



Michael CSÁNYI-WILLS

SONGS WITH ORCHESTRA

THREE SONGS: BUDAPEST, 1944

SIX A. E. HOUSMAN SONGS

ELEGY FOR OUR TIME

Ilona Domnich, soprano
Nicky Spence, tenor
Jacques Imbrailo, baritone
Chris McKay, horn
Londamis Ensemble
Mark Eager, conductor

SOME THOUGHTS ON MY ORCHESTRAL SONGS

by Michael Csányi-Wills

I was lucky enough to have had an opera-loving grandmother, who took me with her as often as she could. When I was three, she took me to see Donizetti's *Don Pasquale* and I am told that I stared at Sir Geraint Evans in awe, without moving or saying a word. It seems that feeling has followed me ever since. I began piano soon after, immersing myself in repertoire from Bach to Widmann, studying with Hilary Coates at Wells Cathedral School and then with Christopher Elton and Frank Wibaut at the Royal Academy of Music. It was there that I met Nigel Clarke, with whom I began to study composition properly. Even though the piano is still a very important part of my life, it's composition that drives me, and I have Nigel to thank for that. We then went on to collaborate on several feature-film scores, which was as much of an education for me as it was to study at the Academy.

Since that time, I've been juggling playing the piano, writing film-scores and concert music and have been lucky enough to have encountered some wonderful musicians along the way. I met Mark Eager, conductor of the Welsh Sinfonia, in 2012 and became their composer-in-residence in 2013, which has resulted in several pieces for chamber orchestra, as well as some projects in music education, which is something I'm passionate about. I've since been made Head of Composition at the World Heart Beat Academy in Wandsworth, which supports young musicians of all backgrounds and cultures, and awards scholarships to those who would otherwise not have access to music.

***Three Songs: Budapest, 1944* for soprano and orchestra**

The three songs in *Budapest, 1944* for soprano and orchestra began with a discovery amongst my grandmother's belongings shortly after her death in 2008. On a small folded piece of paper were written the words 'The Last Letter'. It was her mother's last letter to her children before disappearing from her flat in Budapest in October 1944. I set the letter a year later, and the other songs followed, as I discovered more about her family. 'The Siege' and 'The Last Letter' were originally written in Hungarian, but I decided after some thought that translating them into German made sense. First, most singers are trained in German, and Hungarian is a rather difficult language to sing without a coach and therefore would appeal to fewer singers. Second, German was an official language in the Austro-Hungarian Empire; all the writers of the texts would have spoken German daily, and so I felt that it was a natural language for me to use.

The cycle opens with ‘The “Waldsee” Postcard’ [1]. As part of Gestapo propaganda in World War II, people held captive in the camps were forced to send cards home to loved ones, telling them that they had arrived safely and that all was well – it served the cynical purpose of making the job of rounding-up and deporting the next group of people much easier. The deception often worked and many believed that their relatives were happy and well in an Alpine resort. The postcard was stamped ‘Waldsee’ as if from a resort in either Austria or Switzerland. The idea behind this song was the impossible dilemma between the act of lying to a loved one while knowing that death is imminent.

As one of the Axis powers, Hungary had a minimal Nazi presence until 1944, when the pro-Fascist Arrow Cross Party began its reign of terror. Jews were deported to concentration camps or shot and thrown into the Danube. Herry Hirschler (1911–90), the future sister-in-law of my great-grandmother Irène Csányi, lived in a block of flats with her six-year-old son Misi. Although besieged by the Russian Army and subjected to increasing hardships under Nazi rule, she kept a diary on almost every day during the latter days of the war. ‘The Siege’ [2] sets an extract from this diary, written at a point when the Russians seemed to be the only escape from their situation.

Irène Csányi was born to a wealthy family in Szeged in 1894. She lost her husband to cancer in 1936. Her daughter Gabriella (my grandmother) went to London before the war; her son Charles was dispatched to the forced-labour camps in 1943. Irène kept herself locked away in the family apartment in Budapest, seeing no one but the elderly concierge; out on the streets, the Arrow Cross stalked the city’s remaining Jews. One day in October, she did venture out, leaving behind everything she owned – and an extraordinary letter [3], written in the same week that Herry Hirschler wrote her diary entry set in the previous song.

