

A large, sepia-toned portrait of Edward Elgar occupies the left side of the poster. He is shown from the chest up, wearing a suit and tie, with a prominent mustache and receding hairline.

FRIDAY 1ST - SUNDAY 3RD JUNE 2018

# ELGAR FESTIVAL 2018

## PROGRAMME

The Elgar Festival is the official celebration of the life and music of Edward Elgar, based in his home town of Worcester with activities spanning Elgar Country.



*Elgar*  
ELGAR  
FESTIVAL

ELGARFESTIVAL.ORG



**FRIDAY 1ST JUNE 2018 AT 1PM**

## **ELGAR IN SONG AT THE ELGAR SCHOOL OF MUSIC**

*Lumby Recital Room - Elgar School of Music  
16-20 Deansway, Worcester WR1 2ES*

**Erika Mädi Jones** *Soprano*

**Wilhelm Theunissen** *Tenor*

**Janine Parsons** *Piano*

**and I-Conc (students of the  
Elgar School of Music)**

### **Programme**

A War Song Op. 5

Edward Elgar (1857-1934)

Is She Not Passing Fair?

Pleading Op. 48

Speak Music

Queen Mary's Song

Song of Autumn

Like to the Damask Rose

Canto Populare for Viola and Piano

Dream Childrend, arr. for violins and piano

Die Nacht

Richard Strauss (1864 - 1949)

Morgen

Zueignung Op. 10

The Wind at Dawn

Edward Elgar (1857-1934)

Shepherd's Song

Poet's Life

Edward Elgar (1857-1934)  
(arr. Donald Hunt)



## **JANINE PARSONS** *Piano*

Janine completed her studies at the Birmingham Conservatoire, having gained a B Mus (Hons) degree and a Post Graduate Diploma. She studied piano with Frank Wibaut and Professor Malcolm Wilson. As soloist she gave her debut recital at the Purcell Rooms, London and has since given concerto performances including Gershwin's Rhapsody in Blue, Chopin's Piano Concerto No 1 with The Worcester Philharmonic

Orchestra; Haydn's Piano Concerto in D Major with Volante Strings; and Mendelssohn's Concerto in A Minor with the English String Orchestra. Janine has also given solo recitals for music societies throughout the UK, including locally, The Kidderminster Classical Music Society, The Midland Gershwin Mayerl Society, Upton Arts Music Group and The Elgar Music School, Worcester.

Janine has worked as a freelance repetiteur with the Birmingham Royal Ballet in numerous educational projects, which has led her to appear in a BBC TV drama.

As accompanist, she has worked with numerous singers and instrumentalists in concerts and competitions, including performances broadcast on BBC Radio 2 and BBC Radio Shropshire. She has performed for many years as part of an all female trio 'The Sirens' who together have given concerts nationally and internationally. In 1997, she appeared as finalist in the Young Accompanist of the Year competition. Janine has also performed alongside Maureen Lipman and Julian Lloyd Weber. Janine now works regularly with cellist Corinne Frost and together they have recently performed in the Worcester Festival; Hellens, Much Marcle; the Lion Ballrooms, Leominster and for Coughton Court Arts. Currently Janine enjoys a busy musical life in her role as Head of School at the Elgar School of Music in Worcester.



### **WILHELM THEUNISSEN** *Tenor*

Wilhelm Theunissen is a professional tenor and singing teacher based in Worcester, England. He studied singing in his native South Africa with Professor Werner Nel before continuing his postgraduate studies in Italy and Germany. He returned to lecture in South Africa where he developed a programme to take classical singing into the townships. This eventually resulted in launching the careers of several opera singers, including that of bass baritone Vuyani Mlinde, currently a member of Opera Frankfurt. Wilhelm performed in all the major concert venues in South Africa. Among the highlights were performances in *Il Seraglio*, *Le Nozze di Figaro*, *Il Barbiere di Siviglia* and *Tosca*. Wilhelm's specialism is in the world of oratorio. He has sung the role of the Evangelist for Bach's *St Matthew* and *St John* Passions on many occasions, in both German and English. Since moving to England in 2003, Wilhelm has pursued a teaching and performing career. Apart from the role of the Evangelists, he has performed solo in Handel's *Messiah* and *Ode to St Cecilia*, Haydn's *Creation*, the Verdi *Requiem*, Britten's *Company of Heaven* and Elgar's *Coronation Ode*. Wilhelm gives regular recitals of lieder by Schumann and Schubert for concert clubs around the country and has performed with various ensembles, including the Royal Liverpool Philharmonic Orchestra, the English Symphony Orchestra, the Manchester Camerata and the BBC National Chorus of Wales. He currently runs his own studio in Worcester and teaches at the Elgar School of Music where he is Events Manager and Head of Vocal Studies.



### **ERIKA MÄDI JONES** *Soprano*

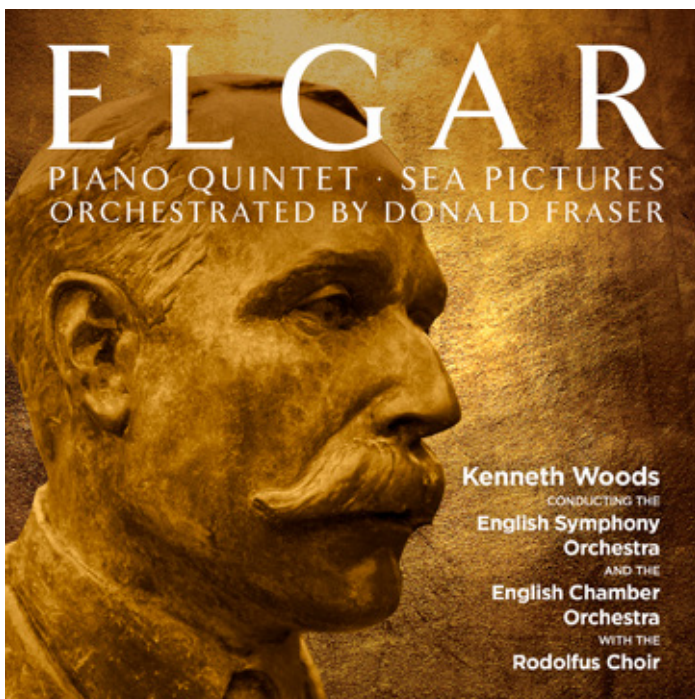
British Jugendlich-dramatischer soprano Erika Mädi Jones debuted to critical acclaim as Elisabeth in *Tannhäuser* at Longborough Festival Opera in summer 2016.

