

MAHLER

in miniature



Presented by

MAHLER PLAYERS mp

BRITTEN	Sinfonietta Op. 1
MAHLER	Rückert-Lieder
LONGWORTH	Pan's Caprice (world premiere)
PÄRT	Fratres
MAHLER	Kindertotenlieder

Laura Kelly McInroy mezzo-soprano Douglas Nairne baritone
Tomas Leakey conductor

Dornoch Inverness Nairn
24th 25th 26th June 2015

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Welcome to this evening's performance, the fourth programme in the Mahler Players' long-term concert series *Mahler in Miniature*. For the first time we are playing contemporary music: *Pan's Caprice* written specially for us by Scottish composer Peter Longworth and *Fratres* to mark the 80th birthday year of the Estonian composer Arvo Pärt. The ensemble will begin the performance with Britten's challenging and virtuosic early Sinfonietta. At the core of all this are two of the greatest song-cycles ever written: Mahler's *Rückert-Lieder* and *Kindertotenlieder*. We are glad to welcome back mezzo-soprano Laura Kelly McInroy and baritone Douglas Nairne with whom we worked extensively in 2014.

We are also delighted to announce that Sir Brian McMaster, Director of the Edinburgh International Festival from 1991 – 2006, has become our Patron.

PROGRAMME

Benjamin Britten: Sinfonietta Op. 1

- I. Poco presto ed agitato
- II. Variations
- III. Tarantella

Gustav Mahler: Rückert-Lieder (arr. Grossman)

- I. Liebst du um Schönheit
- II. Blicke mir nicht in die Lieder
- III. Um Mitternacht
- IV. Ich atmet' einen linden Duft
- V. Ich bin der Welt abhanden gekommen

Interval

Peter Longworth: *Pan's Caprice* (New Commission supported by the RVW Trust)

Arvo Pärt: Fratres

Gustav Mahler: Kindertotenlieder (arr. Riehn)

- I. Nun will die Sonn' so hell aufgeh'n
- II. Nun seh' ich wohl, warum so dunkle Flammen
- III. Wenn dein Mütterlein
- IV. Oft denk' ich, sie sind nur ausgegangen
- V. In diesem Wetter

Laura Kelly McInroy mezzo-soprano, Douglas Nairne baritone
Tomas Leahey conductor

BENJAMIN BRITTEN (1913 – 1976) Sinfonietta Op. 1

Composed in the summer of 1932, the Sinfonietta was the first work which Britten considered worthy of publication and thus commands an important place in his output. He was eighteen years old and a student at the Royal College of Music in London, where he was enrolled from 1930 – 1933. His studies at the College involved surprisingly little teaching by today's standards - one lesson per week in composition with John Ireland and one lesson per week in piano with Arthur Benjamin. For someone of Britten's extraordinary natural gifts it was not the ideal environment, as he expressed when he looked back on it: "I feel I didn't learn very much. When you are immensely full of energy and ideas you don't want to waste your time being taken through elementary exercises in dictation". Before coming to the College he had already studied extensively with the composer Frank Bridge, to whom the Sinfonietta is dedicated.

The first performance of the Sinfonietta was in January 1933 at the Mercury Theatre, Notting Hill, under the auspices of the Ballet Club (now the Rambert Dance Company) and was conducted by Iris Lemare.

The work is in three movements, which are linked together without pause. The first is based on the constant conflict between the notes Bb and A, introduced from the very beginning. A rising horn fanfare briefly relieves the tension but it relentlessly builds up again. There are moments of gentler music but on the whole this movement is austere and severe. The second movement 'Variations' is very different in character. The themes from the first movement reappear at the beginning and are given a plaintive treatment by the wind instruments before the violins start the variation theme, whose intertwining rhapsodic lines show a clear debt to Vaughan Williams. The last movement 'Tarantella', is a virtuosic *moto-perpetuo* showpiece for the ensemble. At the conclusion Britten brings back all of the ideas from the work at once, in a remarkable demonstration of technical ability and (perhaps) an 'I told you so' to the College authorities.