Six A. E. Housman Songs for male voice and orchestra

This recording is the culmination of an initial conversation about writing for voice that I had with my life-long friend, the baritone James Robinson-May, in 2009. He gave me three poems from A. E. Housman’s *A Shropshire Lad*, and asked me to set them so that we could work on them together. Once I had written them, the other songs for tenor followed, one by one, written for the violinist and conductor Mark Wilson and the Dunblane Chamber Orchestra, and then for the conductor Mark Eager and the Welsh Sinfonia.

The *Shropshire Lad* poems were made famous during the First World War, and they are often associated with it, even though they were published in 1896 – and at Housman’s own expense after several publishers had turned the collection down. Its popularity increased with settings by composers such as

Butterworth, Gurney, Somervell and Vaughan Williams. Even though I have always loved the settings of these outstanding composers (and there is doubtless a nod in their direction every now and again in this set), I've always felt there was a darkness in the poems that wasn't always present in their music.

These new settings are divided into halves: three for baritone – 'Farewell', 'Moonlit Heath' and 'Carpenter's Son' – and three for tenor – 'On the Idle Hill of Summer', 'White in the Moon' and 'As through the wild green hills of Wyre'.

In 'Farewell' [4], the singer thinks on the events of the last few hours as he runs from the scene of a terrible crime. He has murdered a man, perhaps his lover, and so flees his home and muses on what he has left behind and how things will never be the same again.

'Moonlit Heath' [5] continues the story from his cell in Shrewsbury Jail, on the night before his execution. The singer dwells on what is to come. He imagines the experiences of men from days gone by whose fate he will soon share. A hundred years ago, men were hanged at the crossroads on Moonlit Heath which overlooks the town. Perhaps it was a more romantic fate, a less clinical death, to be hanged on the Heath, rather than behind the high wall and iron bars of a Victorian prison.

'Carpenter's Son', the final song of the three for baritone [6], stands as a plea to any who might heed the words of a condemned man. The poem alludes to the purity of the death of Christ, an innocent man crucified between two criminals. But though Christ was crucified in the spirit of the love of God, the singer can only console himself that his was a crime of passion, a crime committed in the throes of love rather than hate. And so, in his regret, he urges others to consider his fate and choose other ways to live and make a decent end to their lives.

The three tenor songs are settings of adjacent poems in Housman's collection: Nos. 35, 36 and 37 respectively (it contains 63 poems in total). They share some of the same themes but also have an element of nostalgia, love and light which the three baritone songs lack, and as such they serve as a contrast to the darker set.

Like the poem itself, 'On the idle hill of summer' [7] starts with a burst of energy, positive and light, describing the joy of summer and the sounds of the landscape. It takes only two lines, though, before the true nature of the poem uncovers the hellish reality of soldiers dying far away. The music is never harsh or really sombre, but it grows in intensity over the central verses which deal with ghastly images of bones bleaching and rotting men. Musically, the song evokes a feeling of late summer sickliness, the warm air full of the sweet scent of ripe fields and summer love. Yet all the while, the listener is aware that the army marches closer, recruiting more men, with the fife screaming, like a swarm of angry wasps, for the singer to enlist.

'White in the moon' [8] is told during the night before taking leave of a lover. Perhaps the singer has enlisted. He takes consolation in the old wisdom that, since the world is round, there is only so far away one can go. But what a terribly long way round it is. The whole song is cast, musically speaking, in the white light of the moonlit road. It is still music, calm and serene. Yet at the same time, it is full of that unique anxiety only ever felt when alone and outdoors in the night.