Winner of the 2017 Dvořák Society for Czech and Slovak Music Prize at the Emmy Destinn Young Singers competition and highly commended in the finals of the 2015 UK Wagner Society singing competition, she was awarded

first prize in the 2013 Elisabeth Schumann Lieder Duo competition and second prize in the Roy Pleasance Competition that same year. Erika is supported by Help Musicians UK, and is the recipient of the Goodall scholarship from the UK Wagner Society, Friends in New York of TCM London Award/ Edgar TP Comley Certificate of Excellence. In 2015 she was a chorister at Glyndebourne Festival Opera and a Les Azuriales young artist.

A Britten Pears Young Artist, Erika performed in the 2016 Aldeburgh Festival as part of the Thomas Quasthoff Brahms song course. She has had the pleasure of studying with Eugene Asti on his Brahms and Richard Strauss Projects at Trinity Laban, notably performing Strauss's Opus 27 songs with pianist Clare Simmonds. Together with pianist Panaretos Kyriatzidis, she has performed a wide variety of German lieder from Hindemith to Korngold, Wolf to Berg and recently Wagner's *Wesendonck Lieder*. The duo were invited to sing in a masterclass with Ian Partridge CBE in the 2014 Oxford Lieder festival and a masterclass with Roger Vignoles in the 2013 London Song Festival.

#### ON CD: ELGAR FROM THE ESO





**FRIDAY 1ST JUNE 2018 AT 7:30PM**

## **TALK: “POMP AND POETRY TOO” AT THE FIRS**

*The Firs - Elgar's Birthplace, Crown East Lane,  
Lower Broadheath, Worcestershire, WR2 6RH*

A presentation of Elgar's music together with a selection of poems read by actor, playwright and Elgar Society member Peter Sutton. This compilation by Stella and Stuart Freed contains music and poetry both familiar and unfamiliar.

### **Pomp and Poetry Too**

This seemingly strange title stems from a programme compiled and presented by Stella and Stuart Freed in 1998 consisting of a selection of Elgar's works with accompanying poems both familiar and unfamiliar. The presentation, entitled “Pomp and Poetry”, was given to a number of Elgar Society branches and proved so popular that a second programme emerged along similar lines. Knowing Elgar's fondness for a good pun, the title with an added “Too” became an obvious choice.

To recite the poetry, the Elgar Festival in association with the Elgar Society and The Firs, is pleased to welcome Peter Sutton.

**Peter Sutton** is a playwright, poet, editor and translator, and a sometime professional actor and adult educator. His play *Elgar and Alice* was first produced in 2007, and *The Prebumpious Mr Punch* was premiered in 2013, also at the Swan Theatre, Worcester. His translation of Rolf Hochhuth's play *Death of a Hunter* has just been performed in Berlin and London, and his modern verse translation of William Langland's great medieval poem *Piers Plowman* was published by McFarland of North Carolina in 2014. He has given readings from the work at conferences and poetry festivals in the US and the UK. His own poetry has also begun to appear in journals, and he is a regular reader at West Midlands poetry events. He was Head of Publications at the Unesco Institute for Education in Hamburg in the late 1980s and '90s, before settling in Worcestershire as a freelance translator and editor for cultural institutions, lawyers and international organisations, and training to act. He has written textbooks and articles on languages and education, Elgar and Langland, and he has been a visiting lecturer on translation, English language and education at universities in Armenia, Germany, Russia and the UK.





**SATURDAY 2ND JUNE 2018, 10AM - 4PM**

## **ELGAR'S LIFE IN 100 OBJECTS**

*Worcester Guildhall, High St,  
Worcester WR1 2EY*

Pop in to the beautiful and historic Guildhall in central Worcester any time throughout the 2018 Elgar Festival to sample this fascinating exhibition of Elgar memorabilia on loan from prestigious private collections.

**SATURDAY 2ND JUNE 2018 AT 4:30PM**

## **STRING QUARTET AFTERNOON CONCERT WITH ZOË BEYERS AND FRIENDS**

*Worcester Guildhall, High St, Worcester WR1 2EY*

**String Quartet Coffee Concert with  
Zoë Beyers and Friends**

**Elgar arr. David Matthews** - Sospiri (World Premiere)

**David Matthews** - String Quartet no. 6

**Elgar** - String Quartet in E Minor, opus 83

The Elgar Festival celebrates David Matthews at 75 as part of Matthews in the Midlands with this string quartet concert.



### **ZOË BEYERS** *Violin*

Zoë Beyers was born in Stellenbosch, South Africa. Since her solo debut aged eleven with the Swedish Chamber Orchestra under Paavo Järvi, she has performed with many distinguished conductors throughout Europe and Africa. Recent highlights include Sir Peter Maxwell Davies' *A Spell for Green Corn* and the Britten concerto with the CBSO under Michael Seal. Forthcoming projects include the

Korngold concerto with the Norwich Philharmonic and Prokofiev's 2nd concerto with the Corinthian Chamber Orchestra.

Zoë is a member of the *Hebrides Ensemble* and also performs, broadcasts and records with the *Birmingham Contemporary Music Group* and the *Scottish Ensemble*, collaborating with, amongst others, Francois Leleux, Stephen Osborne, Lars Vogt, Elisabeth Leonskaja and Alexander Janiczek, and the composers Helen Grime and Oliver Knussen. As a soloist/director, Zoë's 2011 recording of early Mendelssohn concerti with the University of Stellenbosch Camerata was nominated for a SAMA award. Her 2013 recording of Wassenauer concerti armonici (directing the *Innovation Chamber Ensemble* for Somm Records) was Classic FM's CD of the week, and their 2014 disc of rare Elgar works was received with critical acclaim.



