

Concerts at The University

Tuesday 29 January 2013

1.10pm

Reid Concert Hall

Brian Bannatyne-Scott · bass

Jan Waterfield · piano

Programme of works by **POULENC**, **IBERT** and
MUSSORGSKY.



THE UNIVERSITY of EDINBURGH
Edinburgh College of Art

Le Bestiare

Francis Poulenc (1899-1963)

Text by Guillaume Apollinaire

Translations by Brian Bannatyne-Scott

Le Dromadaire

Avec ses quatre dromadaires
Don Pedro d'Alfaroubeira
Courut le monde et l'admira.
Il fit ce que je voudrais faire
Si j'avais quatre dromadaires.

La Chèvre du Thibet

Les poils de cette chèvre et même
Ceux d'or pour qui prit
tant de peine
Jason, ne valent rien au prix
Des cheveux dont je suis épris.

La Sauterelle

Voici la fine sauterelle,
La nourriture de saint Jean.
Puissent mes vers être comme elle,
Le régal des meilleures gens.

Le Dauphin

Dauphins, vous jouez dans la mer,
Mais le flot est toujours amer.
Parfois, ma joie éclate-t-elle?
La vie est encore cruelle.

L'Ecrivisse

Incertitude, ô mes délices
Vous et moi nous nous en allons
Comme s'en vont les écrevisses,
À reculons, à reculons.

La Carpe

Dans vos viviers, dans vos étangs,
Carpes, que vous vivez longtemps !
Est-ce que la mort vous oublie,
Poissons de la mélancolie?

The Dromedary

With his four dromedaries,
Don Pedro d'Alfaroubeira wandered the
world, and admired it.
He did what I would have liked to do,
if I had four dromedaries.

The Tibetan Goat

The fleece of this goat, and even that
Golden One for which Jason went to
such lengths,
Are worth nothing, compared to the
beautiful tresses of my beloved.

The Grasshopper

Here is the delicate Grasshopper,
fine nourishment for St John,
If only my verses could be like him,
a delicious treat for superior folk.

The Dolphin

Dolphins, you play in the sea,
but the waves are always bitter,
Sometimes I feel joy breaking out,
yet life is still cruel.

The Crayfish

Indecision, Oh such pleasure for me.
You and I go on our way
just like the crayfish:
Backwards!

The Carp

In your ponds and your pools,
Carp, how long you live!
Has death forgotten you,
melancholy fish?

Poulenc met the poet, Apollinaire, in a Parisian bookshop in his teens and immediately realised he had found a kindred spirit, a modern thinker, rooted in tradition. He set many of the poet's verses to music, and *Le Bestiaire* were the first, composed in 1919. Originally scored for voice and a small chamber group, Poulenc published the six little songs for voice and piano at the same time. The poems were accompanied by woodcuts by Raoul Dufy, and the simplicity of the poetry and illustrations appealed directly to Poulenc. A gentle humour fills the composition, culminating in the timeless melancholy of the last song, the Carp.

Chansons de Don Quichotte

Jacques Ibert (1890-1962)

Text by Ronsard (Chanson du Depart) and Alexandre Arnoux

Translations by Brian Bannatyne-Scott

Chanson du Depart (Departure Song)

This dazzling castle, this brand-new edifice,
lavishly decorated with marble and porphyry,
was built by Love to strengthen his empire,
and into which all of Heaven has poured her art.
Its ramparts form a fortress against vice,
And within which dwells the Mistress of Virtue,
Whom the eye beholds and whom the spirit admires,
Forcing all hearts to render her service and homage.
It is a castle, founded in such a way that none may approach its gates
Unless he has saved the noble race of Kings.
Victorious, valiant and chivalrous the knight must be, however willing,
Before he may gain admittance to such a place.

Chanson à Dulcinée (Song to Dulcinee)

Ah, a day seems to last a year if I do not see my Dulcinee.
Love, however, has painted her portrait in the fountain, in the clouds,
In every dawn and every flower, just to sweeten my torpor.
Ah, a day seems to last a year if I do not see my Dulcinee.
Both near and far, she is the star which guides my path.
The breeze carries her sweet breath to me as it passes through the jasmines.
Ah, a day seems to last a year if I do not see my Dulcinee.

Chanson du Duc (The Duke's Song)

I wish to serenade in song the Lady of my Dreams,
Who raises me high above this tawdry world;
Her diamond heart is ignorant of deceit,
As her cheek can outshine any rose

For her, I have followed knightly quests:
My strong arm has rescued many a damsel in distress,
I have defeated the Enchanter, confounded the Faithless,
And forced the universe to render her its homage.

Lady, for whom I wander alone across the Earth,
You who are free from worldly fashion,
Your champion I shall be against any upstart knight.
I shall uphold your dazzling lustre and proclaim your pre-eminence.

