

The Deeps Have Music

BETH TAYLOR
HAMISH BROWN



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The Deeps Have Music

BETH TAYLOR mezzo-soprano

HAMISH BROWN piano

Traditional, arr. Hamilton Harty (1879–1941)

1. **My Lagan Love** 4:43

Hedwige Chrétien (1859–1944)

Petits Poèmes du Bord de l'Eau

2. **La Rivière** 1:16
3. **La Barque** 1:40
4. **Les Saules** 1:24
5. **La Lune** 0:30
6. **L'Ondine** 0:56
7. **L'Hiver** 2:01

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Franz Schubert (1797–1828)

8. **Meeres Stille, D. 215a/216** 1:59
9. **Gruppe aus dem Tartarus, D. 583** 3:22
10. **Lied eines Schiffers an die Dioskuren, D. 360** 2:55

Cameron Biles-Liddell (b. 1997)

The Breakers*

11. **The Storm** 5:05
12. **Twilight** 8:20

Alma Mahler-Werfel (1879–1964)

13. **Lobgesang** (No. 4 of *Five Songs*) 4:16

Ethel Smyth (1858–1944)

Three Moods of the Sea

- 14. Requies 3:15
- 15. Before the Squall 5:17
- 16. After Sunset 3:38

Edward Elgar (1857–1934)

Sea Pictures, Op. 37

- 17. Sea Slumber Song 5:31
- 18. In Haven 1:54
- 19. Sabbath Morning at Sea 6:17
- 20. Where Corals Lie 4:05
- 21. The Swimmer 6:48

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Hamilton Harty

- 22. Sea Wrack 5:04

* world-premiere recording

Total Running Time 80:20

The Deeps Have Music

The text of **My Lagan Love** is thought to have been written by Joseph Campbell (1879–1944), a Belfast man who in the early years of the 20th century collected many Irish songs, particularly from remote areas of County Donegal. Hamilton Harty was an Irish born composer who is best known today as the resident conductor of the Hallé Orchestra in Manchester from 1920 to 1933. Over this time the orchestra regained its standing as one of the finest in the country: Harty was knighted in 1925. *My Lagan Love* is a beautifully evocative song, the night song of a lover entranced by thoughts and desires for his beloved. The flowing river, the twilight gleam in her eye, the night on her hair, and her own humming voice, all combine to draw the poet to his love.

6 Little is known of Hedwige Chrétien's life. She studied at the Paris Conservatoire, where she won a number of First Prizes, including in piano and in composition. At the age of 30 she was appointed professor there. **Petits Poèmes du Bord de l'Eau** dates from around 1910: it consists of settings of six short poems by Ludovic Fortolis, the *nom de plume* of Louis-Alexandre Fortoul (1870–1948). The poems consider in surrealist vein the river within a network of free sensory associations which hark back to the *correspondances* of Baudelaire: the river kissing the clouds that water it, two lovers in a boat being gently mocked by the river over how long their love will last, the wind re-energizing the ageing willows as it blows through them in spring, the summer moon refreshing itself by drinking the water, the flute playing *ondine*, or mythical water nymph, and her cheeky spirit, and finally the ice chilling what lies beneath as it lays down its winter covering.

Schubert is widely regarded as one of the greatest of all song writers, with, for many, an unsurpassed gift for melody and word setting. The three songs recorded here present the sea in different guises: intensely calm, concealing mysterious and terrifying depths, or rich with nocturnal beauty in the starlight. As sea-farers as much as listeners, we start with the absolute calm of **Meeres Stille** before being gripped by the horrific, pulsating

semiquavers of **Gruppe aus dem Tartarus** as the hideous creatures of the underworld emerge from the deep. The final song, **Lied eines Schiffers an die Dioskuren**, expresses a boatman's gratitude to the Dioscuri, the twins Castor and Pollux reunited as stars by Zeus after Castor's death, for their guiding light and watchful care.