### **KATE SUTHERS** *Violin*

Violinist Kate Suthers leads the award-winning Artesian Quartet. She is currently Section Leader of Second Violins in the City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra. Alongside chamber music and the CBSO, Kate also performs in principal roles with groups around the country including the Aurora Orchestra, BBC National Orchestra of Wales, Birmingham Contemporary Music Group and Scottish Ensemble.

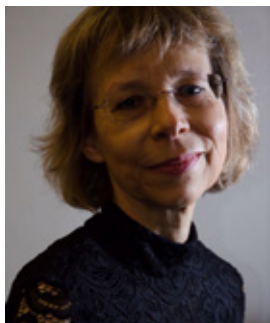
Kate completed a Masters degree at the Royal Academy of Music with Gyorgy Pauk, followed by a further year as a CAVATINA Chamber Fellow with the Artesian Quartet. As part of her orchestral training Kate performed with both the Philharmonia and London Symphony Orchestras, toured with the European Union Youth Orchestra, recorded with Trevor Pinnock for Linn Records and received leadership mentoring from Clio Gould, Andrew Haveron and Zsolt Tihamér-Visontay. Her first appointment was to the first violin section of the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra.

As a soloist Kate has performed across the UK, including concerto performances at Cheltenham Festival, St-Martin-in-the-Fields and with the Sinfonia of Birmingham. With her quartet she has played at the BBC Proms and Wigmore Hall, and has benefitted from the support of the Park Lane Group and the Britten Pears Foundation.

Born and raised in Sydney, Kate has adopted the UK as home since studying in the specialist music stream at Wells Cathedral School. She is a keen baker and cook, a coffee fanatic, and when time allows, an avid reader.

Kate plays on a Marchetti violin, kindly on loan from the Harrison Frank Foundation.





### **CATHERINE MARWOOD** *Viola*

Catherine Marwood studied at the Royal Academy Of Music and spent the following nine years playing with the Fairfield String Quartet with whom she toured Europe and recorded for the Hyperion label. She also explored the oboe quartet repertoire with the Marwood Ensemble and recorded a disc of the music of Jean Francaix.

In 1988 she was appointed principal viola with the Scottish Chamber Orchestra, a position she held for ten years. She appeared many times as soloist with the orchestra collaborating with such artists as Joseph Swensen, Yuri Bashmet and Ernst Kovacic and in the SCO's chamber series she worked with Michael Collins, Stephen Isserlis, Peter Donohoe and many others. She also premièred and recorded Sir Peter Maxwell Davies Strathclyde concerto no 5.

Catherine has also appeared as soloist with a number of other orchestras including the BBC National Orchestra of Wales. She was principal viola in the Scottish Ensemble who have recorded under the prestigious Wigmore Live label, are frequently broadcast on Radio 3 and tour extensively in this country and abroad. Catherine works with many chamber groups and orchestras and in 2009 she was appointed principal viola in the Royal Liverpool Philharmonic Orchestra. She was recently appointed as the violist of the Edinburgh Quartet, Scotland's leading chamber ensemble.

Other commitments include teaching at St Mary's Music School in Edinburgh and examining for the Associated Board.



### **VICTORIA SIMONSEN** *Cello*

Victoria Simonsen enjoys a varied musical life that incorporates solo, chamber music and orchestral concerts as well as teaching. She has performed at festivals such as the IMS Prussia Cove, Manchester International, BBC Proms London, Kronberg Germany, Banff Canada and Chamber Music New Zealand. Her performances have been broadcast on radio and TV

in UK, Germany and NZ and concerts have included Wigmore Hall and Purcell Room. She joined the Rautio Piano Trio in 2015, with whom she is a recording

artist for the Resonus Classics label. Victoria was Principal Cellist with Opera North (2005-07) before becoming a member of the Philharmonia Orchestra (2008-2017) and she has appeared as Guest Principal with many of the UK's major orchestras. Victoria studied primarily at the RNCM with Karine Georgian and Ralph Kirshbaum, culminating in winning the Gold Medal in 2005. She continued her studies as a string quartet fellow at the Guildhall School of Music and later with Julius Berger in Germany. Victoria now teaches cello at the Royal Northern College of Music.

## **ELGAR ARR. DAVID MATTHEWS**

### *Sospiri (World Premiere)*

*Sospiri* for harp and strings is one of the most private of all Elgar's works, and a somewhat mysterious one. He wrote it in 1914 and it was first performed at a Promenade concert the day after the First World War was declared, an appropriate date for such a sad piece, though few in the audience would have realised this. *Sospiri* means 'sighs' and the whole piece is full of the most intense regret: Michael Kennedy called it a 'wounded heart-cry'. What it's really about we don't know – could it even be poignant thoughts of Elgar's first love Helen Weaver, who emigrated to New Zealand in 1885 and whom he never saw again? I thought it could work for string quartet as it's such an intimate piece, and so I made this arrangement especially for this concert.

© **David Matthews**



## **DAVID MATTHEWS**

### *String Quartet No 6*

*1. Allegro moderato e flessibile*

*2. Adagio*

*3. Allegro energico*

When a friend of mine, the art critic Peter Fuller, was killed in a car accident in April 1990, I composed a short piece for string quartet which was later played at his memorial service. This piece forms the basis of the central slow movement of the present Quartet.

The original piece survives more or less intact, but I enclosed it within a rhetorical frame, and at two points I introduced new developmental material.

The outer movements both derive their thematic material from the slow movement. Both are in sonata form. Much of the first movement is contemplative in character, though its second subject is a fierce chordal passage. In the last movement the main contrast is between the energy of the opening and the overt lyricism of the second group. The development precipitates a crisis, where a theme from the slow movement returns, high on the cello. The ending is, I hope, a reaffirmation of vitality.

The Quartet was commissioned by the Little Missenden Festival, funded jointly by the Friends of the Festival and the Buckinghamshire Arts Association.

