen 1983–1992 arbeitete Sir Colin mit dem Symphonieorchester des Bayerischen Rundfunks, und von 1998 bis zur Spielzeit 2002/2003 war er erster Gastdirigent des New York Philharmonic Orchestra. Ehrendirigent der Dresdner Staatskapelle ist er seit 1990.



Glenn Winslade Peter Grimes

Born in Australia, Glenn Winslade studied in Sydney and Vienna. First well-known as a Mozart tenor, he slowly approached the heavier repertoire: Florestan (*Fidelio*) at the Bregenz Festival, 1996; Erik (*Der Fliegende Holländer*) in Rome, 1997; Hün (*Oberon*) in Antwerp, 1998; Rienzi in Vienna, 1999 and also Max (*Der Freischütz*), Apollo (*Daphne*) and Samson (*Samson et Dalila*); Lohengrin in Sydney and Kaiser (*Die Frau ohne Schatten*) in London, 2001. In 2002 and 2003 he sang Tannhäuser in Bayreuth, which he has also performed in Dresden and will repeat in Oviedo, Brussels and Bayreuth. He has appeared at leading concert venues in London, Vienna, Amsterdam, Munich, Berlin, Moscow, Leipzig, Dresden, Monte Carlo and Edinburgh.

Né en Australie, Glenn Winslade a fait ses études à Sydney et à Vienne. Après s'être fait connaître comme ténor mozartien, il a progressivement abordé un répertoire plus lourd : Florestan (*Fidelio*) au Festival de Bregenz en 1996 ; Erik (*Le Vaisseau fantôme*) à Rome en 1997; Hün (*Oberon*) à Anvers en 1998 ; Rienzi à Vienne en 1999, ainsi que Max (*Le Freischütz*), Apollo (*Daphné*) et Samson (*Samson et Dalila*) ; Lohengrin à Sydney et l'Empereur (*La Femme sans ombre*) à Londres en 2001. En 2002 et 2003, il a chanté Tannhäuser à Bayreuth – un rôle qu'il a également incarné à Dresde et qu'il va reprendre à Oviedo, Bruxelles et Bayreuth. Il s'est produit dans les salles les plus prestigieuses de Londres, Vienne, Amsterdam, Munich, Berlin, Moscou, Leipzig, Dresde, Monte-Carlo et Edimbourg.

Glenn Winslade wurde in Australien geboren und studierte in Sydney und Wien. Er schuf sich zuerst als Mozart-Tenor einen Namen, wandte sich dann aber langsam dem stimmlich

gewaltigeren Repertoire zu: Florestan (*Fidelio*) bei den Bregenzer Festspielen, 1996; Erik (*Der Fliegende Holländer*) in Rom, 1997; Hün (*Oberon*) in Antwerpen, 1998; Rienzi in Wien, 1999; Max (*Der Freischütz*), Apollo (*Daphne*) und Samson (*Samson et Dalila*) ebenfalls in Wien; Lohengrin in Sydney und der Kaiser (*Die Frau ohne Schatten*) in London, 2001. In den Jahren 2002 und 2003 sang Glenn Winslade den Tannhäuser in Bayreuth. Auch in Dresden trat er in dieser Rolle auf, die er wiederum in Oviedo, Brüssel und Bayreuth geben wird. Darüber hinaus war er in den berühmten Konzertsälen von London, Wien, Amsterdam, München, Berlin, Moskau, Leipzig, Dresden, Monte Carlo und Edinburgh zu hören.



Janice Watson Ellen Orford

Having studied at the Guildhall School of Music and Drama, Janice Watson first came to prominence as winner of the Kathleen Ferrier Memorial Award. In opera she has sung with Welsh National Opera, English National Opera, the Royal Opera, the Paris Opéra, Opéra de Lyon, Flanders Opera, Bavarian State Opera, Vienna State Opera, Netherlands Opera and Deutsche Staatsoper. She has appeared at the Santa Fe Festival, the San Francisco Opera, Lyric Opera of Chicago and the Metropolitan Opera. Her concert engagements have included the Boston Symphony, San Francisco Symphony, London Philharmonic, Chicago Symphony and Royal Concertgebouw orchestras. Her many recordings include Orff's *Carmina Burana*, Poulenc's *Gloria*, Howells's *Missa Sabrinensis* and Helena (*A Midsummer Night's Dream*) under Sir Colin Davis.

Après des études à la Guildhall School of Music and Drama de Londres, Janice Watson s'est fait remarquer en remportant le prix Kathleen Ferrier. A la scène, elle s'est produite à l'Opéra national de Galles, à l'English National Opera, au Royal Opera House de Covent Garden (Londres), à l'Opéra national de Paris, à l'Opéra national de Lyon, à l'Opéra de Flandres, à l'Opéra d'Etat de Bavière, à l'Opéra d'Etat de Vienne, à l'Opéra des Pays-Bas et à la Deutsche Staatsoper de Berlin. Elle a également chanté au Festival de Santa Fe, à l'Opéra de San Francisco, au Lyric Opera de Chicago et au Metropolitan Opera de New York. En concert, elle a été invitée par des orchestres comme le Boston Symphony, le San Francisco Symphony, l'Orchestre philharmonique de Londres, le Chicago Symphony et le Concertgebouw d'Amsterdam. Au sein d'une discographie abondante, on remarque notamment *Carmina burana* d'Orff, le *Gloria* de Poulenc, la *Missa sabrinensis* de Howells et Helena, dans *Le Songe d'une nuit d'été* de Britten, sous la direction de Sir Colin Davis.

Janice Watson studierte an der Guildhall School of Music and Drama (London). Sie zog zum ersten Mal die öffentliche Aufmerksamkeit auf sich, als sie den Kathleen-Ferrier-Memorial-Preis gewann. Als Opernsängerin trat sie in der Welsh National Opera, der English National Opera, im Royal Opera House/ Covent Garden, in der Paris Opéra, der Opéra de Lyon, der Vlaamse Opera, der Bayerischen Staatsoper, der Wiener Staatsoper, der Nederlands Opera und der Deutschen Staatsoper auf. Sie sang auch beim Santa Fe Festival, in der San Francisco Opera, der Lyric Opera of Chicago und der Metropolitan Opera. Im Konzert war sie unter anderem mit dem Boston Symphony Orchestra, San Francisco Symphony Orchestra, London Philharmonic Orchestra, Chicago Symphony Orchestra und dem Koninklijk Concertgebouw Orkest zu hören. Zu ihren zahlreichen Aufnahmen gehören Britten's *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (Helena) unter Sir Colin Davis, Orff's *Carmina Burana*, Poulenc's *Gloria*, und Howells's *Missa Sabrinensis*.



