

## **Prelude, Op. 18**

*Cesar Franck (1822-1890)*

César Franck was a great innovator, the first Frenchman to write in a Romantic style, and the first to champion the new symphonic style of organ building. He was organist of the Basilica of St. Clothilde for 38 years, a legendary improviser and a much sought-after teacher at the Paris Conservatoire. The Prélude, Fugue and Variation was originally written for piano and harmonium. Franck's arrangement of the Prélude creates a beautifully flowing and calming atmosphere.

Anthony Burns-Cox - Organ

## **Die Seele Ruht in Jesus Händen (BWV 127)**

*J.S. Bach (1685-1750)*

This aria, "The soul rests in Jesus' hands" was written as part of a cantata Bach wrote for the last Sunday before Lent. The long melodic phrases of the soprano and oboe contrast with the pizzicato, staccato of the cello and organ, symbolising the theme of the aria - our transient earthly life leading to an eternity in heaven.

Fiona Zarb-Adami - Soprano, Owen Dennis - Oboe, Stella Scott - Cello,  
Mark Zarb-Adami - Organ

## **Let the Bright Seraphim**

*George Friderich Handel (1685-1759)*

From Handel's oratorio 'Samson', this is an exultant and uplifting aria which calls on the heavenly host to welcome the heroic Samson into Heaven following his death. Often performed as a concert piece, it is renowned for its virtuosic soprano line, typically accompanied by trumpet - though in our case, it will be performed with an oboe!

Melanie Mastrototaro - Soprano, Owen Dennis - Oboe, Mark Zarb-Adami - Organ

## **Sarabande**

*J.S. Bach (1685-1750)*

The Bach Sarabande is the third movement of his Partita in D minor. Slow and stately, three in a bar often emphasising the second beat. It seems to have been popularised in Spain and the Spanish colonies in the 16th and 17th Centuries before spreading to Italy and France where it became a slow court dance.

Jackie Drew - Violin

## **Chorale (BWV 731)**

*J.S. Bach (1685-1750)*

"Liebster Jesu, wir sind hier" ("Dearest Jesus, we are here") is a chorale prelude composed for organ by J.S. Bach. These preludes adopt and embellish hymn

tunes for instruments, and Bach's simple and peaceful setting perhaps reflects the original word-setting which seeks guidance towards the light of Christ. Below the melody, Bach weaves a simple yet effective three-part accompaniment, in which the alto and tenor continually pass the musical movement back and forth.

Angus Williams - Organ

## **Oboe Concerto in D Minor**

*Alessandro Marcello (1673-1747)*

Andante e spiccato - Adagio - Presto

This Marcello concerto has been reconstructed from various sources including Bach's version for harpsichord. The original is likely to have been very simply scored and Bach added extensive ornamentation, particularly in the sublime second movement. The challenge for the modern performer is to retain the simplicity of the original together with the improvisatory approach of musicians of that time.

Owen Dennis - Oboe, Mark Zarb-Adami - Organ

## **When I am Laid in Earth**

*Henry Purcell (1659-1695)*

From Purcell's famous opera Dido and Aeneas, this aria is sung by Dido, the queen of Carthage, as she prepares to die with a broken heart at the departure of her beloved Trojan hero Aeneas. It features a repeated, descending chromatic ground bass figure.

Fiona Zarb-Adami - Soprano, Stella Scott - Cello, Mark Zarb-Adami - Organ

## **Morgen**

*Richard Strauss (1864-1949)*

'Morgen' was composed in 1894 as a wedding present to Strauss' wife. Written during a time of personal growth, it reflects his exploration of profound human emotions and his search for meaning in the world. The lyrics paint a vivid picture of hope and tranquillity - how, when the sun rises it will bring people together, uniting them as they walk on the path of happiness.

Maria Willsher - Soprano, Jackie Drew - Violin, Mark Zarb-Adami - Organ

## **Niobe**

*Benjamin Britten (1913-1976)*

(from 6 Metamorphoses after Ovid)

Britten based this work on six stories from Ovid's influential work. His transformation myths now permeate our culture (the god Pan giving his name to a set of reed pipes, for example, or the vain Narcissus becoming a flower). The

movement played today is Niobe, the third of the six. Britten has a brilliant understanding of the oboe and uses it to illustrate the unbearable loss Niobe feels when, in punishment for her blasphemous arrogance, her fourteen children are slain by Artemis and Apollo. She flees to Mount Sipylus and is transformed into a silent, weeping, mountain.

Owen Dennis - Oboe

**Duet for Violin and Cello, D Major - Op.125 No.2** *Sebastian Lee (1805-1887)*

Sebastian Lee was a cellist and teacher, born in Hamburg but working for many years in Paris at the Opéra and Conservatoire. This duet has the atmosphere of a Victorian drawing room – a wistful melody with more passionate moments thrown in!

Jonathan Scott - Violin, Stella Scott - Cello

**Pie Jesu** *Andrew Lloyd Webber (1948 - )*

This duet is the best known piece from Andrew Lloyd Webber's Latin Requiem Mass. It was written in memory of his father, William Lloyd Webber. It is normally sung by a boy soprano and a female soprano, and has been performed by many artists across the globe since premiering in New York, with Sarah Brightman and Paul Miles-Kingston. Today Abby will sing the part normally sung by the boy soprano, and Melanie singing the higher female line.

Melanie Mastrototaro - Soprano, Abby Bamber-Brown - Soprano

**The Phantom of the Opera** *Andrew Lloyd Webber (1948 - )*

From the 1986 musical of the same name, telling the tragic story of beautiful soprano Christine Daaé, who becomes the obsession of a mysterious, disfigured musical genius living in a subterranean labyrinth beneath the Paris opera house. The longest running show in Broadway history, *The Phantom of the Opera* celebrated its 10,000th performance on 11 February 2012.

Abby Bamber-Brown - Soprano, Ashton Gray - Baritone, Jonathan & Stella Scott  
- Violin & Cello, Melanie & Fiona - Chorus, Mark Zarb-Adami - Organ

**Jerusalem** Audience (please stand)  
Anthony Burns-Cox - Organ

Please join us for tea and cake!   [www.sparsholtmusic.org](http://www.sparsholtmusic.org)