GUSTAV MAHLER (1861 – 1911) *Five Lieder* on texts by Rückert (arr. Grossman)

Mahler's main occupation was as a conductor, not a composer, and therefore most of his composing was done during his summer holidays in the three-month break between concert-seasons. In his idyllic summer residence in Maiernigg on the Wörthsee in southern Austria, he reportedly spent the mornings from 6am composing in an isolated, specially built hut in the woods not far from the lake. He would go for a dip around midday and spend the afternoons walking. In the summer of 1901 he was particularly productive, completing much of the 5th Symphony, three of the *Kindertotenlieder* and four of the five so-called '*Rückert-Lieder*'. These lieder, setting texts by the German poet Friedrich Rückert (1788 – 1866), are very different in style to the songs Mahler had composed in earlier years, almost all of which were from *Des Knaben Wunderhorn*. Gone are the folk tunes, marches and sardonic lyrics, to be replaced by something more subtle and sophisticated.

The *Rückert-Lieder* were first performed along with the *Kindertotenlieder* in January 1905 in a concert conducted by the composer. The songs do not form a cycle on a particular theme or mood and Mahler did not prescribe a performance order. The first of the lieder in this evening's performance, *Liebst du um Schönheit*, was the last to be composed - in August 1902, a few months after Mahler's marriage to Alma Schindler. The story goes that

it was written as a gift to her after an argument and he hid the manuscript in her score of Wagner's *Die Walküre*, which she often played through for pleasure. The song warns against loving for three superficial reasons: beauty, youth and riches, before extolling the virtues of loving for love's own sake. In her diary Alma said of it: "the song is so indescribably moving...it almost brought me to tears". Being such a private expression of his love, *Liebst du um Schönheit* is the only song from the *Rückert-Lieder* which was not orchestrated by Mahler himself; it was orchestrated by Max Puttman. *Blicke mir nicht in die Lieder*, a busy little song about the need for privacy when undertaking creative work, is an illustration that Mahler could be light and playful when he wanted to. *Um Mitternacht* is unusually scored for a large wind and brass section with no strings. It opens with the lonely thoughts of a sleepless night-watcher and ends with a triumphant chorale about faith in God. *Ich atmet' einen linden Duft*, a song with a delicacy and sparseness of instrumentation that looks forward to Webern, was described by Mahler as "the way one feels in the presence of a beloved being of whom one is completely sure without a single word needing to be spoken". The song does not really work in English translation – a major point of it being a play on the German words *lind* (meaning 'delicate') and *Linde* (meaning 'Lime-tree').

The final song, *Ich bin der Welt abhanden gekommen*, ('I am lost to the world') is the most well-known and has similarities with the famous *Adagietto* of the 5th Symphony. In February 1901, Mahler almost died as a result of a major haemorrhage, largely brought on by over-work. Since 1897 he had been Director of the Vienna State Opera, the most prestigious and demanding job in music at that time. In combination with his role as head of the Vienna Philharmonic subscription concerts (which he resigned in April 1901) it took him to breaking point. *Ich bin der Welt abhanden gekommen* is a paean to the contentment he felt when he was in the solitude of his summer retreat, away from the 'worldly-tumult' of his work in Vienna, and free to compose. Indeed, he said of the song to his long-term confidante, the violist Natalie Bauer-Lechner: "It is I myself".

This evening's performance is in a chamber arrangement from 2008 by Daniel Grossman. With the exception of the ending of *Um Mitternacht*, the original songs are also scored for relatively small forces so little is lost in these arrangements.

I.

Liebst du um Schönheit,
O nicht mich liebe!
Liebe die Sonne,
sie trägt ein gold'nes Haar!

If you love for beauty,
then do not love me!
love the Sun,
for he has golden hair.

Liebst du um Jugend,
O nicht mich liebe!
Liebe den Frühling,
der jung ist jedes Jahr!

If you love for youth,
then do not love me!
love the Spring,
which is young every year.

Liebst du um Schätze,
O nicht mich liebe!
Liebe die Meerfrau,
sie hat viel Perlen klar!

If you love for riches,
then do not love me!
love a mermaid,
for she has many fine pearls!

Liebst du um Liebe,
O ja, mich liebe!
Liebe mich immer,
dich lieb' ich immerdar!

If you love for love,
then yes, do love me!
love me forever,
I'll love you evermore!

II.