Anthony Michaels-Moore Balstrode

Anthony Michaels-Moore studied at Newcastle University and the Royal Scottish Academy of Music and Drama, and was the first British winner of the Pavarotti/ Philadelphia Opera Competition. He appears regularly with the world's leading opera companies and orchestras including the Royal Opera, Covent Garden; the Vienna Staatsoper; the Opéra Bastille; La Scala, Milan; Metropolitan New York; Chicago Lyric Opera; San Francisco; Brussels; Munich; Berlin; Barcelona; Madrid; Buenos Aires; Toulouse; and the Glyndebourne and Edinburgh festivals. His repertory includes most of the main baritone roles in the Italian repertory including Rigoletto, Di Luna, Giorgio Germont, Macbeth, Posa, Enrico, Marcello, Tonio and Carlo Gerrard. His many recordings include , *Carmina Burana*, *La vestale*, *Lucia di Lammermoor*, *La favorite* and Szymanowski's *Stabat Mater*.

Anthony Michaels-Moore a fait ses études à l'université de Newcastle et à la Royal Scottish Academy of Music and Drama, et a été le premier Britannique à remporter le Concours Pavarotti/ Opera Company de Philadelphie. Il est invité régulièrement par les plus grandes scènes et salles de concert mondiales, notamment le Royal Opera House de Covent Garden (Londres), l'Opéra d'Etat de Vienne, l'Opéra-Bastille, la Scala de Milan, le Metropolitan Opera de New York, le Lyric Opera de Chicago, les scènes de San Francisco, Bruxelles, Munich, Berlin, Barcelone, Madrid, Buenos Aires et Toulouse et les festivals de Glyndebourne et Edimbourg. Il a incarné la plupart des grands rôles de baryton du répertoire italien, tels Rigoletto, le Comte di Luna, Giorgio Germont, Macbeth, Posa, Enrico, Marcello, Tonio et Carlo Gérard. Parmi ses nombreux enregistrements, signalons *Carmina burana*, *La Vestale*, *Lucia di Lammermoor*, *La Favorite* et le *Stabat Mater* de Szymanowski.

Anthony Michaels-Moore studierte an der Newcastle University und Royal Scottish Academy of Music and Drama (Glasgow). Er war der erste britische Gewinner des in Verbindung mit der Opera Company of Philadelphia veranstalteten Wettbewerbs "Luciano Pavarotti". Anthony Michaels-Moore tritt regelmäßig in den großen Opernhäusern der Welt und mit den weltbesten Orchestern auf. Zu ihnen gehören das Royal Opera House/ Covent Garden, die Wiener Staatsoper, die Opéra Bastille, La Scala in Mailand, die Metropolitan Opera in New York, die Chicago Lyric Opera, die San Francisco Opera sowie Opernhäuser in Brüssel, München, Berlin, Barcelona, Madrid, Buenos Aires und Toulouse als auch die Festivals in Glyndebourne und Edinburgh. Sein Repertoire enthält die meisten Baritonrollen der italienischen Opernliteratur einschließlich Rigoletto, Di Luna, Giorgio Germont, Macbeth, Posa, Enrico, Marcello, Tonio und Carlo Gerrard. Unter seinen zahlreichen Einspielungen findet man unter anderem die *Carmina Burana*, *La vestale*, *Lucia di Lammermoor*, *La favorite* und Szymanowskis *Stabat Mater*.



Jill Grove Auntie

Jill Grove attended the New England Conservatory and Stephen F Austin State University. Opera engagements include Magdalena (*Die Meistersinger*); Madelon (*Andrea Chenier*); Pantalis (*Mefistofele*); Emilia (*Otello*); Rossweiße (*Die Walküre*); Amneris (*Aida*) with Dayton Opera; her London debut as Marfa (*Khovanshchina*) with English National Opera; Mary (*Der fliegende Holländer*) at the Met; Ulrica (*Un ballo in maschera*) for Welsh National Opera; Deaconess (*King Roger*) in Amsterdam; Haushälterin (*Die schweigsame Frau*) at the Théâtre du Châtelet; Omniscent Sea-Shell (*Die ägyptische Helena*); Mistress Quickly (*Falstaff*) in Santa Fe; First Norn (*Götterdämmerung*) in Dallas; Azucena (*Il trovatore*) in Tulsa; Anne Kronenberg in the world premiere of *Harvey Milk*; Suzuki (*Madame Butterfly*); Fortune Teller (*Arabella*); Dryad (*Ariadne auf Naxos*), and the world premiere of Tobias Picker's *The Fantastic Mr Fox*.

Jill Grove a étudié au Conservatoire de Nouvelle-Angleterre (Boston) et à l'université d'Etat Stephen F. Austin (Texas). Parmi ses engagements scéniques, signalons Magdalena (*Les Maîtres chanteurs de Nuremberg*), Madelon (*Andrea Chénier*), Pantalis (*Mefistofele*), Emilia (*Otello*), Rossweiße (*La Walkyrie*), Amneris (*Aida*) à l'Opéra de Dayton, Marfa (*Khovanchtchina*) à l'English National Opera, pour ses débuts londoniens, Mary (*Le Vaisseau fantôme*) au Metropolitan Opera de New York, Ulrica (*Un bal masqué*) à l'Opéra national de Galles, la Diaconesse (*Le Roi Roger*) à Amsterdam, la Gouvernante (*La Femme silencieuse*) au Théâtre du Châtelet, le Coquillage omniscent (*Hélène d'Egypte*), Mrs Quickly (*Falstaff*) à Santa Fe, la Première Norn (*Le Crépuscule des dieux*) à Dallas, Azucena (*Le Trouvère*) à Tulsa, Anne Kronenberg lors de la création de *Harvey Milk* de Stewart Wallace, Suzuki (*Madame Butterfly*), la Diseuse de bonne aventure (*Arabella*), la Dryade (*Ariane à Naxos*) et la création mondiale de *The Fantastic Mr Fox*, de Tobias Picker.