© **David Matthews**

## **EDWARD ELGAR (1857-1934)**

*String Quartet in E Minor, opus 83*

*Allegro moderato*

*Piacevole (poco andante)*

*Allegro molto*

It's become commonplace to portray Elgar as the self-confident voice of Edwardian England, silenced by the Great War, but Elgar's success had come late in life; he was 57 in 1914, and he simply could not face the War with the confidence and moral certainty of a younger man. In May 1917 he and his wife Alice left London for Brinkwells, a rented country house in a wooded valley of the Sussex downs, and over the next three years this retreat drew from him a series of works of a character quite unlike his pre-war music. Alice Elgar noticed straight away that something special was happening, and noted in her diary that "E. is writing wonderful music, different from anything else of his. A. calls it wood magic. So elusive and delicate".

Between August and December 1918 there came, in quick succession, Elgar's three great chamber works - his Violin Sonata, String Quartet and Piano Quintet - followed next summer by the Cello Concerto, chamber music in spirit. Something in the atmosphere of the time and place combined to give Elgar's inspiration a new intimacy and poetry, while bringing the aching melancholy that was never far beneath the surface of his music to an unprecedented degree of poignancy. Elgar was fascinated by a group of twisted tree-stumps, said to be haunted, that stood in a woodland clearing near Brinkwells. Their shadows fall across all of his Brinkwells music, much as the public sorrows of the time threw their own darkness across his feelings.

So although Elgar was no stranger to the technique of writing for strings (he was himself a violinist, and had made his first attempt at a string quartet as long ago as 1878), his String Quartet is something new and unique in his music. That it should have turned out this way was not as self-evident as it might now seem. The intimacy of the Quartet's inspiration in no way affected Elgar's technical prowess, and the comments with which he described its progress to his musical friends are full of his usual outward confidence and humour - the violinist William Reed, for example, arrived for a play-through of the unfinished Quartet to find his part sitting on the music stand under the heading "Reed's Jazz". The Quartet, likewise, is full of confident gestures. "Finishing composing last movement of 4tet. Most fiery & sweeps along like Galloping of Squadrons" reads Elgar's diary entry for 11th December 1918, and the Quartet is indeed laid out in three expansive, thoroughly-worked movements, the first and third in Elgar's uniquely rhapsodic brand of sonata-form.

Even on first listening, though, there's something troubled about the piece. The quiet opening motif, with its duplet rhythms, sits uncomfortably atop the first movement's 12/8 time signature, and the way in which the movement's lines and harmonies twist and strain evokes the "sense of ruin" that Elgar would express even more bleakly in the Piano Quintet and (we now know) his unfinished Third Symphony. Despite moments of caressing sweetness, this movement is one in which the shadows predominate. And there's something of falling leaves about the central section of the slow movement, despite the idyllic character of its lovely first subject – a melody (marked *piacevole*, "agreeable") that Alice Elgar called "captured sunshine", and which Elgar, with the generosity of the true chamber musician, gave to the second violin. Alice particularly loved this *poco andante* - its magical closing passage was her idea, and the whole movement was played at her funeral, in April 1920.

With the vigour of the final *Allegro molto*, we seem, at first, to be back on familiar Elgar territory, and in fact the quartet ends with a confident sweep into E major. But along the way come some of the most haunted sounds yet, including a brief, eerie passage in which the musicians play *tremelando, sul ponticello* (on the bridge). Elgar's Quartet is an assured and superbly written piece of late-romantic chamber music but it betrays, equally clearly, the fears and doubts that before long would effectively silence its composer for the rest of his life.

© **Richard Bratby**



**SATURDAY 2ND JUNE 2018 AT 6PM**

## **THE A.T. SHAW LECTURE "ELGAR'S VOICE" WITH DAVID MATTHEWS**

*Abbot's Kitchen, The Old Palace, Deansway, Worcester WR1 2JE*

**The Elgar Society Presents**

**The bi-annual A.T. Shaw Lecture "Elgar's Voice"**

**David Matthews** *Composer/speaker*

*"In this talk I shall be dealing with two aspects of Elgar's very distinct voice, the public voice and the private voice. Among the works I shall be discussing are In the South, Falstaff, the String Quartet (talking about my arrangement for strings as well as the original) and Sospiri – one of the most private of all Elgar's works."*

**– David Matthews**

David Matthews, 2018 Visiting Composer of the Elgar Festival, takes up the chair of "John McCabe Composer-in-Association" with the English Symphony Orchestra in 2018. He was born in London in 1943 and started composing at the age of sixteen. He read Classics at the University of Nottingham – where he has more recently been made an Honorary Doctor of Music – and afterwards studied composition privately with Anthony Milner. He was also helped by the advice and encouragement of Nicholas Maw and spent three years as an assistant to Benjamin Britten in the late 1960s. He has largely avoided teaching, but has undertaken editorial work to support his composing career, collaborating with Deryck Cooke on the performing version of Mahler's Tenth Symphony and orchestrating film music. He has written books on the music of Tippett and Britten, published a lecture on the relation of music to painting and penned numerous reviews for music journals. Matthews is Music Advisor to the English Chamber Orchestra and was Artistic Director of the Deal Festival for 13 years. In 2013 he was included in the Evening Standard's Power 1000 list of London's most influential people.

The Elgar Festival is proud to be a part of the consortium of leading performing arts organisations. including the English Symphony Orchestra and the Orchestra of the Swan, presenting "David Matthews in the Heart of England," a year-long celebration of Matthews' work presented in celebration of his 75th birthday.



*ESO at St Georges, Bristol with Sheku Kanneh-Mason - 9 May 2018 - photography by Evan Dawson*

**SATURDAY 2ND JUNE 2018 AT 7.30PM**

## **ENGLISH STRING ORCHESTRA FESTIVAL GALA CONCERT IN WORCESTER CATHEDRAL**

*Worcester Cathedral, 8 College Yard, Worcester WR1 2LA*

**English String Orchestra**

**Kenneth Woods** *Conductor*

**Nicholas Daniel** *Oboe*

Introduction and Allegro, op. 47

Oboe Concerto

Edward Elgar (1857-1934)

Ralph Vaughan Williams  
(1872-1958)

***Nicholas Daniel, oboe***

*Interval - 20 Minutes*

Songs for Strings (World Premiere)

String Quartet in E minor, opus 83

Edward Elgar (1857-1934)

arr. Donald Fraser

Edward Elgar (1857-1934)

arr. David Matthews

### **EDWARD ELGAR**

*Introduction and Allegro for Strings*

Folk music was a lifelong interest and source of inspiration for Vaughan

Williams, but less so for Edward Elgar. In fact, the Introduction and Allegro heard this evening is one of the very few pieces Elgar wrote to include any element of folk music. Elgar transcribed the haunting melody first played by the solo viola while on holiday in Cardigan Bay in Wales. The work was written to showcase the strings of the newly-formed London Symphony Orchestra. Written for string orchestra and solo-string quartet, Elgar's Introduction and Allegro is a modern reinvention of the Baroque concerto grosso.