Chanson de la Mort de Don Quichotte (Song on the Death of Don Quixote)

Do not cry, Sancho, do not cry, my good man,
Your master is not dead, he is not far from you.
He lives now on a happy isle where all is pure and without deceit,
On the isle at last discovered, the wished-for place where you will join him in time, o my friend Sancho.
The books are all burned, and form a sad pile of ashes.
If all these books have killed me, just one will hold my memory alive!
A phantom in life, yet real in death:
Such is the strange tale of poor Don Quixote.

Jacques Ibert was a French composer best remembered for his film scores, perhaps the most famous being for Orson Wells' 1948 "Macbeth". It was a film which brought these four songs to life in 1933 when the Director Georg Pabst made his "Don Quixote" in English, French and German, starring the legendary Russian bass, Feodor Chaliapin. Various composers were asked to contribute songs, including Ravel, although his three songs never made it to the screen. It was Ibert whose songs eventually appeared, and they can still be found on Youtube sung in an improvisatory style by Chaliapin.

None of the words are by Cervantes. The first song is set to a poem by Pierre de Ronsard, the 16th century French "Prince of Poets" who spent some time in Scotland as page to Madeleine, wife of James 5th. The song is composed in an antique style to fit the old French of Ronsard, with very Spanish twists and melismas. The other three songs are composed to the poetry of Alexandre Arnoux, and are directly related to Don Quixote.. They all invoke the mock courtly world of the Don, and are great examples of the peculiar French skill in creating Spanish music. The Dulcinee song is a tender serenade to his love (a bawd in the story, transformed into a vision of Courtly Love) and the Duke's Song is a swaggering toast to his peerless Lady. The final song, a minor masterpiece, charts the last words of Don Quixote to his faithful servant, Sancho Panza. In the film, the Don dies beside a pile of burnt books and we see Sancho sobbing as his old master's voice sings this lovely song from the grave, or as he says, from his happy island.

Songs and Dances of Death

Modeste Mussorgsky (1839-1881)

Text by Golenishchev - Kutuzov

Translations by Brian Bannatyne-Scott

Lullaby

The child moans - - the candle burns low, and casts a dim flicker around.
All night long, rocking the cradle, the mother has not slept
Early that morning, so gently, merciful Death...knocks!
The mother gives a start, and looks around in fear.
"Don't be frightened my dear; the pale light of morning peeps in your window.
Weeping, longing, sighing, you are tired out. Take a little nap.
I will sit by him for you. You couldn't calm him down. Let me. I can sing sweeter than you!"
"Hush! My baby is agitated and thrashing about. My soul is tormented!"
"Now now, with me, he will quickly calm down - sing lullaby lullaby lullaby."
"His cheeks are pale, his breathing weakens. Be quiet, I beg you."
"That's a good sign. His suffering will calm. Lullaby lullaby lullaby."
"Away with you! With your tenderness you will kill all my joy."
"No, I shall weave peaceful sleep around your baby. Lullaby lullaby lullaby."
"Have mercy! At least for a second, stop your fearful song!"
"Oh look! He's fallen asleep to my gentle singing.....Lullaby lullaby lullaby!"

Serenade

Magical bliss, the blue-hued night, the trembling twilight of spring...
The invalid listens, hanging her head, to the whisper of night's silent words.
Sleep does not dim her shining eyes, life to its joys calls her still,
But, under her window in midnight silence, Death sings his Serenade:
"Captive in the darkness, so grim and confining, your youth will wither away.
But I, your unknown knight, by my wondrous power, will set you free!
Rise up, gaze at yourself. With what beauty your face shines so brightly,
Your rosy cheeks, your waving curls,, your waist encircled like a cloud.
Your clear eyes of radiant blue are brighter than the light of heaven.
Your breath has the warmth of the midday sun. How you have captivated me!
Your ear has been charmed by my serenade, Your whispers have called me he
Now your knight has come for his final reward! The hour of ecstasy is near!
With your slender waist, you tremble with desire. Oh let me crush you in my warm embrace!
My song is of love...listen.....Now you are mine!"

Trepak

Fields... forests....No one around.....The storm cries and moans.
It seems as if in the darkness of night, the angry snow is burying some poor man.
Look! So it is!
In the gloom, Death embraces and caresses a peasant; He dances a Trepak with the drunkard,
And sings this sweet song in his ear:
"Hey, poor peasant, you old man. In your cups, you've wandered off your road,
But the blizzard, the witch, rose up and played with you, and chased you from the field deep into the forest.
Sorrowful, laden with grief, oppressed, lie down, be comfortable, sleep, my dove.
I shall warm you with a coverlet of snow, and around you, I shall create a mighty whirl!
Fluff up a bed, you swan-feathered snow! Hey there, wild weather, start up a song!
A song indeed to last all night, so that this drunk may fall asleep to its melody.
Oh you forests, heavens and clouds, darkness, winds and swirling snow:
Weave a shroud of downy snow so I can cover the old man like a baby.
Sleep my friend, happy peasant. Summer has come, all in bloom.
Over the cornfields, the sun smiles and scythes are swinging,
Songs are heard.....doves fly past....."