Jill Grove besuchte das New England Conservatory (Boston) und die Stephen F Austin State University (Nacogdoches, Texas). Zu ihren Opernrollen gehörten bisher die Magdalena (*Die Meistersinger*), Madelon (*Andrea Chenier*), Pantalis (*Mefistofele*), Emilia (*Otello*), Rossweiße (*Die Walküre*), Amneris (*Aida*) an der Dayton Opera, ihr Londoner Debüt als Marfa (*Khovan'shchina*) an der English National Opera, Mary (*Der fliegende Holländer*) an der Metropolitan Opera, Ulrica (*Un ballo in maschera*) an der Welsh National Opera, die Äbtissin (*King Roger*) in Amsterdam, die Haushälterin (*Die schweigsame Frau*) am Théâtre du Châtelet, die alles-wissende Muschel (*Die ägyptische Helena*), Mrs. Quickly (*Falstaff*) in Santa Fe, die 1. Norn (*Götterdämmerung*) in Dallas, Azucena (*Il trovatore*) in Tulsa, Anne Kronenberg in der Uraufführung von Stewart Wallace's *Harvey Milk*, Suzuki (*Madame Butterfly*), die Kartenaufschlägerin (*Arabella*), die Dryade (*Ariadne auf Naxos*) und Agnes the digger in der Uraufführung von Tobias Pickers *The Fantastic Mr. Fox*.



Sally Matthews First Niece

Sally Matthews, winner of the 1999 Kathleen Ferrier Award, studied at the Guildhall School. She was a member of the Royal Opera Young Artist programme and part of the BBC New Generation Artists scheme. She has given performances at the Glyndebourne Festival, Royal Opera House, Covent Garden, Bayerische Staatsoper, Netherlands Opera, and Vienna Staatsoper, among others, and has collaborated with many of Europe's finest orchestras and conductors including the London Symphony Orchestra, Berlin Philharmonic, Mahler Chamber Orchestra, Chamber Orchestra of Europe, Sir Simon Rattle, Sir Colin Davis, Antonio Pappano, Bernard Haitink, and Michael Tilson Thomas.

Her roles have included Countess (*The Marriage of Figaro*), Fiordiligi (*Così fan tutte*), Sifare (*Mitridate*), Anne Truelove (*The Rake's Progress*), Blanche (*Les Dialogues des Carmélites*), Cavalli's *La Calisto*, the title role in Unsuk Chin's *Alice in Wonderland*, and the Governess (*The Turn of the Screw*).

Also an experienced recitalist and concert performer, her repertoire includes Mahler's Symphony No 2, Beethoven's Symphony No 9, Poulenc's *Gloria*, Mendelssohn's *Lobgesang*, Brahms' *German Requiem*, Strauss's *Four Last Songs*, and Schumann's *Paradies und die Peri*.

Sally Matthews, qui a remporté le prix Kathleen-Ferrier 1999, a étudié à la Guildhall School (Londres). Elle a été membre du programme Jeunes Artistes de l'Opéra royal et du projet Artistes de la nouvelle génération de la BBC. Elle a chanté entre autres au Festival de Glyndebourne, à l'Opéra royal de Covent Garden, à la Staatsoper de Bavière, à l'Opéra des Pays-Bas et à la Staatsoper de Vienne. Elle a collaboré avec les meilleurs orchestres d'Europe,

tels l'Orchestre symphonique de Londres, l'Orchestre philharmonique de Berlin, l'Orchestre de chambre Mahler, l'Orchestre de chambre d'Europe, et des chefs aussi éminents que Sir Simon Rattle, Sir Colin Davis, Antonio Pappano, Bernard Haitink et Michael Tilson Thomas.

Parmi les rôles qu'elle a incarnés, citons la Comtesse (*Les Noces de Figaro*), Fiordiligi (*Così fan tutte*), Sifare (*Mitridate*), Anne Truelove (*The Rake's Progress*), Blanche (*Dialogues des carmélites*), La Calisto de Cavalli, le rôle titre d'*Alice au pays des merveilles* d'Unsuk Chin et la Gouvernante (*Le Tour d'érou*).

Elle mène également une riche carrière en récital et en concert, et son répertoire inclut la *Deuxième Symphonie* de Mahler, la *Neuvième Symphonie* de Beethoven, le *Gloria* de Poulenc, la *Symphonie Lobgesang* de Mendelssohn, Un *requiem allemand* de Brahms, les *Quatre Derniers Lieder* de Strauss et *Le Paradis et la Péri* de Schumann.

Sally Matthews studierte an der Guildhall School of Music and Drama und gewann 1999 den Kathleen-Ferrier-Preis. Sie nahm am Förderprogramm für junge Künstler am Royal Opera House/Covent Garden und an Förderprogramm des Radiosenders BBC Radio 3 New Generation Artists teil. Sie trat unter anderem beim Glyndebourne Festival, am Royal Opera House/Covent Garden, an der Bayerischen Staatsoper, Nederlandse Opera und Wiener Staatsoper auf und arbeitete mit zahlreichen führenden Orchestern und Dirigenten Europas zusammen wie zum Beispiel dem London Symphony Orchestra, den Berliner Philharmonikern, dem Mahler Chamber Orchestra, dem Chamber Orchestra of Europe, Sir Simon Rattle, Sir Colin Davis, Antonio Pappano, Bernard Haitink und Michael Tilson Thomas.

Zu Sally Matthews Rollen gehörten bisher die Gräfin (*Le nozze di Figaro* [Figaros Hochzeit]), Fiordiligi (*Così fan tutte*), Xiphare/Sifare (*Mitridate*), Anne Truelove (*The Rake's Progress* [Der Wüstling]), Blanche (*Les Dialogues des Carmélites* [Dialoge der Karmelitinnen]) und die Gouvernante (*The Turn of the Screw* [Die Drehung der Schraube, Die sündigen Engel oder Die Besessenen]) sowie die Titelrolle in Cavalli's *La Calisto* und Unsuk Chins *Alice in Wonderland* [*Alice im Wunderland*].

Sally Matthews ist auch eine erfahrene Solo- und Orchesterkonzertinterpretin. Zu ihrem Repertoire zählen u. a. Mahlers 2. Sinfonie, Beethovens 9. Sinfonie, Poulencs *Gloria*, Mendelssohns *Lobgesang*, Brahms' *Deutsches Requiem*, Strauss' vier letzte Lieder und Schumanns *Paradies und die Peri*.