The work's origin as a showpiece for the LSO is particularly apparent in the middle section of the piece, what Elgar himself described as "a devil of a fugue." This astonishing passage takes the place of a traditional "development" section, and the work ends with an ecstatic restatement of the "Welsh" tune.

© **Kenneth Woods**

## **RALPH VAUGHAN WILLIAMS**

### *Concerto in A Minor for Oboe and String Orchestra*

After a lengthy search for a personal style, Vaughan Williams found his voice by tapping into England's rich treasury of folk song, and the magnificent heritage of its Tudor-era music. The warmth, spirituality, and humour of those sources played a significant role in many of his compositions. The example he set of bringing together traditional sources with modern techniques paved the way for British composers of later generations, such as Benjamin Britten, to continue and elaborate the practice.

The Oboe Concerto was commissioned and premiered by the internationally celebrated English soloist, Léon Goossens. Several other distinguished composers wrote music expressly for him, including Sir Edward Elgar and Benjamin Britten.

Vaughan Williams completed the concerto in 1943, but difficult wartime conditions delayed the premiere until the following year. Its gentleness gives little hint of the background to its creation. It includes material for a scherzo that had been discarded from the recently composed Fifth Symphony.

The soloist has little 'breathing room,' playing almost continually from first bar to last. The first movement, Rondo Pastorale, communicates equal parts warmth, whimsy, and wistfulness. The personality of Minuet and Musette, the brief, sprightly second movement, lies closer to the countryside than the ballroom. The concluding Scherzo demands virtuosity from the soloist for the first time. The energetic opening alternates with a reflective section, leading to an emotionally enigmatic conclusion.



## FOUR ELGAR PIECES:

### *"Songs for Strings"*

Yehudi Menuhin was the first to ask me to arrange Elgar's music. In his case for a tour of America with only a string orchestra. I have subsequently arranged and orchestrated many of Elgar's works for both orchestral and choral forces. The arrangements are of three of his songs and an improvisation that he recorded towards the end of his life.

© **Donald Fraser**

The Songs:

#### **Pleading**

#### **A Child Asleep**

#### **Queen Mary's Lute Song**

From Elgar's improvisation a new work:

#### **The Queen's Hall**

*These works will be available in September on Avie Records. Also available is the CD of the Piano Quintet orchestration and Sea Pictures for chorus and orchestra. (Conducted by Kenneth Woods and English Symphony Orchestra)*

## PLEADING

### **Arthur L. Salmon**

Will you come homeward from the hills of Dreamland,  
Home in the dusk, and speak to me again?  
Tell me the stories that I am forgetting,  
Quicken my hopes, and recompense my pain?  
Will you come homeward from the hills of Dreamland?  
I have grown weary, though I wait for you yet;  
Watching the fallen leaf, the faith grown fainter,  
The memory smoulder'd to a dull regret.  
Shall the remembrance die in dim forgetting—  
All the fond light that glorified my way?  
Will you come homeward from the hills of Dreamland,  
Home in the dusk, and turn my night to day?

## **A CHILD ASLEEP**

***Elizabeth Barrett Browning***

How he sleepeth!  
Vision unto vision calleth,  
While the young child dreameth on.  
Fair, O dreamer, thee befalleth  
With the glory thou hast won!  
Darker wert thou in the garden, yesternorn, by summer sun.  
We should see the spirits ringing  
Round thee, - were the clouds away.  
'Tis the child-heart draws them, singing  
In the silent-seeming clay -  
Singing! - Stars that seem the mutest, go in music, music all the day.  
  
Softly! softly, make no noises!  
Now he lieth still and dumb -  
Now he hears the angels' voices  
Folding silence in the room -  
Now he muses deep the meaning of the Heaven-words as they come.  
Floweth outward with increase -  
Dare not bless him! but be blessed by his peace - and go in peace.

## **QUEEN MARY'S LUTE SONG**

***Lord Tennyson***

Hapless doom of woman  
    happy in betrothing,  
Beauty passes like a breath  
    and love is lost in loathing;  
Low! my lute:  
Speak low, but say the world is nothing.  
  
Low! lute, low! Love will hover round the flowers  
when they first awaken;  
Love will fly the fallen leaf,  
and not be overtaken;  
Low, my lute!  
O low, my lute! we fade and are forsaken.  
Low, dear lute, low!

## ELGAR

### *String Quartet, Op.83*

*Arranged for string orchestra by David Matthews*

Although Elgar was a highly accomplished violinist, he wrote no mature string chamber music until, at the end of his creative life, he produced three major works: a violin sonata, a piano quintet and a string quartet. His creativity was incapacitated by the First World War: "I cannot do any real work with the awful shadow over us", he wrote to his friend Sidney Colvin. He was living in his grand Hampstead house and much of the time was ill and deeply depressed. But in 1917 his wife found an isolated cottage, Brinkwells, near Fittleworth in Sussex. It was here, in the autumn of 1918, his spirits revived, that Elgar worked on the three new pieces, and also made sketches for his last major completed work, the Cello Concerto. These sketches were originally intended for string quartet, and the Quartet proper begins with similar E minor material. Both outer movements are full of mercurial changes of mood; both end at the last minute in the major, the finale with an exhilarating display of renewed energy. In between comes an intermezzo marked 'Piacetole', 'peacefully' - a pastoral C major interlude between the two stormy outer movements. Alice Elgar was particularly fond of this movement, and it was played at her funeral in 1920. In 2002, I arranged the slow movement for string orchestra and George Vass conducted it that year at the Deal Festival. The remainder of the Quartet was orchestrated in 2010. The substantial part of the arrangement is the addition of a double bass part, but I have also thickened the upper parts in a number of places. At two points in the first movement and at the end of the Andante I have preserved the original writing for solo strings. The arrangement was commissioned by the John S. Cohen Foundation.