'As through the wild green hills of Wyre' [9] is set on a train as a new recruit heads to London from his home in Shropshire to join his regiment. In his need to find his courage, he addresses his own hand. He gives it the stoic advice he so desperately craves for himself. The motion of the train is immediately clear as the main theme of this song, but the motion of the train also hints at, and dances with, themes of nervousness and fear. Eventually as the new recruit is hurled towards his unknown and frightening new post, he seems keen to reassure himself that if he dies, he will die well. Gradually, as it becomes clear that the most important thing is not to disgrace the men of his county, the train theme is overtaken by a much more serious, almost prayer-like mood, which eventually brings the song to its chilling conclusion.

Elegy for Our Time for soprano and orchestra

Elegy for Our Time, by Jessica d'Este, is a poem that struck me immediately when she gave it to me to read in 2014. (We met by chance at a Chopin Society recital given by the wonderful 94-year-old pianist Abbey Simon.) The text is incredibly cold and dark, which is all the more extraordinary for being about her own granddaughter, who died in a car-crash, aged a mere 23.

Jessica d'Este (*née* Amelia Linda Marinelli) was born in New York City to the pioneer biophysicist Leonidas Marinelli (a participant in the Manhattan Project that sustained the world's first atomic chain reaction) and his wife Elena (herself descended from Neopolitan and Sicilian painters and musicians). Jessica repatriated to Europe, settling in London in the 1970s. She has read, written and recited poetry from an early age. Since 1994, the popularity of spoken poetry in London venues has encouraged her performance. She writes:

A meditation on death and the waste of innocent, vulnerable youth –
(misled by corrupt society and infected by rapacious, global materialism in thrall to celebrity and the inevitability of peer pressure without sufficient, passionate example of love, moral wisdom and experience that assures the vitality of an independent human spirit).
– prompts this *Elegy for Our Time*.¹

¹ Personal communication from Jessica d'Este.

When I first considered the music for *Elegy for Our Time* [10], how the Estonian composer Lepo Sumera² used woodblocks in his Sixth Symphony came into my mind. I remember thinking at the time that they felt cold and death-like, and began playing with a similar idea for the beginning of this song. What follows is equally cold, in non-vibrato muted violins, playing a series of chords based on tritones, which give an uncomfortable rocking movement. The soprano enters as if halfway through a phrase, both lyrically and musically, joining the rocking tritones. The music slowly builds, moving through a series of uneasy harmonies, never sure of its root. There are moments in the poem I felt the music should be very still and cold, almost indifferent to its tragedy, and others which represent a pent-up anger, which presents itself for very brief spells only, as if controlled once again by a pragmatic rationale. Indifference is replaced by sadness for 'Not only sorrow, child, but much despair', but the music returns to the discomfort of the opening in the line 'enraged by your death', before ending with the deathly woodblocks of the beginning.

² Sumera (1950–2000) studied first with Veljo Tormis (b. 1930) and then became the last student of Heino Eller (1887–1970), one of the pillars of Estonian musical history. Sumera himself became an important teacher and cultural figurehead, serving as the Estonian Minister of Culture in 1988–92. The last of his six symphonies was premiered shortly before his early death from cardiac problems.

Ilona Domnich was chosen by *Opera Now* in 2014 as one of their 'Top 10 high flyers', a 'new generation of sopranos who are destined to have impressive careers', and she has been 'Artist of the Month' in *Opera Now*. A CD of operatic arias, *Surrender: Voices of Persephone*, was recently released by Signum Classics.

Ilona studied in St Petersburg in Jerusalem and at the Royal College of Music in London with Vera Rózsa and now with Susan Roberts. She has performed at the English National Opera, Buxton and Grange Park Opera and in music festivals in the UK and Europe, singing the main soprano roles in operas like *The Barber of Seville*, *La bohème*, *Don Giovanni*, *Eugene Onegin*, *The Magic Flute*, *The Marriage of Figaro*, *Rigoletto*, *Pelléas et Mélisande*, *La Rondine*, *La voix humaine* and *The Merry Widow*.



Jacques Imbrailo studied at the Royal College of Music under Ryland Davies and on the Jette Parker Young Artists Programme at the Royal Opera House, winning the Audience Prize at the BBC Cardiff Singer of the World competition in 2007.