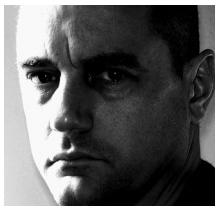
Alison Buchanan Second Niece

Alison Buchanan graduated from Guildhall School of Music and the Curtis Institute and was a winner of the Washington International Competition (1995), the Pavarotti Competition (1996) and the Kathleen Ferrier Competition (1996). Having completed her Adler Fellowship at San Francisco Opera, she made her debut with the company as Mimi in *La Bohème*, also appearing as Micaela (*Carmen*), in *Harvey Milk*, *Aida*, *Rigoletto* und *Elektra*. She has performed Beethoven's *Missa solemnis* with the Symphonieorchester des Bayerischen Rundfunks and the role of Donna Elvira (*Don Giovanni*) under Sir Colin Davis. She made her New York operatic debut for New York City Opera as Bess (*Porgy & Bess*) and was invited back to sing Donna Elvira (*Don Giovanni*).

Diplômée de la Guildhall School of Music and Drama de Londres et du Curtis Institute de Philadelphie, Alison Buchanan a remporté le Concours international de Washington (1995), le Concours Pavarotti (1996) et le Concours Kathleen Ferrier (1996). Après avoir bénéficié d'une bourse Adler à l'Opéra de San Francisco, elle y a fait ses débuts en Mimi (*La Bohème*), interprétant par la suite Micaela (*Carmen*), *Harvey Milk*, *Aida*, *Rigoletto* et *Elektra*. Elle a chanté la *Missa solemnis* de Beethoven avec l'Orchestre de la Radio bavaroise et Donna Elvira (*Don Giovanni*) sous la direction de Sir Colin Davis. Elle a fait ses débuts scéniques new-yorkais au New York City Opera dans le rôle de Bess (*Porgy and Bess*) et y a été réinvitée en Donna Elvira.

Alison Buchanan beschloss ihre Gesangsausbildung an der Guildhall School of Music (London) sowie am Curtis Institute (Philadelphia). 1995 war sie Preisträgerin des Gesangswettbewerbs innerhalb der Washington International Competitions, und 1996

gewann sie sowohl den Wettbewerb Luciano Pavarotti als auch den Kathleen-Ferrier-Preis. Nachdem sie ihren Adler-Studienaufenthalt an der San Francisco Opera abgeschlossen hatte, trat sie in jenem Haus zuerst als Mimi in *La Bohème* auf, dann auch in *Carmen* (Micaela), *Harvey Milk*, *Aida*, *Rigoletto* und *Elektra*. Sie erschien in Beethovens *Missa solemnis* mit dem Symphonieorchester des Bayerischen Rundfunks und in der Rolle der Donna Elvira (*Don Giovanni*) unter Sir Colin Davis. In New York trat sie zum ersten Mal in der New York City Opera auf, wo sie die Rolle der Bess (*Porgy and Bess*) sang. Sie erhielt eine Einladung, dort auch die Rolle der Donna Elvira (*Don Giovanni*) zu übernehmen.



Christopher Gillett Bob Boles

Christopher Gillett was born in London and studied at King's College Cambridge, the Royal College of Music and the National Opera Studio. He has recorded Elgar's *The Kingdom* with Leonard Slatkin and the London Philharmonic Orchestra; Britten's *The Beggar's Opera*; Albert in Britten's *Albert Herring* with Steuart Bedford; and the title role in Peter Maxwell Davies's *The Martyrdom of St Magnus*. Recent engagements have included Netherlands Opera's *The Marriage of Figaro* and *L'Incoronazione di Poppea* (also in New York); Henze's *Voices* with The London Sinfonietta; Britten's *Serenade* with the Danish Philharmonic Orchestra; Mozart's C minor Mass in the Netherlands; the Evangelist in the St Matthew Passion at the Royal Festival Hall; Dr Suda in Janáček's *Osud* at Garsington Opera, debuts with the Cleveland Orchestra and the Berlin Philharmonic in works by Oliver Knussen; and the Prince in the world premiere production of Tan Dun's *Tea* in Tokyo and Amsterdam.

Né à Londres, Christopher Gillett a fait ses études au King's College de Cambridge, au Royal College of Music de Londres et au National Opera Studio. Il a enregistré *Le Royaume* d'Elgar avec Leonard Slatkin et l'Orchestre philharmonique de Londres, *L'Opéra des gueux* de Britten, Albert (*Albert Herring* de Britten) avec Steuart Bedford et le rôle titre du *Martyre de saint Magne* de Peter Maxwell Davies. Parmi ses engagements récents, citons *Les Noces de Figaro* à l'Opéra des Pays-Bas, *Le Couronnement de Poppée* dans ce même théâtre et à New York, *Voices* de Henze avec le London Sinfonietta, *la Sérénade* de Britten avec l'Orchestre philharmonique danois, la Messe en ut mineur de Mozart aux Pays-Bas, l'Évangéliste dans la Passion selon saint Matthieu de Bach au Royal Festival Hall de Londres et le Docteur Suda dans *Osud* de Janáček à l'Opéra de Garsington. Il a fait ses

débuts avec l'Orchestre de Cleveland et l'Orchestre philharmonique de Berlin dans des œuvres d'Oliver Knussen et il a incarné le Prince lors de la création mondiale de *Tea*, de Tan Dun, à Tokyo et Amsterdam.

Christopher Gillett wurde in London geboren und studierte am King's College Cambridge, dem Royal College of Music (London) und dem National Opera Studio (London). Er sang in Einspielungen von Elgars *The Kingdom* mit dem London Philharmonic Orchestra unter Leonard Slatkin, von Brittens *Albert Herring* (Albert) unter Steuart Bedford, von Brittens *The Beggar's Opera* sowie Peter Maxwell Davies's *The Martyrdom of St Magnus* (Titelrolle). In jüngster Zeit trat Christopher Gillett in *Le nozze de Figaro* und *L'Incoronazione di Poppea* an der Nederlands Opera auf (in letztgenannter Oper auch in New York), in Henzes *Voices* mit der London Sinfonietta, in Brittens *Serenade* mit dem Sønderjyllands Symfoniorkester, in Mozarts Messe in c-Moll in den Niederlanden, als Evangelist in der Matthäuspassion in der Royal Festival Hall (London) und als Dr. Suda in Janáček's *Osud* bei den Sommerinszenierungen im Park des Garsington Manor (Oxford). Zudem war Christopher Gillett erstmalig auch mit dem Cleveland Orchestra und Berliner Philharmonikern zu hören, wo er Werken von Oliver Knussen darbot. In Tokio und Amsterdam sang er die Rolle des Prinzen in der Uraufführungsinszenierung von Tan Duns *Tea*.