© **David Matthews**

## DONALD FRASER *Composer*

British born, now a permanent US resident, British Academy Award winning Donald Fraser lives and works from his home outside of Chicago.

His studio is a converted barn and he uses Sibelius software for scoring and publishing, ProTools for recording and mixing and Avid Media Composer for film and video.

Donald entered the Royal College of Music at age seventeen to study composing and conducting. His principal tutors were Sir Adrian Boult, Humphrey Searle and Alexander Goehr. He also studied with Nadia Boulanger.

In his second year he was awarded all five composition prizes and a Cobbett Prize for conducting. At nineteen he began writing for film and television and subsequently became resident composer at the Royal College of Art Film School and composer, conductor and Artistic Associate for the Old Vic Theatre Company. Donald has also created and produced TV, Film and Theatre programmes and many sound recordings for RCA, BMG, EMI, Philips, the BBC, Thames TV, PBS, Channel 4 and independent production companies. He has composed scores for over 30 documentaries, several feature films and TV series as well as more than 120 commercials, many radio dramas and music for the concert hall. Donald's music been heard at many of the world's major festivals including Edinburgh, Istanbul, Perth (Australia), Hong Kong as well as on theatrical tours to the United States, China, Japan and many European countries.



### **NICHOLAS DANIEL** *Oboe and Conductor*

Nicholas Daniel has long been acknowledged as one of the world's great oboists, and is one of Britain's best known musicians. In a distinguished career that began more than four decades ago he has significantly enlarged the repertoire for his instrument with the commissioning of hundreds of new works.

Nicholas has been Music Director of the Leicester International Music Festival for many years. He is Professor at the Trossingen Musikhochschule in Germany and at the Guildhall School of Music in

London, and he records and broadcasts widely.

In recognition of his achievements he was honoured in 2012 by Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II with the prestigious Queen's Medal for Music, and cited as having made "an outstanding contribution to the musical life of the nation".

Nicholas was put into the spotlight at the age of 18 when he won the BBC Young Musician competition, after which he quickly established his career with early debuts at the BBC Proms and on disc. He made his conducting debut at the BBC Proms in 2004.

He has been a soloist with many of the world's leading orchestras, performing a huge range of repertoire and premiering works written for him by composers including Harrison Birtwistle, Henri Dutilleux, James MacMillan, Thea Musgrave, John Tavener and Michael Tippett. His recording of concertos by Vaughan Williams

and MacMillan was awarded the BBC Music Magazine Premiere Award in 2016.

Nicholas is a founder member of the Britten Sinfonia, the Haffner Wind Ensemble and the Britten Oboe Quartet, whose debut disc was released to great acclaim on the Harmonia Mundi label in 2017. He also works regularly with the pianists Charles Owen and Julius Drake, and with many leading string quartets. He is principal oboist of Camerata Pacifica, California's leading chamber music ensemble.

Nicholas Daniel is proud to play the world's first 'fair-trade' oboe, certified by the Forest Stewardship Council and made especially for him by Marigaux in Paris.

**[www.nicholasdaniel.co.uk](http://www.nicholasdaniel.co.uk)**



### **KENNETH WOODS** *Conductor*

Hailed by Gramophone as a "symphonic conductor of stature," conductor, cellist, composer and author Kenneth Woods has worked with the National Symphony Orchestra (USA), Royal Philharmonic Orchestra, Cincinnati Symphony Orchestra, BBC National Orchestra of Wales, Budapest Festival Orchestra, Royal Northern Sinfonia and English Chamber Orchestra. He has also appeared on the stages of some of the world's leading music festivals, including Aspen, Scotia and Lucerne. In 2013, he took up a new position as Artistic Director

and Principal Conductor of the English Symphony Orchestra. In 2015 he became the second Artistic Director of the Colorado MahlerFest, the only American organisation other than the New York Philharmonic to receive the Gold Medal of the International Gustav Mahler Society.

Woods was appointed Principal Guest Conductor of the Orchestra of the Swan in 2010 and during his tenure lifted that orchestra to a new level of international renown. With them, he recorded the first complete cycle of the symphonies of Hans Gál paired with those of Robert Schumann, among the most widely praised classical recording projects in recent years, highlighted in National Public Radio's All Things Considered, Performance Today, BBC Radio 3, the Sunday New York Times, the Sunday Telegraph, Washington Post and was an Editor's Choice in Gramophone. Among his other recordings are Schoenberg's chamber ensemble versions of Das Lied von der Erde and Lieder eines fahrenden Gesellen (for Somm) by Gustav Mahler, which won the coveted

IRR Outstanding rosette from International Record Review, and Spring Sounds, Spring Seas, a MusicWeb 'Record of the Year'. His recordings with the English Symphony Orchestra and English String Orchestra include the Elgar Piano Quintet as orchestrated by Donald Fraser, and the complete piano concertos of Ernst Krenek, a Sunday Times "Best of 2016."

A widely read writer and frequent broadcaster, Woods' blog, A View from the Podium, is one of the 25 most popular classical blogs in the world. He has spoken on Mahler on NPR's All Things Considered and BBC Radio 4's Today Programme and is a frequent commentator on BBC Radio 3.

**[www.kennethwoods.net](http://www.kennethwoods.net)**



## **ABOUT THE ESO**

The Worcestershire based English Symphony Orchestra, the International Orchestra of Elgar Country, is an ensemble which in recent years has become synonymous with artistic excellence, innovative and visionary programming, distinctive commissioning, ground-breaking recording, a welcoming and immersive concert experience, transformative youth programmes and service to the community. Since the appointment of Kenneth Woods as the orchestra's new Artistic Director and Principal Conductor in 2013, the orchestra has re-emerged as a major force in British musical life, presenting and recording the orchestra's first full-length opera (the world premiere of John Joubert's *Jane Eyre*) to overwhelming critical acclaim, which received the 2015 Classical Music Magazine "Premiere of the Year," and releasing a triumphant series of

recordings including Donald Fraser's orchestration of the Elgar Piano Quintet (Classic FM Disc of the Week) and the Complete Piano Concertos of Ernst Krenek (Sunday Times Essential New Release).