Blicke mir nicht in die Lieder!
Meine Augen schlag' ich nieder,
wie ertappt auf böser Tat.
Selber darf ich nicht getrauen,
ihrem Wachsen zuzuschauen.
Blicke mir nicht in die Lieder!
Deine Neugier ist Verrat!

Do not look into my songs;
I cast down my eyes,
as if surprised in a naughty deed.
I dare not even trust myself
to watch them growing.
Do not look into my songs;
your inquisitiveness is treason!

Bienen, wenn sie Zellen bauen,
lassen auch nicht zu sich schauen,
schauen selbst auch nicht zu.
Wenn die reichen Honigwaben
sie zu Tag befördert haben,
dann vor allen nasche du!

Bees, when they build cells,
also will not let themselves be watched,
and do not even watch themselves.
When the rich honeycombs
are at last brought to the light of day,
you shall be the first to taste!

III.

Um Mitternacht
hab' ich gewacht
und aufgeblickt zum Himmel;
kein Stern vom Sterngewimmel
hat mir gelacht
um Mitternacht.

At midnight
I kept watch
and looked up to heaven;
no star of all the host of stars
smiled on me
at midnight.

Um Mitternacht
hab' ich gedacht
hinaus in dunkle Schranken;
es hat kein Lichtgedanken
mir Trost gebracht
um Mitternacht.

At midnight
I sent my thoughts
far to the bounds of dark space;
no vision of light
brought me comfort
at midnight.

Um Mitternacht
kämpft' ich die Schlacht,
die Schläge meines Herzens;
ein einz'ger Puls des Schmerzens
war angefacht um Mitternacht

At midnight
I took note of
the beating of my heart;
a single pulse of sorrow
was set in motion at midnight.

Um Mitternacht
kämpft' ich die Schlacht,
O Menschheit, deiner Leiden;
nicht konnt' ich sie entscheiden
mit meiner Macht
um Mitternacht

At midnight
I fought the battle,
O Mankind, of your sufferings;
I could not gain the victory
by my own strength
at midnight

Um Mitternacht
hab' ich die Macht
in deine Hand gegeben!
Herr über Tod und Leben:
Du hältst die Wacht
um Mitternacht!

At midnight
I gave my strength
into Thy hands!
Lord of death and life,
thou keep'st the watch
at midnight!

IV.

Ich atmet' einen linden Duft!
Im Zimmer stand ein Zweig der Linde,
ein Angebinde von lieber Hand.
Wie lieblich war der Lindenduft!

I breathed a delicate fragrance.
In the room stood a spray of lime,
a token from a beloved hand.
How lovely was the fragrance of lime!

Wie lieblich ist der Lindenduft,
das Lindenreis brachst du gelinde!
Ich atme leis im Duft der Linde-
der Liebe linden Duft.

How lovely is the fragrance of lime,
the spray of lime you delicately plucked!
I gently breathe the fragrance of lime-
the delicate fragrance of love.

V.

Ich bin der Welt abhanden gekommen,
mit der ich sonst viele Zeit verdorben;
sie hat so lange nichts von mir
vernommen,
sie mag wohl glauben, ich sei gestorben!

I am lost to the world,
on which I squandered so much time;
it has for so long known nothing of me,
it may well believe that I am dead!

Es ist mir auch gar nichts daran gelegen,
ob sie mich für gestorben hält.
Ich kann auch gar nichts sagen dagegen,
denn wirklich bin ich gestorben der Welt.

Not that I am in any way concerned
if it takes me for dead;
nor can I really deny it,
for truly I am dead to the world.

Ich bin gestorben dem Weltgetümmel
und ruh' in einem stillen Gebiet!
Ich leb' allein in meinem Himmel,
in meinem Lieben, in meinem Lied

I am dead to the world's commotion
and at peace in a still land!
I live alone in my own heaven,
in my love, in my song.

PETER LONGWORTH (b. 1990) *Pan's Caprice* (New Commission)

There is a bucolic quality to much of the music in this caprice. The sound of the tambourine (heard periodically throughout the piece) enhances this pastoral atmosphere whilst also hinting at an ancient and almost ritualistic sound-world. This combination of the rustic and the antique brought to mind Pan, the woodland dwelling Demi-God of Ancient Greek mythology, who is often associated with music.