James Rutherford Swallow

James Rutherford was born in Norwich, studied Theology at Durham University and music at the Royal College of Music, and National Opera Studio in London. He became a BBC Radio 3 New Generation Artist in 2000. Recent engagements include the title role in *The Marriage of Figaro* for Opéra National de Paris, Welsh National Opera, and Glyndebourne Touring Opera; Argante (*Rinaldo*) with René Jacobs at the Deutsche Staatsoper Berlin, and the Montpellier and Innsbruck festivals (recorded for Harmonia Mundi); Kothner (*Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg*) for Royal Opera; and concert appearances with the major UK orchestras. He was guest soloist at the opening concert of the BBC Proms 2003 and has given numerous recitals in venues throughout the UK and in studio for BBC Radio 3.

Né à Norwich (Grande-Bretagne), James Rutherford a étudié la théologie à l'université de Durham et la musique à Londres, au Royal College of Music et au National Opera Studio. En 2000, il a été nommé Artiste de la nouvelle génération par la chaîne de radio BBC 3. Parmi ses engagements récents, on remarque le rôle titre des *Noces de Figaro* à l'Opéra national de Paris, à l'Opéra national de Galles et au Glyndebourne Touring Opera ; Argante (*Rinaldo*) avec René Jacobs à la Deutsche Staatsoper de Berlin, ainsi qu'aux festivals de Montpellier et Innsbruck (enregistré chez Harmonia Mundi) ; Kothner (*Les Maîtres chanteurs de Nuremberg*) à Covent Garden ; et des concerts avec les principaux orchestres britanniques. Il a été invité comme soliste lors du concert d'ouverture des BBC Proms 2003 et a donné de nombreux récitals, en concert à travers le Royaume-Uni et en studio pour la BBC 3.

James Rutherford wurde in Norwich geboren, studierte Theologie an der Durham University (Nordengland) und Musik sowohl am Royal College of Music als auch am National Opera Studio (beide in London). Beim Radiosender BBC Radio 3 wurde er im Jahre 2000 als New Generation Artist vorgestellt. Zu seinen Engagements aus jüngster Zeit gehören die Titelrolle aus *Le nozze de Figaro* für die Opéra National de Paris, Welsh National Opera und Glyndebourne Touring Opera, Argante (*Rinaldo*) unter René Jacobs an der Deutschen Staatsoper Berlin, Auftritte bei den Festivals in Montpellier und Innsbruck (die für Harmonia mundi aufgenommen wurden), Kothner (*Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg*) am Royal Opera House/ Covent Garden und Konzertauftritte mit den großen Orchestern des Vereinigten Königreichs. Er war Solist beim Eröffnungskonzert der BBC-Proms 2003 und gab zahlreiche Solokonzerte in ganz Großbritannien. Einige Soloprogramme wurden auch im Studio für den Radiosender BBC Radio 3 aufgenommen.



Catherine Wyn-Rogers Mrs Sedley

Catherine Wyn-Rogers studied with Meriel St Clair and Ellis Keeler and now works with Diane Forlano. She appears with the major British and European orchestras and is renowned for her performances with the period instrument orchestras. She appears at the Three Choirs Festival, Edinburgh and Aldeburgh festivals and regularly at the BBC Proms. Her numerous recordings include Handel's *Samson* with Christophers, Mozart's *Vespers* with Pinnock, Vaughan Williams's *Serenade to Music* with Norrington, Elgar's *The Dream of Gerontius* with Handley, Mozart's *Requiem* with Mackerras. As a regular guest artist with English National Opera her roles have included Suzuki (*Madame Butterfly*), Akhrosimova (*War and Peace*) and La Cieca (*La Gioconda*), and with the Royal Opera House, Covent Garden First Norn (*Götterdämmerung*), Erda (*Das Rheingold* and *Siegfried*), Magdalena (*Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg*) and Cornelia (*Giulio Cesare*).

Catherine Wyn-Rogers a étudié auprès de Meriel St Clair et Ellis Keeler et travaille actuellement avec Diane Forlano. Elle s'est produite avec les plus grands orchestres britanniques et européens et s'est fait particulièrement remarquer à l'occasion de concerts avec instruments anciens. Elle a chanté au Three Choirs Festival, aux festivals d'Edimbourg et Aldeburgh et chante régulièrement aux BBC Proms. Parmi ses nombreux enregistrements, citons *Samson* de Haendel avec Christophers, les *Vêpres* de Mozart avec Pinnock, *la Sérénade à la Musique* de Vaughan Williams avec Norrington, *Le Rêve de Géronte* d'Elgar avec Handley, le *Requiem* de Mozart avec Mackerras. Régulièrement invitée par l'English National Opera, elle y a incarné Suzuki (*Madame Butterfly*), Akhrosimova (*Guerre et Paix*) et La Cieca (*La Gioconda*). Au Royal Opera House de Covent Garden, elle a chanté la Première Norn (*Le Crépuscule des dieux*), Erda (*L'Or du Rhin* et *Siegfried*),

Magdalene (*Les Maîtres chanteurs de Nuremberg*) et Cornelia (*Giulio Cesare*).

Catherine Wyn-Rogers studierte bei Meriel St Clair und Ellis Keeler, und arbeitet zurzeit mit Diane Forlano. Catherine Wyn-Rogers tritt mit den großen britischen und europäischen Orchestern auf und wurde auch durch ihre Zusammenarbeit mit Orchestern alter Musik bekannt. Sie erschien beim Three Choirs Festival, den Festivals in Edinburgh und Aldeburgh sowie regelmäßig bei den BBC-Proms. Zu ihren zahlreichen Aufnahmen gehören Handels *Samson* unter Christophers, Mozarts *Vespers* unter Pinnock, Vaughan Williams's *Serenade to Music* unter Norrington, Elgars *The Dream of Gerontius* unter Handley und Mozarts *Requiem* unter Mackerras. Regelmäßig an der English National Opera gastierend sang sie dort die Suzuki (*Madame Butterfly*), Achrosimowa (*Krieg und Frieden*) und La Cieca (*La Gioconda*). Am Royal Opera House/Covent Garden sang sie die 1. Norn (*Götterdämmerung*), Erda (*Das Rheingold und Siegfried*), Magdalena (*Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg*) und Cornelia (*Giulio Cesare*).