Founded by conductor William Boughton in 1978, the ESO have a long and distinguished history of collaboration with legendary figures of British music making. Vernon "Tod" Handley became the orchestra's second Principal Conductor in 2007, and led the orchestra until his death. Over the years, the ESO has worked with a distinguished list of instrumentalists, composers and conductors, including Nigel Kennedy, Steven Isserlis, Daniel Hope, Michael Tippett, Nicholas Maw and Yehudi Menuhin, who was appointed the ESO's Principal Guest Conductor in 1991, and led the orchestra on a number of international tours. British music has always been a central part of the orchestra's mission. Appropriately for an orchestra based in Elgar's home town, the ESO has made many acclaimed recordings of that composer's music, as well as that of major 20th century British composers including Vaughan Williams, Britten, Butterworth and Bridge. The ESO discography also highlights a commitment to the music of our time; in addition to the notable recordings which grew out of the orchestra's affiliation with Sir Michael Tippett, are recordings of music by John Metcalfe, John Joubert, and Michael and Lennox Berkeley. The ESO's discography also includes Baroque masters such as Boyce and Handel, and composers as diverse as Schnittke, Strauss, Shostakovich, Sibelius and Respighi. John McCabe served as the orchestra's Composer-in-Association from 2013 until his death in 2015. Following McCabe's death in 2015, the ESO appointed Philip Sawyers as "John McCabe Composer-in-Association." Other recent recording projects include a disc of newly-commissioned works for trumpet, piano and strings with Simon Desbruslais and Clare Hammond for Signum, the Hans Gál Concertino for Cello and Orchestra with Matthew Sharp, new violin concerti by David Matthews, Paul Patterson, Rob Fokkens and Emily Doolittle with Harriet Mackenzie and the Third Symphony of Philip Sawyers.

Highlights of recent seasons include triumphant debuts in LSO St Luke's, St John's Smith Square, Elgar Concert Hall, The Bridgewater Hall, King's Place and Cheltenham Town Hall.

One of the ESO's aims is to develop the audience and the musicians of the future. The ESO runs orchestra courses for children from grade 1 onwards, and, when it is feasible, train talented young players to perform alongside the professional orchestra for a part of a concert. ESO has recently (April 2015)



been appointed “Orchestra-in-Association” by the Worcestershire Music Hub and has very close links with the Elgar School of Music in that county. In 2016-7, the ESO became “Orchestra in Residence” for Worcester Live. In Herefordshire, the ESO works in strategic partnership with the Herefordshire Music Hub and the Hereford Sixth Form College. Each year, the ESO presents dozens of concerts in care homes and hospices across the Midlands, bringing the comfort of live music to those who need it most.

From its beginnings as the English String Orchestra, the ESO soon earned an international reputation for performances of English music, made over fifty recordings and began touring regularly in Europe. Over time, the orchestra’s repertoire expanded to include the full breadth of orchestral music, and the ESO grew to become the English Symphony Orchestra. Ever since then, “ESO” has served as an acronym with a dual meaning.



## **ABOUT THE WORCESTER CATHEDRAL**

Worcester Cathedral has been a place of prayer and worship for fourteen centuries. Of all the English Cathedrals, Worcester has one of the richest musical traditions, stretching back to the origins of medieval plainchant and including its close association with one of our greatest composers, Sir Edward Elgar, and the Three Choirs Festival. The monastic singing in the Benedictine priory existed until Henry VIII dissolved it in 1540. However singing has continued to the present day and there is a thriving musical life in the Cathedral.

The glorious sounds of the Cathedral Choir and organ fill the building most days at Choral Evensong, at the main services and at Cathedral concerts.





**SUNDAY 3RD JUNE 2018 AT 3PM**

## **THE ELGAR CHORALE AT THE FIRS**

*The Firs - Elgar's Birthplace, Crown East Lane, Lower Broadheath, Worcestershire, WR2 6RH*

**The Elgar Choral, Piers Maxim** *Conductor and Pianist*

### **Programme**

Three Shakespeare Songs

*Spring Song - It was a lover and his lass*

*Willow, willow, willow*

*Blow, blow thou winter wind*

C.H.H.Parry (1848-1918)

arr Piers Maxim

Two Part-songs

*My love dwelt in a northern land*

*As torrents in Summer*

Edward Elgar (1857-1934)

Sonatina in G major

*Andantino*

*Allegro*

Edward Elgar (1857-1934)

4 Songs of Farewell

*My soul, there is a country*

*I know my soul hath power*

*Never weather-beaten sail*

*There is an old belief*

C.H.H. Parry (1848-1918)

*They are at rest*  
*The long day closes*  
*The Blue bird*

Edward Elgar (1857-1934)  
Arthur Sullivan (1842-1900)  
Charles Villiers Stanford  
(1852-1924)

## THE ELGAR CHORALE OF WORCESTER

### **Patron** *Sir Roy Strong*

The Elgar Chorale is a mixed voice choir of up to 40 singers, many of whom are professional musicians, which was founded in 1980 by Dr Donald Hunt OBE. It quickly established itself as a choir specialising in English music, particularly that of Sir

Edward Elgar. It recorded Elgar's *Scenes from the Bavarian Highlands* and the *Complete Choral Songs of Elgar*. An album of English part-songs included the first recording of *The Scribe* by Herbert Howells. Now established as one of the leading chamber choirs in the West Midlands, the choir continues to sing Elgar part-songs but is also becoming known for the variety of its repertoire. Recent performances have ranged from a programme of renaissance music, including Tallis's *Spem in Alium*, to a concert featuring some contemporary settings of the psalms (Lennox Berkeley, Rutter), and along the way Handel's *Messiah*, as well as music by English composers other than Elgar (Delius, Holst, Howells, Britten). Later in June the choir will perform a concert of all-American music, which will include music by Copland, Barber, Guy Turner and Henry Mancini.