The piece is structured in a series of contrasting episodes within which the listener might hear Pan - represented by the solo clarinet or bass clarinet - gleefully scaring intruders who enter his woodland (the word 'panic' is derived from his name after all), dancing with other satyrs, and resting in idyllic glades. All the while Pan is haunted by the memory of Syrinx

(represented by the flute or piccolo), the nymph who was the object of his unrequited love.
Programme note by Peter Longworth

ARVO PÄRT (b. 1935) *Fratres*

One of the most distinctive composers of the present day, and now in his eightieth year, Arvo Pärt's music underwent a long evolution to reach the style which we hear in *Fratres*. Born in Estonia, he was initially known as a member of the Soviet avant-garde. In his early years he experimented with many of the techniques in use by his contemporaries: neo-classicism, serialism (he wrote Estonia's very first twelve-tone piece, *Nekrolog*), aleatoricism ('chance' music) and composing with sound masses and collage techniques. He had some success although unsurprisingly often found himself at odds with the Soviet regime.

In 1968 he had an artistic crisis of confidence, which was to result in eight years of introspection and no creative output. Much of this time was devoted to study: of Gregorian chant, of the 'Notre Dame' school of composers working in Paris from approximately 1160 – 1250 and of Renaissance polyphonic choral music. In 1976 he finally broke his silence with the piano miniature *Für Alina* which was composed in a new style called 'Tintinnabuli' (Latin for 'little bells'). The style combines the use of triadic (tonal) harmony with strict rules - closer to those of serialism than tonality - as to how the parts can move. The result is something which sounds both ancient and modern at the same time and is deeply concerned with Pärt's own conviction that "hidden behind the art of connecting two or three notes lies a cosmic mystery".

The original version of *Fratres* (which is Latin for 'brothers') was composed in 1977. Since then, Pärt has created numerous versions of it for different instrumental forces. As well as the best-known version for solo violin, string orchestra and percussion there are versions for violin and piano, string quartet, 12 cellos, and the present version (from 2007) for chamber ensemble. *Fratres* consists of a set of several 'variations' on a chordal sequence, the instrumentation changing on each successive return and separated each time by a recurring percussion motif.

The music is instantly highly atmospheric and as a result has been used many times as a back-drop to documentaries and films, perhaps most famously in the 2007 film *There Will Be Blood*. But there is much more to this music than facile atmosphere. The American composer Steve Reich makes the lucid point: "He (Pärt) is completely out of step with the zeitgeist and yet he's enormously popular, which is so inspiring. His music fulfils a deep human need that has nothing to do with fashion."

GUSTAV MAHLER *Kindertotenlieder* (arr. Riehn)

With the *Kindertotenlieder* we reach some of the greatest music Mahler ever composed, but, understandably, the subject material can sit uncomfortably. What sort of person, after all, would want to compose, perform or listen to 'songs on the deaths of children'? The original poems – Rückert produced over 400 of them - were written in the early 1830s as a reaction to the deaths of two of his children from scarlet fever. The sheer volume of this outpouring of grief on a single subject is surely unique in the history of literature. Mahler composed three of the songs (Nos. 1, 2 and 5) in the summer of 1901 and the remaining two in the summer of 1904. The first performance was in the same concert in which the

Rückert-Lieder were premiered, in January 1905.

Much has been made of his wife Alma's warnings that Mahler was tempting providence in composing these songs. Tragically, their eldest daughter Maria died in 1907 at the age of four from scarlet fever, the same disease that had claimed Rückert's children over seventy years earlier. However, the 'tempting fate' argument must be put in context, as it is unfair to portray Mahler as a morbid neurotic sitting musing about the deaths of his own children. Firstly, Mahler had not even met Alma and had no children in 1901 when he composed the first three of the songs. Secondly the reason for his return to the songs in 1904 (by which time he was married with two children) was most likely practical – he had promised the 'Vereinigung schaffender Tonkünstler' (a short-lived Viennese society led by Schoenberg for the performance of contemporary music) a work to premiere in the 1904/1905 season. It would have been much easier to return to an almost completed work than to write a new one. But, morbid or not, Mahler was aware of the tragic nature of these songs, saying to Natalie Bauer-Lechner in 1901: "It hurt me to write them and I grieve for the world which will one day have to hear them, so sad is their content".