Ryland Davies Rev Horace Adams

Born in South Wales, Ryland Davies studied at the Royal Manchester College of Music and was made a Fellow of the College in 1971. Engagements have included *Turandot* at Geneva Opera; *La finta giardiniera* at Welsh National Opera; *Arbace (Idomeneo)* at Metropolitan Opera and Opera North; *Le Duc (Chérubin)* at Covent Garden and Monte Carlo; *Aumônier (The Dialogue of the Carmelites)* at Netherlands Opera and in Florence; *Monostatos (The Magic Flute)* and *Basilio (The Marriage of Figaro)* at Nice Opera, New Israeli Opera, Lyric Opera of Chicago, Netherlands Opera and Glyndebourne; *Dr Caius (Falstaff)* in Israel; *The Dialogue of the Carmelites* and Horace Adams (*Peter Grimes*) in Florence and at English National Opera and Japan; *Sellem (Rake's Progress)* at Glyndebourne; *La Bohème* and *The Magic Flute* with the Royal Opera House; and *Hauksendorf (The Makropoulos Case)* with Houston Grand Opera.

Né en Galles du Sud, Ryland Davies a étudié au Royal College of Music de Manchester, où il a été nommé fellow en 1971. Parmi ses engagements, on remarque *Turandot* au Grand Théâtre de Genève ; *La finta giardiniera* à l'Opéra national de Galles ; *Arbace (Idomeneo)* au Metropolitan Opera de New York et à l'Opéra North ; *Le Duc (Chérubin de Massenet)* à Covent Garden et Monte-Carlo ; l'Aumônier (*Les dialogues des carmélites*) à l'Opéra des Pays-Bas et à Florence ; *Monostatos (La Flûte enchantée)* et *Basilio (Les Noces de Figaro)* à l'Opéra de Nice, au New Israeli Opera, au Lyric Opera de Chicago, à l'Opéra des Pays-Bas et à Glyndebourne ; le Docteur Caius (*Falstaff*) en Israël ; Horace Adams (*Peter Grimes*) à Florence, à l'English National Opera et au Japon ; *Sellem (The Rake's Progress)* à Glyndebourne ; *La Bohème* et *La Flûte enchantée* à Covent Garden ; *Hauksendorf (L'Affaire Makropoulos)* au Grand Opéra de Houston.

Ryland Davies wurde in Süd Wales geboren und studierte am Royal Manchester College of Music, wo er 1971 zum Fellow des Colleges ernannt wurde. Zu seinen Engagements gehörten bisher die *Turandot* am Grand Théâtre de Genève, *La finta giardiniera* an der Welsh National Opera, *Arbace (Idomeneo)* an der Metropolitan Opera (New York) und Opera North (Leeds, England), *Le duc (Chérubin)* am Royal Oper House/ Covent Garden und in Monte Carlo, Aumonier (*Les dialogues des Carmélites*) an der Nederlands Opera und in Florenz, *Monostatos (Die Zauberflöte)* und *Basilio (Le nozze de Figaro)* an der Opéra de Nice, Neuen Oper Israel, Lyric Opera of Chicago, Nederlands Opera und Glyndebourne, Dr Caius (*Falstaff*) in Israel, Horace Adams (*Peter Grimes*) in Florenz, an der English National Opera und in Japan, Sellem (*The Rake's Progress*) in Glyndebourne, *La Bohème* und *Die Zauberflöte* am Royal Opera House/Covent Garden sowie *Hauksendorf (Vec Makropulos)* an der Houston Grand Opera.



Nathan Gunn Ned Keene

Born in the USA, Nathan Gunn studied at the University of Illinois. He made his debut at the Met in 1995 and appears there regularly as well as in other American houses including Chicago, Santa Fe, Seattle and Glimmerglass. He made his European debut in Paris as Prince Andrei (*War and Peace*), his Glyndebourne Festival debut in 2000 as Guglielmo (*Così fan tutte*), and his Covent Garden debut in 2002 as Harlequin (*Ariadne auf Naxos*). He returned to Glyndebourne in 2003 as Marcello (*La Bohème*).

Né aux Etats-Unis, Nathan Gunn a étudié à l'université de l'Illinois. Il a fait en 1995 ses débuts au Metropolitan Opera de New York et y est régulièrement invité, ainsi que dans d'autres opéras américains comme Chicago, Santa Fe, Seattle et Glimmerglass. Pour ses débuts européens, il a chanté le Prince Andrei (*Guerre et Paix*) à Paris. Il a fait ses débuts au Festival de Glyndebourne en 2000 en Guglielmo (*Così fan tutte*) et à Covent Garden en 2002 en Arlequin (*Ariane à Naxos*). Il est retourné à Glyndebourne en 2003 dans le rôle de Marcello (*La Bohème*).

Nathan Gunn wurde in den USA geboren und studierte an der University of Illinois. Sein Debüt an der Metropolitan Opera erfolgte 1995, wo er seither regelmäßig auftritt, wie auch in anderen amerikanischen Opernhäusern einschließlich Chicago, Santa Fe, Seattle und New York (Glimmerglass Opera). In Europa war er zum ersten Mal in Paris als Prinz Andrej (*Krieg und Frieden*) zu hören, beim Glyndebourne Festival sang er erstmalig im Jahre 2000 als Guglielmo (*Così fan tutte*). Sein Debüt am Royal Opera House/ Covent Garden erfolgte 2002 als Harlequin (*Ariadne auf Naxos*). Er kehrte 2003 nach Glyndebourne als Marcello (*La Bohème*) zurück.



Jonathan Lemalu Hobson

A New Zealand-born Samoan, Jonathan graduated from the Royal College of Music where he received the Tagore Gold Medal. He is joint winner of the 2002 Kathleen Ferrier award and the recipient of the 2002 Royal Philharmonic Society's Award for Young Artist of the Year. He has performed at the Tanglewood Festival with the Boston Symphony Orchestra and at the Ravinia Festival with the Chicago Symphony Orchestra. He performed *La damnation de Faust* with the London Symphony Orchestra under Sir Colin Davis in London and New York, and gave the world premiere of Harbison's Requiem with the Boston Symphony Orchestra. His EMI debut recital disc was awarded the *Gramophone* Debut Artist of the Year award. He is a BBC Radio 3 New Generation Artist and a recipient of a 2003 Borletti-Buitoni Trust award.

Samoan né en Nouvelle-Zélande, Jonathan Lemalu est diplômé du Royal College of Music de Londres, où il a remporté la médaille d'or Tagore. En 2002, il a remporté ex æquo le prix Kathleen Ferrier et le prix du Jeune Artiste de l'année de la Royal Philharmonic Society. Il a chanté au Festival de Tanglewood avec l'Orchestre symphonique de Boston et au Festival de Ravinia avec l'Orchestre symphonique de Chicago. Il a interprété *La damnation de Faust* avec l'Orchestre symphonique de Londres et Sir Colin Davis à Londres et New York, et a participé à la création mondiale du Requiem de Harbison avec l'Orchestre symphonique de Boston. Son premier disque de récital pour EMI a été récompensé par le prix du Meilleur Jeune Artiste de l'année de *Gramophone*. Jonathan Lemalu a également été nommé Artiste de la nouvelle génération par la chaîne de radio BBC 3 et a remporté en 2003 le Borletti-Buitoni Trust award.