Recent operatic engagements include *Pelléas et Mélisande* for Essen Opera; Valentin in Gounod's *Faust* in Baden-Baden; the title role in *Don Giovanni* for Scottish Opera; Tarquinius in *The Rape of Lucretia* in Florence and Houston; Count Almaviva in *Le nozze di Figaro* for the Royal Opera House, Welsh National



Opera and Opéra de Lille; and Aeneas in *Dido and Aeneas* for the Opera di Roma. His 2010 Glyndebourne Festival debut – the title role of *Billy Budd* in Michael Grandage's acclaimed new production conducted by Sir Mark Elder – won rave reviews, with Andrew Clark of *The Financial Times* pronouncing him 'the finest Billy I have heard – lusty, virile, sensitive and moving'.

Concert performances include Christ in Elgar's *The Apostles* with the Hallé and Sir Mark Elder at the BBC Proms and *Carmina Burana* with the New York Philharmonic under the late Rafael Frühbeck de Burgos, as well as Bach *St John Passion*, Handel *Messiah*, Brahms *Deutsches Requiem*, Fauré Requiem and Duruflé Requiem. He has given solo lieder recitals at the Wigmore Hall, St John's Smith Square and the Het Concertgebouw, Amsterdam, and performed in concert at the Verbier Festival, Royal Albert Hall and Southbank Centre.

The tenor Nicky Spence studied at the Guildhall School and the National Opera Studio supported by Help Musicians UK. Following a major record contract with Universal at a young age, Nicky has gone on to become one of the finest young singers of his generation and has now sung on many of the world's major stages. He created one of the leading roles in the world premiere of Nico Muhly's *Two Boys* for the English National Opera, a role he reprised for his debut at the Metropolitan Opera, New York. Other highlights include his recent role debut as David in the multi-award winning *The Mastersingers of Nuremberg* at the ENO with Music Director Edward Gardner, a Rossini double at Welsh National Opera with Carlo Rizzi, Števa in *Jenůfa* at La Monnaie, *Tristan und Isolde* with Donald Runnicles and the BBC Scottish Symphony Orchestra, Steuermann in *Der fliegende Holländer* in concert with the City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra under Andris Nelsons, Tamino in *Die Zauberflöte* for Scottish Opera directed by Sir Thomas Allen, and Francesco in Berlioz's *Benvenuto Cellini* at De Nederlandse Opera under Sir Mark Elder.

Nicky was nominated by the International Opera Awards for Young Singer of the Year 2015 and was also one of ten artists up for this year's Times Breakthrough Award at the South Bank Sky Arts Awards celebrating the best of young British talent from across the arts.

Mark Eager is Principal Conductor and Artistic Director of The Welsh Sinfonia. His clear, highly musical direction and his consummate grasp of musical style have developed the ensemble over the past few years into Wales' finest chamber orchestra. In 2013 Mark appointed Michael Csányi-Wills as composer-in-residence and their relationship has developed into a close musical bond. Underpinning Mark's understanding of the orchestra is his experience as a player, as a soloist and Principal



Trombone with the BBC National Orchestra of Wales from 1993 to 2006. The landmark 'Crescendo' project of the Welsh Sinfonia, to build school orchestras throughout Wales, is proving highly successful under Mark's leadership, with schools seeing real development in their collective appreciation of classical music.

Mark is also Principal Conductor of Cardiff University Symphony Orchestra where he enjoys working with inspiring young musicians. Under his baton the orchestra is achieving considerable educational and musical success, including two CD releases, most recently featuring the world premiere recordings of Debussy's ballet *No-Ja-Li* and prelude *L'Histoire de Tristan*.

Mark tours extensively worldwide and has annual residencies in Australia.