The period of convalescence following his near-fatal haemorrhage in February 1901 was very important to Mahler's evolution as a composer: for the first time he intensively studied the music of Bach. As with Mozart's 'discovery' of Bach in the early 1780s, the influence of the contact on everything Mahler composed from this moment on is clear. The first song of the *Kindertotenlieder*, *Nun will die Sonn' so hell aufgeh'n*, opens with an 'invention' in bare two part counterpoint between the oboe and the horn. The contrast of minor and major in music that reflects the alternately mournful and consoling lines of the poem, also owes much to Schubert. *Nun seh ich wohl, warum so dunkle Flammen*, about the memory of the bright eyes of the children, is more impassioned, with Tristanesque harmonies and most of the music deriving from the yearning opening figure played on the cello. *Wenn dein Mütterlein*, is again evidence of Mahler's acquaintance with the music of Bach, much of it being a trio-sonata, separated by the most extraordinarily anguished passage involving the descent of the vocal line through almost two octaves. *Oft denk ich, sie sind nur ausgegangen*, where the father believes the children have only gone ahead on a walk, is the first song to begin in a major key, richly scored with the melody in thirds and sixths and led by the horn. The final song, *In diesem Wetter*, describes the storm that was raging on the day of the children's funeral. Suddenly the storm subsides and the glockenspiel, not heard since the first song, chimes the beginning of a long lullaby, describing the peace that the children must now have found.

Kindertotenlieder, tragic and harrowing as it is, remains one of the pinnacles of the song repertoire and is a reminder of the fact that music, like all art, is there to deal with the human condition in its entirety, not only to provide a pleasant evening's entertainment.

Programme notes by Tomas Leakey

I.

Nun will die Sonn' so hell aufgeh'n
als sei kein Unglück, die Nacht
gescheh'n!

Now will the sun as brightly rise
As though no evil befell last night!

Das Unglück geschah nur mir allein!
die Sonne, sie scheint allgemein!

The evil befell just me alone;
The sun, it shines on all mankind!

Du musst nicht die Nacht in dir
verschränken;
musst sie ins ew'ge Licht versenken!

Ein Lämplein verlosch in meinem Zelt,
Heil sei dem Freudenlicht der Welt!

II.

Nun seh' ich wohl, warum so dunkle
Flammen
ihr sprühtet mir in manchem Augenblicke.
- O Augen! - Gleichsam, um voll in einem
Blicke
zu drängen eure ganze Macht zusammen.

Doch ahnt' ich nicht, weil Nebel mich
umschwammen,
gewoben vom verblendenden Geschicke,
daß sich der Strahl bereits zur Heimkehr
schicke,
dorthin, von wannen alle Strahlen
stammen.

Ihr wolltet mir mit eurem Leuchten sagen:
Wir möchten nah dir bleiben gerne,
Doch ist uns das vom Schicksal
abgeschlagen.
Sieh' uns nur an, denn bald sind wir dir
ferne!

Was dir noch Augen sind in diesen Tagen:
in künft'gen Nächten sind es dir nur Sterne.

III.

Wenn dein Mütterlein
tritt zur Tür herein,
und den Kopf ich drehe,
ihr entgegen sehe,
fällt auf ihr Gesicht
erst der Blick mir nicht,
sondern auf die Stelle,
näher nach der Schwelle,
dort, wo würde dein
lieb' Gesichten sein.
Wenn du freudenhelle
trätest mit herein,
wie sonst, mein Töchterlein.
Wenn dein Mütterlein
tritt zur Tür herein,
mit der Kerze Schimmer,

You must not enfold the night within you;
You must immerse it in eternal light!

A lamp has gone out in my abode;
Hail to the whole world's gladdening light!

Now I see clearly, O eyes, why such dark
flames
So oft leapt out at me
As if you wanted to concentrate
The whole sum of your strength in a
single look.

Yet I never suspected (because of the mists
that hovered round me,
All spun by the deceitful loom of fate),
That those bright beams already sought to
journey
Back home – to the place where every
beam originates.