Jonathan Lemalu wurde in Neuseeland geboren und ist samoanischer Abstammung. Seine Gesangsausbildung schloss er am Royal College of Music (London) ab, wo er die Tagore-Goldmedaille erhielt. Auch gehörte zu den Gewinnern des Kathleen-Ferrier-Preises 2002 und erhielt im gleichen Jahr den Young-Artist-of-the-Year-Preis der britischen Royal Philharmonic Society. Er trat beim Tanglewood Festival mit dem Boston Symphony Orchestra und beim Ravinia Festival mit dem Chicago Symphony Orchestra auf. In London und New York sang er in *La damnation de Faust* mit dem London Symphony Orchestra unter Sir Colin Davis. Auch in der Uraufführung von Harbisons Requiem mit dem Boston Symphony Orchestra war er zu hören. Seine erste Solo-CD bei EMI wurde mit britischen *Gramophone*-Preis Debut Artist of the Year geehrt. Jonathan Lemalu erhielt auch einen der Borletti-Buitoni-Preise für 2003 und wird beim Radiosender BBC Radio 3 als New Generation Artist vorgestellt.

London Symphony Chorus

President

Sir Colin Davis CH

Voice Presidents

Claudio Abbado

Michael Tilson Thomas

Chorus Director

Joseph Cullen

Assistant Chorus Director /

Accompanist

Stephen Betteridge

President Emeritus

André Previn KBE

Conductor Emeritus

Richard Hickox CBE

Chairman

Pam Buckley

Auditions Secretary

Helen Lawford

The London Symphony Chorus was formed in 1966 to complement the work of the London Symphony Orchestra. The partnership between the LSC and LSO was developed and strengthened in 2012 with the joint appointment of Simon Halsey as Chorus Director of the LSC and Choral Director for the LSO. The LSC has partnered other major UK and international orchestras including the Berlin and Vienna Philharmonic orchestras, Boston Symphony Orchestra and the European Union Youth Orchestra. Along with regular appearances at the major London venues, the LSC tours extensively throughout Europe and has visited North America, Israel, Australia, and the Far East.

The chorus has recorded widely, with releases including Britten's *War Requiem* with Gianandrea Noseda, Haydn's *The Seasons*, Walton's *Belshazzar's Feast* and Verdi's *Otello*, and the world premiere issue of MacMillan's *St John Passion*. The chorus also partners the LSO on Gergiev's recordings of Mahler's Symphonies Nos 2, 3 and 8, while the men of the chorus took part in the recent Gramophone Award-winning recording of *Götterdämmerung* with the Hallé under Sir Mark Elder.

The chorus has also commissioned new works from composers such as Sir John Tavener, Sir Peter Maxwell Davies, Michael Berkeley and Jonathan Dove, and took part in the world premiere of James MacMillan's *St John Passion* with the LSO and Sir Colin Davis in 2008, and in the second London performance in February 2010.

The London Symphony Chorus is always interested in recruiting new members, welcoming applications from singers of all backgrounds, subject to an audition. Visit www.lsc.org.uk

* Denotes Council member of Chorus (see list to right)

Chorus members on this recording:

Sopranos

Margaret Askew, Clare Beard, Sophie Brind, Pam Buckley*, Carol Capper, Ann Cole, Vicky Collis*, Debra Colvin, Lucy Craig, Emma Craven, Susan Crocker, Anna Davenport, Rachel Delahunty, Gabrielle Edwards, Marnie Fairlie, Katherine Field, Lorna Flowers, Ruth Fowler, Eileen Fox, Gabriella Galgani, Christina Gibbs, Fulva Giust, Jane Goddard, Irene Goff, Lavinia Gough, Elizabeth Graham, Joanna Gueritz, Carolin Harvey, Lucy Heyman, Emily Hoffnung, Gladys Hosken, Claire Hussey, Katrina Hyde, Jessica Ibbotson, Candice Ingham, Sarah Illingworth, Debra Jones*, Nancy King, Frances Lake, Helen Lawford, Cinde Lee, Helena Lloyd, Sophie Lloyd, Clare Lorimer*, Jane Lumb, Meg Makower, Alison Marshall, Aileen Moar Biagi, Jeannie Morrison, Jane Morley, Dorothy Nesbit, Joanna Newell, Jennifer Norman, Emily Norton, Jane O' Regan, Maggie Owen, Olen Pfeiffer, Susan Pollard, Carole Radford, Mikko Ridd, Emily Rogers, Clodagh Riordan, Melissa Scott, Kate Storey, San Sykes, Amanda Thomas, Rachel Tubby, Julia Warner*, Mary Withall

Altos

Primrose Amender, Janet Aspinall, Mary Baker*, Margaret Baxter, Jo Buchan*, Jane Cargin, Monica Channell, Glynis Charrot, Rosemary Chute, Margery Cohen, Yvonne Cohen, Liz Cole, Janette Daines, Zoë Davis, Maggie Donnelly, Diane Dwyer, Andrea Eassey, Linda Evans, Amanda Freshwater, Ann Gildersleeve, Pamela Hilder, Aneesa Higgins, Dee Home, Elisabeth Iles, Susan Jones, Vanessa Knapp, Gillian Lawson, Susan Lee, Belinda Loo, Anne Loveluck, Fiona Macdonald, Etsuko Makita, Barbara Marchbank, Rita Marson, Liz McCav, Alexandra O'Shea, Helen Palmer, Tina Parry-Jones, Karen Rowe, Rachel Sloan, Joan Smith, Lis Smith, Jane Steele, Karen Taylor, Claire Trocmé, Louise Tulip, Curzon Tussaud, Diana Unwin, Lucy Venn, Patricia Wallis, Nimmi Weeks, Judith Youdell, Mimi Zadeh

Tenors

David Aldred, Paul Allatt, Robin Anderson, Simon Bainbridge, Charles Bettinson, Xavier Bray, Michael Buckley, Richard Cunningham, Lorne Cuthbert, John Farrington, Andrew Fuller, John Harding, Brian Hazell, Warwick Hood, Gareth Humphreys, Tony Instral, Mark James, Michael Jones, James Lawson, David Leonard, John Marks, Alastair Mathews, Malcolm Nightingale, Stuart Packford, Rich Phillips, Kevin Rigg, Peter Sedgwick, Mohan Sirdardena, Graham Steele, Anthony Stutchbury, Malcolm Taylor, Owen Toller*, James Warbis*, Robert Ward, Paul Williams-Burton