Londamis Ensemble

Violins

Sara Trickey (leader)
Concettina del Vecchio
Esther King-Smith
Nicola Hatfield
Lizzie Roberts
Clara Biss
Mary Hofman
Winona Fifield
Ivana Cetkovic
Megan Hill
Laci Olah

Violas

Sarah-Jane Bradley
Ursula John
Julian Latham
Morgan Goff
Kristina Kiss

Cellos

Dan Bull
Alice Murray
Vicky Walker
Nunziatina Del Vecchio-Wills

Bass

Jonny Gee

Flutes

Emma Halnan
Hannah Black

Oboes

Rebecca Millard
Elsie Woollard

Clarinets

Izzie Thompson
Greg Hearle

Bassoons

Greg Topping
Cerys Evans

Horns

Chris McKay
Jonathan Farey

Timpani

Henry Fynn

Harp

Heather Wrighton

Texts and Translations

Budapest, 1944

1 'The "Waldsee" Postcard'

Liebe Mutter,

ich bin gut angekommen und habe bereits nette Leute hier getroffen. Hoffentlich werde ich bald einen Arbeitsplatz finden, und ich hoffe auch, dass Du in der Lage sein wirst, mich besuchen zu können. Bitte sag meiner Schwester, dass es mir gut geht und grüss sie ganz lieb von mir. Ich hoffe, dass ich beim nächsten Mal mehr schreiben kann. Ich umarme Dich ganz lieb.¹

2 'The Siege'

Wir haben die Waffen begraben. Ich hätte nie gedacht, dass ich den Tag erleben würde. Jeder ist begeistert. Aber es hält nicht lange an. Szálasi² hat die Macht übernommen. Er sagt, sie werden bis zum letzten Mann kämpfen. Ich bleibe angezogen weil wir jederzeit abgeholt werden könnten. Aus den Fenstern könnten wir sehen wie die Soldaten Juden ohne ihren gelben Sternen geschlagen haben. Ich kann kaum die Anspannung der letzten Tage beschreiben. Die Tore unseres Hauses sind geschlossen. Nicht ein einzige Seele kommt oder

Dear Mother,

I have arrived safely and have already met a nice group of people. Hopefully they'll find me some work soon, and I hope you'll be able to visit.

Please tell my sister that I'm well and give her a kiss from me.

I hope that I'll be able to write more next time.

Lots of love.

We have buried our weapons. I never thought I'd see the day. Everybody is excited. But it does not last long.

Szálasi has taken over. He says they'll fight until their last drop of blood. I won't undress for bed as we could be taken any minute. From the windows we could see the soldiers beating several Jews for not wearing their yellow stars. I can hardly describe the strain of the last few days. The gates of our building are closed. Not a single soul in or out. Escape is impossible. Only the Russians can help us, where are they?

¹ The 'Waldsee' Postcard' and 'The Siege,' both written in Hungarian, were translated into German by Nunziatina Vecchio-Wills and Silke Lohmann.

² Ferenc Szálasi (1897–1946), leader of the fascist Arrow Cross Party, formed a Government of National Unity on 16 October 1944 turning the Kingdom of Hungary into a client state of Nazi Germany.

geht. Ein Flucht ist unmöglich.
Nur die Russen können uns helfen, wo sind sie?
So lange ich lebe werde ich diese drei Tage nicht
vergessen.

3 'The Last Letter'

Meine liebe Kinder, Ich sage auf wiedersehen. Es
schmerzt mich sehr dass ich nicht bei euch sein
kann, im Geiste bin ich da. Habt Euch lieb und
vergesst mich nicht.

Diese Worte wird Frau Fold Euch überbringen.
Sie war in der ganzen Zeit mein einziger Trost:
sie ist eine liebe Frau gute Seele.

Ihr könnt Euch treffen mit Doktor Ussetty Bela
meinem Notar der sich um meine Anliegen
kümmert.

Karoly kam, du kannst Vier Tausend Pengo³ im
Waisenhaus abholen.

Gaby mein Liebling, meine Kleidung und
Pelzmäntel sind alle Dein, falls etwas bleibt.

Charles wird wissen was zu tun ist.

Kleiner Charles, Deine Postkarte einèchte
Freude war meine letzte Freude.