You wanted with your shining light to tell
me:
"We'd dearly love to stay here by you,
But our destiny denies us.
Ah look at us, for soon we'll be far from
you!

What are but eyes to you, these present
days,
In nights to come will be to you but stars."

When your mother dear
Comes in through the door,
And I turn my head,
to look across at her,
'Tis not on her face
That my glance falls first,
But upon that place,
Nearer to the floor,
There, where your dear face
Always used to be,
When all bright with joy
You would come in with her,
In bygone days, my daughter dear!
When your dear mother
Comes in through the door
In her candle's shimmer,

ist es mir, als immer
kämst du mit herein,
huschtest hinterdrein,
als wie sonst ins Zimmer!
O du, des Vaters Zelle,
ach, zu schnell, zu schnelle
erlosch'ner Freudenschein!

IV.

Oft denk' ich, sie sind nur ausgegangen!
Bald werden sie wieder nach Hause
gelangen.
Der Tag ist schön! O sei nicht bang!
Sie machen nur einen weiten Gang.

Jawohl, sie sind nur ausgegangen
und werden jetzt nach Hause gelangen.
O, sei nicht bang, der Tag ist schön!
Sie machen nur den Gang zu jenen Höh'n!

Sie sind uns nur vorausgegangen,
und werden nicht wieder nach Hause
verlangen!
Wir holen sie ein auf jenen Höh'n
im Sonnenschein! Der Tag ist schön
auf jenen Höh'n!

V.

In diesem Wetter, in diesem Braus,
nie hätt' ich gelassen die Kinder hinaus,
Man hat sie hinaus getragen.
ich durfte nichts dazu sagen.

In diesem Wetter, in diesem Saus,
nie hätt' ich gelassen die Kinder hinaus,
ich fürchtete, sie erkranken;
das sind nun eitle Gedanken.

In diesem Wetter, in diesem Graus,
nie hätt' ich gelassen die Kinder hinaus.
Ich sorgte, sie stürben morgen,
das ist nun nicht zu besorgen.

In diesem Wetter, in diesem Graus!
nie hätt' ich gesendet die Kinder hinaus.
Man hat sie hinaus getragen;
ich durfte nichts dazu sagen!

It's as though you always
Came in with her too,
Toddling after her,
As you used to do.
O you, your father's flesh and blood,
Ah, gladdening light
Too swiftly extinguished!

How often I think they're just out walking;
They won't be much longer, they'll soon be
returning.
The day is so fine, O never fear!
They're only taking the long way back.

Oh yes, they've only gone out walking,
And even now they must be returning.
O never fear, the day is fine!
They're only taking the path into the hills!

They've only started out before us
And won't come back home at all!
We'll soon overtake them, up on the hills,
In the sunshine! the day is fine
Upon the hills!

In this grim weather, this raging storm,
I'd never have sent the children outside!
But out of the house they've borne them.
I had no say in the matter.

In this grim weather, this howling gale,
I'd never have let the children outside,
I'd fear they might catch an illness;
Now these are but idle thoughts.

In this grim weather, this dreadful blast,
I'd never have dared let the children
outside.
I'd fear they might die tomorrow;
Now this is no cause for worry.

In this grim weather, this raging storm,
I'd never have dared send the children
outside!
But out of the house they've borne them;
I had no say in the matter!

In diesem Wetter, in diesem Saus,
in diesem Braus,
sie ruh'n, als wie in der Mutter Haus.
Von keinem Sturm erschreckt,
von Gottes Hand bedeckt,
sie ruh'n wie in der Mutter Haus!

In this grim weather, this howling gale,
This raging storm,
They rest, as if in their mother's house.
No storm can now frighten them,
The hand of God protects them,
They rest as if in their mother's house!

English translations by Deryck Cooke

LAURA KELLY McINROY – mezzo-soprano



Laura obtained her BMus Hons (1st Class) from the Royal Scottish Academy of Music and Drama and a postgraduate diploma in Opera from the Royal Academy of Music, London. She is an alumna of the Britten Pears School and English National Opera's Baylis Programme. Awards at the Royal Scottish Academy of Music and Drama include the Hugh S Robertson and George McVicar Memorial for Scots song. She embraces every opportunity to promote Scots song, having performed some of her favourites as far afield as Japan!