Cameron Biles-Liddell is based in North Wales and is currently studying for a PhD in composition at the University of Manchester. His music is wide ranging both in its inspiration and in the performance resources required, including works for orchestra, chamber orchestra and chamber ensembles, as well as solo instrumental and vocal compositions. In addition to his work as a composer, Cameron is a dedicated educator: he is a Widening Participation Fellow at the University of Manchester, a role which takes him into schools with the aim of promoting accessibility into classical music, irrespective of background.

The Breakers, two contrasting songs for mezzo-soprano and piano, was composed in 2025 and is dedicated to Beth Taylor and Hamish Brown. The composer explains the conception of the two movements in the following programme note:

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The first is tempestuous, depicting a violent storm, where I set the text of Erasmus Henry Brodie, a poet from the Victorian era. In this dramatic opening movement, the piano has toccata-like ostinati rhythms where the brisk quaver pulsation is set against a singing long line in the voice. Over the course of this movement, the narrative follows how a storm approaches, arrives and subsides by the narrative voice, sung by the mezzo-soprano. I wanted to capture the visceral feeling of being at sea during a storm, with the athletics by the duo replicating both the violent nature of the sea as well as the panic and fear of the sailors trapped at sea.

The second movement is pensive and thoughtful, setting the text of William Sharp's *On a Nightingale in April*. Despite this text not being distinctly about the sea, there is an essence of the moon reflecting on still water. This movement is contemplative with an unfurling melodic line, where the piano shimmers and portrays the dancing phantom through various guises. The music gradually

becomes more excited, with the mezzo and harmony moving upwards. As we reach the empathic climax, the opening harmonies return now fully voiced in the piano, after which the music fades away with musical echoes of the material that preceded it.

8 The life of Viennese composer Alma Mahler-Werfel was marked by a succession of relationships with some of the best known cultural figures of the twentieth century. Partners had already included the artist Gustav Klimt (1862–1918) and the composer Alexander von Zemlinsky (1871–1942) before she secretly became engaged to Gustav Mahler (1860–1911) at the age of 22. Soon afterwards, Mahler expressly forbade Alma from continuing to compose: she acceded to this and devoted herself during their ten-year marriage to the role of wife and mother of their two daughters. She would remain a lifelong supporter of her husband's music. However, after Mahler's early death in 1911, an affair with the artist Oskar Kokoschka (1886–1980) and marriage to architect Walter Gropius (1883–1969) followed, before a third marriage, in 1929, to the poet and writer Franz Werfel (1890–1945). Fleeing Austria in the face of Nazi persecution, Alma and Franz settled first in the south of France, and subsequently in Los Angeles and, later, New York. She was an iconic figure in the USA, attracting many visitors as a living link with the music of Mahler: Leonard Bernstein (1918–1990) and Benjamin Britten (1913–1976) were particular devotees.

Lobgesang (Song of Praise) is the fourth of her Five Songs for voice and piano, published in 1924. It is a setting of a poem adapted by Alma Mahler from a poem by Richard Dehmel (1863–1920). The sea and love are both seen as immeasurable, extensive, stormy, calming, mysterious, unfathomable, offering but a hazy view to a distant horizon. In many ways the song expresses the eddies and currents of Alma's own life.

Ethel Smyth is known not only as a composer but also as a member of the movement for women's suffrage in the early years of the 20th century. After private study and attending the Leipzig Conservatoire, she composed a considerable number of orchestral and choral works, together with chamber music, operas and works for piano. In 1910 she became

involved in the women's suffrage movement and formed an association with Emmeline Pankhurst. In 1912 she served two months in prison following a stone throwing incident, after which her direct involvement in the movement lessened. Limited voting rights were granted in 1918, with full equality finally gained in 1928.

Three Moods of the Sea dates from 1913 and is a setting of poems by Arthur Symonds (1865–1945), for mezzo-soprano (or baritone) and piano. The poems, rich in symbolism, combine powerfully with Smyth's impressionistic harmonic voice to evoke in turn the scarcely disturbed stillness, the rising wind as a squall approaches, and finally the calm peace on the sea as sunset gives way to the light of moon and star.