Verkauft die Häuser und geht in die Ferne.
Tausend Küsse Meine Allerliebsten seid von
Eurer traurigen Mutter umarmt.

I shall never forget these three days for as long
as I live.

My beloved children, I'm saying farewell. The
pain of being so far from you is unbearable, but
know that I'm with you in spirit. Love each other
and don't forget me.

Mrs Fold will see that this note gets to you. She
has been a great comfort to me through all of
this: she is a good soul.

You could meet my lawyer, Dr Bela Ussetty.
He handles all my affairs.

Karoly came, you will be able to claim four
thousand Pengo at the orphanage.

Gaby, my darling, my clothes and furs will be
yours if there's anything left. Charles will know
what to do.

My little Charles, the last thing that brought me
happiness was the postcard you sent.

Sell up and go abroad.

A thousand kisses, my dearest ones, and
embraces from your sad mother.

³ The Pengö was the currency of Hungary from 1 January 1927, when it replaced the Korona, to 31 July 1946, when it was replaced by the Forint.

Six A. E. Housman Songs

4 'Farewell'

'Farewell to barn and stack and tree,
Farewell to Severn shore.
Terence, look your last at me,
For I come home no more.

'The sun burns on the half-mown hill,
By now the blood is dried;
And Maurice amongst the hay lies still
And my knife is in his side.

'My mother thinks us long away;
'Tis time the field were mown.
She had two sons at rising day,
To-night she'll be alone.

'And here's a bloody hand to shake,
And oh, man, here's good-bye;
We'll sweat no more on scythe and rake,
My bloody hands and I.

'I wish you strength to bring you pride,
And a love to keep you clean,
And I wish you luck, come Lammastide,
At racing on the green.

'Long for me the rick will wait,
And long will wait the fold,
And long will stand the empty plate,
And dinner will be cold.'

5 'On Moonlit Heath'

On moonlit heath and lonesome bank
The sheep beside me graze;
And yon the gallows used to clank
Fast by the four cross ways.

A careless shepherd once would keep
The flocks by moonlight there,⁴
And high amongst the glimmering sheep
The dead man stood on air.

They hang us now in Shrewsbury jail:
The whistles blow forlorn,
And trains all night groan on the rail
To men that die at morn.

There sleeps in Shrewsbury jail to-night,
Or wakes, as may betide,
A better lad, if things went right,
Than most that sleep outside.

And naked to the hangman's noose
The morning clocks will ring
A neck God made for other use
Than strangling in a string.

And sharp the link of life will snap,
And dead on air will stand
Heels that held up as straight a chap
As treats upon the land.

⁴ Hanging in chains was called 'keeping sheep by moonlight'.

So here I'll watch the night and wait
To see the morning shine,
When he will hear the stroke of eight
And not the stroke of nine;

And wish my friend as sound a sleep
As lads' I did not know,
That shepherded the moonlit sheep
A hundred years ago.

6 'Carpenter's Son'

'Here the hangman stops his cart:
Now the best of friends must part.
Fare you well, for ill fare I:
Live, lads, and I will die.

'Oh, at home had I but stayed
'Prenticed to my father's trade,
Had I stuck to plane and adze,
I had not been lost, my lads.

'Then I might have built perhaps
Gallows-trees for other chaps,
Never dangled on my own,
Had I left but ill alone.

'Now, you see, they hang me high,
And the people passing by
Stop to shake their fists and curse;
So 'tis come from ill to worse.

'Here hang I, and right and left
Two poor fellows hang for theft:
All the same's the luck we prove,
Though the midmost hangs for love.

'Comrades all, that stand and gaze,
Walk henceforth in other ways;
See my neck and save your own:
Comrades all, leave ill alone.

'Make some day a decent end,
Shrewder fellows than your friend.
Fare you well, for ill fare I:
Live, lads, and I will die.'

7 'On the idle hill of summer'

On the idle hill of summer,
Sleepy with the flow of streams,
Far I hear the steady drummer
Drumming like a noise in dreams.