The Field-Marshal

The battle rages, armour flashes, bronze cannons roar, the regiments charge,
horses panic,
Red rivers of blood flow.
The noon sun burns as men fight; as the sun sinks low, the fighting is fiercer.
When sunset pales, the enemies fight on, with yet more violence.
As night falls, the battlefield is quiet. Friends have become separated in the dark.
All is silent.
In the foggy gloom, moans rise to heaven.
Then, illuminated by the moon, on his great battle horse, his white bones gleaming, Death appears.
In the stillness, he listens to the groans and the prayers, and, filled with pride and satisfaction,
Like a Field-Marshal, he circles round the battle field.
He climbs a hill, he looks around, he stops. And he smiles!
Above the plain of battle, the voice of doom is clearly carried:
"The battle is over. I have conquered all! You have all made peace before me, warriors.
In life, you were enemies, now I reconcile you in death.
Rise up now for the roll call, corpses. March past in solemn file.
I want to count my troops.
Later, you may lay your bones in the ground, and sweetly rest from life's toils.
Year after year will pass unheeded, you will fade from the memories of men,
But I will not forget, and over your bones, I will hold a loud midnight feast.
With a heavy tread in the damp earth, I shall dance over your graves,
So your bones will never escape, and you can never rise from the earth!"

The *Songs and Dances of Death* is a cycle of four songs written by Mussorgsky in the mid 1870s. The texts are by Arseny Golenishchev-Kutusov, who was related to the composer and was in fact a close friend, and appear at first view deeply pessimistic. Each song deals with death in a poetic manner, but they are also realistic, as they reflect 19th century experiences of death: infant death, death in youth from sickness, drunken misadventure and war.
Each song is a miniature opera, and Mussorgsky finds extraordinary soundscapes in the accompaniment, leading one to the heart of the Russian soul. The first song is a lullaby and the second a serenade, although grim examples of the genres. The third song is also in the form of a dance, the Russian Trepak while the fourth is both a marching song and a funeral dance.

Brian Bannatyne-Scott was born and educated in Edinburgh. After obtaining MA (Hons) at St Andrews University, he studied singing at the Guildhall School of Music in London with Laura Sarti, and subsequently with Hans Hotter, Elisabeth Schwarzkopf, Galina Vishnevskaya and Norman Bailey. After debuts at La Fenice, Venice and the Rome Opera, he sang with Scottish Opera before embarking on an international career which has taken him to La Scala, Milan, Opera de Paris, Royal Opera House, Covent Garden, Teatro Colon, Buenos Aires, Theatre de la Monnaie, Brussels, Salzburg Festival, Aix-en-Provence Festival, Edinburgh Festival, Grand Theatre de Geneve, Nederlandse Opera, Amsterdam over the last 30 years. His repertoire ranges from early Baroque to Contemporary, and he has sung with such eminent conductors as Sir Colin Davis, Sir Simon Rattle, Sir Alexander Gibson, Sir Richard Hickox and Sir Antonio Pappano and with world famous orchestras and ensembles such as the LSO, the ECO, Les Musiciens du Louvre, the English Concert, the Dunedin Consort and the Hilliard Ensemble. His discography is extensive, covering many genres – e.g. Purcell's *King Arthur* with DG, Handel's *Messiah* with Minkowski on DG and Britten's *Midsummer Night's Dream* with Sir Colin Davis on Philips.

Brian has recently been appointed as Honorary Professor of Singing at St Andrews University. More details can be found on Brian's website at bannatynescott.co.uk.

Jan Waterfield studied music at Girton College, Cambridge, followed by studies in piano and harpsichord at London's Royal Academy of Music, with David Willison and John Toll.

As principal harpsichordist with Paul McCreesh's Gabrieli Players, she has played throughout Europe and contributed to many award-winning recordings; most recently 'A New Venetian Coronation', with its celebration of the ceremonial beauty of Giovanni Gabrieli's instrumental and vocal music. She also plays harpsichord regularly with the Academy of Ancient Music, Classical Opera Company, The Sixteen, the Scottish Chamber Orchestra, The Scottish Ensemble and Edinburgh's own 'Ludus Baroque'.

Jan's pianistic skills have led mainly into the realms of Art song and vocal coaching; she has been a contributor for many years at the Britten-Pears school in Aldeburgh and has also worked on courses for young singers throughout France and Spain. She performs regularly with the Scottish bass-baritone, Brian Bannatyne-Scott and sopranos Lorna Anderson and Mhairi Lawson.

Future projects include performing Gorecki's harpsichord concerto at London's Wigmore Hall, AAM's Monteverdi Opera recordings and another chance to play and record Handel Oratorios in Edinburgh's Canongate Kirk for Delphian Records.