Laura has sung for English National Opera, English Touring Opera, Diva Opera, Classical Opera Company and Opera North among others. Operatic roles include Rosina: *Il Barbiere di Siviglia*, Cherubino: *Le Nozze di Figaro*, Hansel: *Hansel und Gretel* and Nancy: *Albert Herring*.

Whilst at the RAM she also created the role of The Doctor in the world premiere of *Kommilitonen* (Sir Peter Maxwell Davies).

Experienced on the concert platform, Laura's repertoire includes Vivaldi *Gloria* with the Brandenburg Sinfonia at St Martin in the Fields, Leighton *Columba Mea* with the White Hall Choir at St John's Smith Square, Vaughan Williams *Serenade to Music* at the Queen Elizabeth Hall for the Concordia Foundation and Beethoven's 9th Symphony at Canterbury Cathedral. With the Classical Opera Company she has performed recitals at London's Caledonian Club.

Future engagements include a tour of Mahler's *Rückert-Lieder* with The Mahler Players and the role of Frederico in a premiere of Edward Lambert's *An Opera with a Title* at Kings Place London.

DOUGLAS NAIRNE – baritone

Douglas won a scholarship to study at the Guildhall School of Music & Drama where he gained an Advanced Masters with Distinction before completing a Masters in Opera at the Sir Alexander Gibson Opera School. He was the soloist in Faure's 'Requiem' in a live performance on BBC Radio Ulster and in 2004 he led the National Anthem at Scotland's RBS 6 Nations Rugby Tournament.

Roles include Dancairo: *Carmen* and Marcello: *La Bohème* at Haddo House Opera; Silvio: *Pagliacci* with Lakeland Opera; Marcello: *La Bohème*, Enrico: *Lucia di Lammermoor* and the title character in *Eugene Onegin* with Opera Bohemia and Herald in *Burning Fiery Furnace* at the Aldeburgh Festival and the Hermitage in St Petersburg with Mahogany Opera.

In 2012 Douglas was the Baritone soloist for Go Opera's collaborative project with Peroni Beer, which toured the UK bringing opera to thousands of people.

On the concert platform Douglas has performed many works including the Britten *War Requiem* and the Vaughan-Williams *Sea Symphony* with the Scottish Opera Orchestra.



PETER LONGWORTH – composer



Peter Longworth (b.1990) studied at the Guildhall School of Music and Drama with Matthew King and at the Royal College of Music with Mark-Anthony Turnage, supported by a Douglas and Hilda Simmonds Award, a Dewar Arts Award and by the Countess of Munster Musical Trust and the RVW Trust. His music has been performed across the world in countries including the United States, Japan, Germany and the Netherlands, as well as in British venues such as the Southbank Centre, the Queen Elizabeth Hall, the Cadogan Hall, the Royal Glasgow Concert Hall and St Martin in the Fields.

Ensembles who have performed or workshopped Peter's music include members of the London Philharmonic Orchestra, the Bournemouth Symphony Orchestra, and the National Youth Orchestras of Scotland.

His work, 'Ludi' (commissioned by the National Youth Orchestras of Scotland in celebration of the 2014 Commonwealth Games) was described by Michael Tumelty of The Herald as 'dazzlingly-atmospheric... an extremely impressive set of vignettes which are concise, precise and exactly to the point'.

Peter was one of four composers to be mentored by Magnus Lindberg on the London Philharmonic Orchestra's Young Composers Programme for the 2014/15 season. His involvement with the scheme culminated with the premiere of 'Fiabe Cavalleresche' for chamber orchestra, performed in the Queen Elizabeth Hall by members of the London Philharmonic Orchestra and the Foyle Future Firsts programme, conducted by Magnus Lindberg. The piece was described by Colin Anderson of Classical Source as 'a likeably quirky piece, unpredictable, pastoral-lyrical and strongly rhythmic'.

A finalist in the 2014 Keuris Composers Contest (held in Amersfoort, Holland), Peter's music often draws on literature and his strong affinity with Tuscan culture and landscapes for inspiration.

TOMAS LEAKEY - conductor

Tomas Leakey's first experiences of orchestral music were as a trombonist in the Highland Regional Youth Orchestra. He later joined the National Youth Orchestra of Scotland.