The choir has often performed in some of Worcestershire's most prestigious music festivals, such as Three Choirs and Bromsgrove. It has appeared at each of the Worcester Three Choirs Festivals from 1981 to 1996 and presented world premières of works by Sir Richard Rodney Bennett, Herbert Sumsion and Howard Blake, and a British première of *Missa Brevis* by Leonard Bernstein. The Elgar Chorale appeared again in 2005 and then at the 2008 festival, it performed a memorable and well-received concert of Vaughan Williams' music with the ESO, including *Five Mystical Songs* and the less familiar *Magnificat*. The choir has participated many times in the Bromsgrove Festival, performing works such as Vaughan Williams' *Sea Symphony*, Elgar's *The Music Makers* and David Fanshawe's *African Sanctus*, and in 2010 was involved in the festival's 50th anniversary celebrations.

The Elgar Chorale has toured extensively at home and abroad. It has visited

two of Worcester's twin towns - Kleve in Germany and Le Vesinet near Paris - as well as Cape Town in South Africa and most recently Devon in 2016. The choir is often invited to perform on behalf of charities and has raised thousands of pounds for good causes over the years. Annually the choir performs at the Mayor's Charity Christmas concert in the Worcester Guildhall. The choir is also asked to perform at weddings and on civic occasions.

The Elgar Chorale looks forward to celebrating its 40th anniversary in 2020 with a host of events and celebrations currently being planned.



## **PIERS MAXIM**

### *Director of Music of the Elgar Chorale*

Piers Maxim was a chorister at St Paul's Cathedral, London. He continued his studies at Clare College, Cambridge and at the Guildhall School of Music and Drama, London.

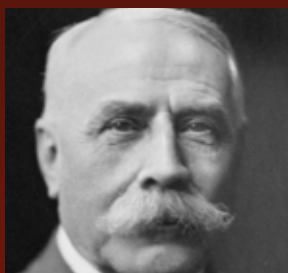
As conductor, assistant conductor and chorus master, Piers worked extensively in the opera houses and theatres of Europe, including Staatsoper Berlin, La Monnaie Brussels, Le Théâtre des Champs Elysées Paris and the Netherlands Nationale Reisopera. Following two years as Chorus Master of Scottish Opera, he was invited to become Chef des Choeurs at La Monnaie, Brussels.

As Assistant Conductor to René Jacobs from 1996 to 2012, Piers worked on many operas and oratorios on stage, in concert and in recordings. He features as harpsichord soloist on the harmonia mundi (France) recording of Rinaldo, and was Musical Assistant to Jacobs on the recordings of the three Mozart/Da Ponte operas.

Piers made his USA debut conducting *Der Zauberflöte* at the Brooklyn Academy of Music, New York in April 2007. In October 2010 he conducted the first performance of a staged baroque opera in China, directing Handel's *Semele* in the Beijing Music Festival with the China Philharmonic and English Voices. In 2013 he conducted a new production of Purcell's *Dido and Aeneas* and Blow's *Venus and Adonis* in the Innsbruck of Early Music, leading his period band Pavillion Ensemble.

Piers Maxim is now Director of Music at Great Malvern Priory, Director of Music of Elgar Chorale and has recently taken over as Conductor of EC4 Orchestra based in London, with whom he has conducted Beethoven's Symphony No. 7 and Stravinsky's Pulcinella Suite and Prokofiev's Classical Symphony No. 1. Other recent performances include Messiah with Elgar Chorale and Pavillion Ensemble in Pershore Abbey , and Haydn's "Nelson" Mass and Mozart's Vesperae de confessore in Epsom.

Piers teaches singing, piano, organ and composition in schools around Worcestershire and Herefordshire, and regularly holds choral workshops - in April he led the Worcester Festival Choral Society in their Come & Sing Verdi's Requiem. Composing music since he was seven years old, he had songs, carols and piano works published while still at school. Composition highlights over the years include commissions for a National Children's Home celebration in Winchester Cathedral (The Land of Lost Content), and the Millennium Eve service of celebration at Southwark cathedral in the presence of HM Queen Elizabeth II (And I said to the Man). A choral-symphonic setting of Longfellow, The Silent Land, was joint winner of the Longfellow Chorus Cantata Composition Competition 2011 in the USA. In March 2016 he fulfilled an oratorio commission, The Musket Ball , which was performed in The Old Royal Naval Chapel, Greenwich, with orchestra, Epsom Chamber Choir and soloists. Piers' music is published by the Royal School of Church Music. For the RSCM, he co-edited and compiled All Glorious Above, an upper voices choral resource, which includes many of his compositions. Two French Carols were published last autumn and a further anthem has just appeared in the RSCM's Young Voices Festival book, God's Green Planet. The Elgar Chorale recently sang the world première of his A Festival Anthem - De Profundis.



## About the Festival

The Elgar Festival is the officially sanctioned celebration of the life and music of Sir Edward Elgar based in his home town of Worcester.

Held annually during the weekend closest to Elgar's birthday (2 June 1857), the festival combines symphonic and string orchestra concerts by the festival's orchestra-in-residence, the English Symphony Orchestra, with chamber concerts, choral concerts, recitals, outdoor concerts, plays, exhibits and talks. Venues for the festival include Worcester Cathedral, Huntingdon Concert Hall, the Elgar Birthplace, Worcester Guildhall and the Elgar School of Music. The Festival brings together the full gamut of leading musical and educational organisations across Worcestershire with a starry array of internationally renowned guest artists.

The first annual festival offers a diverse array of events in Worcester from 1-3 June, 2018. In 2019, the festival expands to a full week and incorporates an ambitious programme of symphonic and cantata concerts, theatrical productions and chamber concerts alongside a wide range of educational activities and community projects.

In years where the Three Choirs Festival takes place in Worcester, the Elgar Festival will take to the road, celebrating Elgar's legacy across Elgar Country, with concerts in historically significant venues in London, Birmingham, Malvern, Hereford and Gloucester.