Far and near and low and louder
On the roads of earth go by,
Dear to friends and food for powder,
Soldiers marching, all to die.

East and west on fields forgotten
Bleach the bones of comrades slain,
Lovely lads and dead and rotten;
None that go return again.

Far the calling bugles hollo,
High the screaming fife replies,
Gay the files of scarlet follow:
Woman bore me, I will rise.

8 'White in the Moon'

White in the moon the long road lies,
The moon stands blank above;
White in the moon the long road lies
That leads me from my love.

Still hangs the hedge without a gust,
Still, still the shadows stay:
My feet upon the moonlit stut
Pursue the ceaseless way.

The world is round, so travellers tell,
And straight though reach the track,
Trudge on, trudge on, 'twill all be well,
The way will guide one back.

But ere the circle homeward hies
Far, far must it remove:
White in the moon the long road lies
That leads me from my love.

9 'As through the wild green hills of Wyre'

As through the wild green hills of Wyre
The train ran, changing sky and shire,
And far behind, a fading crest,
Low in the forsaken west
Sank the high-reared head of Clee,
My hand lay empty on my knee.
Aching on my knee it lay:
That morning half a shire away
So many an honest fellow's fist
Had well-nigh wrung it from the wrist.
Hand, said I, since now we part
From fields and men we know by heart,
For strangers' faces, strangers' lands,—
Hand, you have held true fellows' hands.
Be clean then; rot before you do
A thing they'll not believe of you.
You and I must keep from shame
In London streets the Shropshire name;
On banks of Thames they must not say
Severn breeds worse men than they;
And friends abroad must bear in mind
Friends at home they leave behind.
Oh, I shall be stiff and cold
When I forget you, hearts of gold;
The land where I shall mind you not
Is the land where all's forgot.
And if my foot returns no more
To Teme nor Corve nor Severn shore,
Luck, my lads, be with you still
By falling stream and standing hill,

By chiming tower and whispering tree,
Men that made a man of me.
About your work in town and farm
Still you'll keep my head from harm,
Still you'll help me, hands that gave
A grasp to friend me to the grave.

10 *Elegy for Our Time*

Words by Jessica d'Este

When, suddenly –
It swerved and crashed
Mirrored in the wreckage
The splintering glass
A reflection of us
Who, also, blundered in this

too loose clasp in tasks of love
Meant to keep sweetness close
Robust and enough itself to flourish
Mid least good and dangerous pursuits
That captivate youth
Let go to waste
Life too short to celebrate.

remembered most for being brief
Wrenched from us
Still clinging – crushed
A ghost of what once hoped – extinguished
Talent, lifeless
Temperance, dust.

Not only sorrow, child – but much
Despair, distress, regret insists
What is not nor ever best
– Enraged
By your death.



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Explore Unknown Music with the Toccata Discovery Club

Since you're reading this booklet, you're obviously someone who likes to explore music more widely than the mainstream offerings of most other labels allow. Toccata Classics was set up explicitly to release recordings of music – from the Renaissance to the present day – that the microphones have been ignoring. How often have you heard a piece of music you didn't know and wondered why it hadn't been recorded before? Well, Toccata Classics aims to bring this kind of neglected treasure to the public waiting for the chance to hear it – from the major musical centres and from less-well-known cultures in northern and eastern Europe, from all the Americas, and from further afield: basically, if it's good music and it hasn't yet been recorded, Toccata Classics is exploring it.

To link label and listener directly we run the Toccata Discovery Club, which brings its members substantial discounts on all Toccata Classics recordings, whether CDs or downloads, and also on the range of pioneering books on music published by its sister company, Toccata Press. A modest annual membership fee brings you, free on joining, two CDs, a Toccata Press book or a number of album downloads (so you are saving from the start) and opens up the entire Toccata Classics catalogue to you, both new recordings and existing releases as CDs or downloads, as you prefer. Frequent special offers bring further discounts. If you are interested in joining, please visit the Toccata Classics website at www.toccataclassics.com and click on the 'Discovery Club' tab for more details.