After completing a degree in Natural Sciences at the University of Cambridge, Tomas studied conducting with the late George Hurst at the Sherborne (formally Canford) Summer School of Music, with Denise Ham at the Blackheath Conservatoire in London and with Toby Purser at the Aberystwyth *Musicfest*. In addition he has studied privately with Susan Dingle and at the Royal Welsh College of Music and Drama from 2013 - 2014.

In 2013 he set up and conducted an educational project in which a full performance of Stravinsky's *Soldier's Tale* was toured to several local schools. Later the same year he founded the Mahler Players who are now presenting their fourth concert tour.

MAHLER PLAYERS

The Mahler Players was founded in 2013 for the *Mahler in Miniature* project and is a hand-picked ensemble of entirely voluntary professional, former professional and very talented amateur musicians. Between them, the other ensembles with which they have played include the Berlin Philharmonic, Hallé, Orchestra of Opera North, BBC Philharmonic, BBC Scottish Symphony, Royal Scottish National, Scottish Chamber, Sydney Symphony and Tasmanian Symphony orchestras. They are for the most part resident in the local area. Currently they get together twice a year to rehearse very intensively for each set of concerts which are then toured across the Highlands. One of the aims of the ensemble is to present performances which have at their heart the philosophies and attitudes of chamber music, even if the central works were often conceived for much larger forces.

VIOLIN I:

Eleanor Cameron

CLARINET/BASS CLARINET

Mhairi Callander
James Ross

VIOLIN II:

Friedegund Riehm

BASSOON

Bruce Gordon

VIOLA:

Rachel Farmer

HORN

Andy Evans

CELLO:

Rick Lusher

TRUMPET

Rob Farmer

DOUBLE BASS:

Tam Hardy

PIANO

Fiona Sellar

FLUTE/PICCOLO:

Ruth Binks

HARMONIUM

Gordon Tocher

OBOE/COR ANGLAIS:

Leslie Callander

PERCUSSION

Alison Russell
Rob Farmer

We hope you enjoyed this evening's performance. We would be very grateful if you can fill in the questionnaire, which will give you the chance to enter a prize draw for free tickets to future concerts. Please leave the questionnaire by the door where you picked up tickets (Dornoch and Nairn) or with an usher (Eden Court) as you leave or alternatively post it to us (address opposite) at a later date.

The Mahler Players have ambitious plans for the rest of 2015 and 2016 including another four concerts in our *Mahler in Miniature* series. Works featured will be the 5th, 9th and 10th Symphonies and *Das Lied von der Erde*. We also have an educational project planned for September 2015 which will involve touring a performance of Walton's *Façade* to nine local schools followed by public performances. In order to achieve these aims we need your support. There are a number of ways you can help us if you would like to support our work.

Exit collections: at the Dornoch and Nairn performances there will be exit collections where you can make a small cash donation.

By cheque: cheques made payable to 'Mahler Players' can be sent to the address on the form opposite. If you are a UK taxpayer please also detach and fill in this Gift Aid form which will allow us to boost your donation by 25% at no extra cost to you.

Online: donations can be made via our website: www.mahlerplayers.co.uk

Major benefactors can have their names acknowledged in the concert programmes if they wish. We are also interested to hear from business owners who may wish to sponsor us.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

- The National Lottery through Creative Scotland
- The RVW Trust
- Scott-Moncrieff Business Advisors and Accountants
- Highland Council

CONTACT US

Email

contact@mahlerplayers.co.uk

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DATE FOR YOUR DIARY - Highland Chamber Orchestra 15th Anniversary Concert

Eden Court OneTouch Theatre
Saturday 5th September 2015 at 7.30pm

Mozart Overture to *Don Giovanni*

Goodwill, O'Rourke *Across the Albans* (World Premiere)

Rachmaninov *Vocalise*

Mendelssohn Scottish Symphony

Aileen Birch soprano, Christopher Josey tenor, Susan Dingle conductor

The Mahler Players is a Scottish Charitable Incorporated Organisation (SCIO) Charity No. SC044711



Scott-Moncrieff
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**Scott-Moncrieff, business advisers and accountants,
proud to support The Mahler Players.**

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