Basses

Derek Adams, Stephen Allen, David Armour, Peter Avis, Mark Bamforth, Jonathan Bird, Dennis Bowen, Gavin Buchan, Roger Carpenter, Stephen Chevis, Nick Clarke, Patrick Curwen, Damian Day, Desmond Day, Sven Drew, Thomas Fea, Alastair Forbes, Robert French, Robert Garbolinski, Trevor Glover, John Graham*, Robin Hall, Bryan Hammersley, Tim Hammond, Owen Hamner, Christopher Harvey, Mark Hillier, David Hodgson, Derrick Hogermeier, Anthony Howick, Alex Kidney, Stephan Kooper, Georges Leaver, Keith Montgomery, Alan Moss, Geoffrey Newman*, Peter Niven, David Peirson, Alan Rochford, Malcolm Rowat, Nicholas Seager, Edwin Smith, John Streit, Paul Warburton, John Wareing, Nicholas Weekes

Orchestra featured on this recording:

First Violins

Raduslaw Szulc GUEST LEADER
Carmine Lauri
Lennox Mackenzie
Michael Humphrey
Pierre Bensaid
Nigel Broadbent
Ginette Decuyper
Jörg Hammann
Maxine Kwok-Adams
Belinda McFarlane
Claire Parfitt
Laurent Quenelle
Ian Rhodes
Sylvain Vasseur
Nicole Wilson
Nicholas Wright

Second Violins

Evgeny Grach *
Warwick Hill
Thomas Norris
Sarah Quinn
David Ballesteros
Richard Blayden
Norman Clarke
Matthew Gardner
David Goodall
Ian McDonough
Joyce Nixon
Paul Robson
Stephen Rowlinson
Louise Shackelton

Violas

Paul Silverthorne *
Malcolm Johnston
Maxine Moore
Duff Burns
Richard Holttum
Peter Norriss
Caroline O'Neill
Alastair Scahill
Claire Smith
Robert Turner
Jonathan Welsh
Gina Zagni

Cellos

Moray Welsh *
Rebecca Gilliver
Alastair Blayden
Jennifer Brown
Raymond Adams
Mary Bergin
Noel Bradshaw
Nicholas Gethin
Hilary Jones
Francis Saunders

Double Basses

Colin Paris *
Nicholas Worters
Patrick Laurence
Gerald Newson
Michael Francis
Matthew Gibson
Thomas Goodman
Jani Pensola

Flutes

Paul Edmund-Davies *
Martin Parry

Piccolos

Sharon Williams *
Martin Parry

Oboes

Roy Carter *
John Lawley

Cor Anglais

Christine Pendrill *

Clarinets

Andrew Marriner *
Chi-Yu Mo

E-flat Clarinet

Chi-Yu Mo *

Bassoons

Rachel Gough *
Nicholas Hunka

Contrabassoon

Dominic Morgan *

Horns

Timothy Jones *
David Pyatt *
Jonathan Durrant
John Ryan
Jonathan Lipton

Trumpets

Maurice Murphy *
Roderick Franks *
Gerald Ruddock

Trombones

Dudley Bright *
James Maynard

Bass Trombone

Andrew Fawbert **

Tuba

Patrick Harrild *

Timpani

Adrian Bending **

Percussion

Neil Percy *
David Jackson
Jeremy Cornes
Christopher Thomas

Harp

Thelma Owen **

Celeste & Offstage organ

Catherine Edwards **

* Principal

** Guest Principal

London Symphony Orchestra

Patron

Her Majesty The Queen

President

Sir Colin Davis CH

Principal Conductor

Valery Gergiev

Principal Guest Conductors

Daniel Harding

Michael Tilson Thomas

Conductor Laureate

André Previn KBE

The LSO was formed in 1904 as London's first self-governing orchestra and has been resident orchestra at the Barbican since 1982. Valery Gergiev became Principal Conductor in 2007 following in the footsteps of Hans Richter, Sir Edward Elgar, Sir Thomas Beecham, André Previn, Claudio Abbado and Michael Tilson Thomas, among others. Sir Colin Davis had previously held the position since 1995 and from 2007 became the LSO's first President since Leonard Bernstein. The Orchestra gives numerous concerts around the world each year, plus more performances in London than any other orchestra. It is the world's most recorded symphony orchestra and has appeared on some of the greatest classical recordings and film soundtracks. The LSO also runs LSO Discovery, its ground-breaking education programme that is dedicated to introducing the finest music to young and old alike and lets everyone learn more from the Orchestra's players. For more information visit iso.co.uk

Premier orchestre autogéré de Londres, le LSO fut fondé en 1904. Il est en résidence au Barbican depuis 1982. Valery Gergiev a été nommé premier chef en 2007, succédant à Hans Richter, Sir Edward Elgar, Sir Thomas Beecham, André Previn, Claudio Abbado et Michael Tilson Thomas, entre autres. Sir Colin Davis occupait auparavant le poste depuis 1995 et, en 2007, il devint le premier président du LSO depuis Leonard Bernstein. Chaque année, l'Orchestre donne de nombreux concerts à travers le monde, tout en se produisant plus souvent à Londres que n'importe quel autre orchestre. C'est l'orchestre au monde qui a le plus enregistré, et on le retrouve sur des enregistrements devenus de grands classiques, ainsi que sur les bandes son des films les plus célèbres. Grâce à LSO Discovery, l'Orchestre est également un pionnier en matière de pédagogie; ce

programme s'attache à faire découvrir les plus belles pages du répertoire aux enfants comme aux adultes, et à permettre à chacun de s'enrichir au contact des musiciens de l'Orchestre. Pour plus d'informations, rendez vous sur le site iso.co.uk

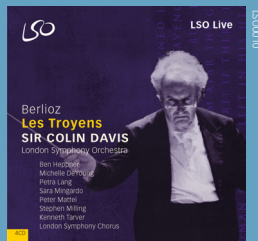
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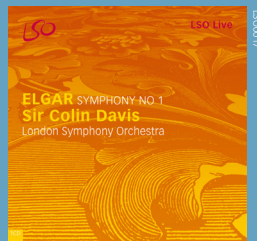
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Recorded live January 2004 Barbican, London

James Mallinson producer

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