First performed by Clara Butt (1872–1936) at a concert in the Norwich Festival on 5 October 1899, with Elgar conducting, **Sea Pictures**, Op. 37, is widely regarded as Elgar's greatest achievement in the field of song. Originally scored for contralto and a full size orchestra, the song-cycle is remarkable for its sensitive word setting and its creation of atmosphere: it is equally successful as a work for voice and piano. The version heard on this album is Hamish Brown's adaptation of Elgar's own piano accompaniment. The full range of the elements is presented in these five songs: the rise and fall of the sea, the quiet power of the lovers holding hands, the grand climax generated in the vastness of the ocean, the contrasting simplicity of the repeated rhythm of the waves and the singer's calm, and the valiant efforts of the swimmer battling the rough sea.

Perhaps at the heart is the beautiful message of human love expressed through fortitude against the elements. Nowhere is this more clearly felt than in 'In Haven', written by Elgar's wife, Alice (1848–1920). Its insistent lines 'Love alone will stand ... will last ... will stay' encapsulate their mutual love and support against her own family's reaction to the marriage in 1889, disapproved of on grounds of social standing, financial prospects, age difference (she was nine years older) and his Catholic faith.

1. My Lagan Love

Where Lagan stream sings lullaby
There blows a lily fair
The twilight gleam is in her eye
The night is in her hair,
And, like a love-sick leannán sí
She hath my heart in thrall;
No life I own, no liberty,
For love is lord of all.

10

And often, when the beetle's horn
Hath lulled the eve to sleep,
I steal unto her shieling lorn
And through the doorway creep.
There, on the crickets' singing-stone,
She spares the bogwood fire
And hums in sad, sweet undertone
The song of heart's desire.

JOSEPH CAMPBELL (1879–1944)

2. La Rivière

Dans sa mantille de fleur,
La rivière passe.
Elle arbore les couleurs
Qu'arbore l'espace.
Elle choisit pour amant
Le premier nuage
Que balance au firmament
La brise ou l'orage.
Mais à peine est-il passé
Qu'un autre attend son baiser !

LOUIS-ALEXANDRE FORTOUL 'LUDOVIC FORTOLIS' (1870–1948)

The River

*In its mantilla of flowers
The river flows by.*

*It displays the colours
Displayed by space.
It chooses as a lover
The first cloud
Placed in the sky
By north wind or the storm.
But scarcely has it passed
Than another awaits its kiss!*

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3. La Barque

La barque sur l'eau qui jase
Promène des amoureux
Qui tous deux avec emphase
Échangent d'éternels vœux.
Mais l'eau verte qui ruisselle
En son clapotis leur dit
Que vite, plus vite qu'elle,
L'amour, ici bas s'enfuit.
LOUIS-ALEXANDRE FORTOUL 'LUDOVIC FORTOLIS'

The Boat

*The boat cutting through the water
Carries lovers
Who both with deep commitment
Exchange eternal vows.
But the flowing green water
Through its lapping declares to them
That quickly, more quickly than it,
Does love drift away.*

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4. Les Saules

Sur le bord de la rivière,
Les saules aux cheveux blancs
Semblent des vieux en prière

Qui joignent leurs doigts tremblants.
Et lorsqu'au printemps la brise
Ride l'eau de ses frissons,
Le cœur des saules se grise
De baisers et de chansons !

LOUIS-ALEXANDRE FORTOUL 'LUDOVIC FORTOLIS'

The Willows

*On the river bank,
The white-haired willows
Look like old people praying,
Their trembling fingers joined together.
And when in spring the breeze
Wrinkles the water with its ripples,
The hearts of the willows are intoxicated
With kisses and songs!*

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5. La Lune

On dit qu'aux ruisseaux, l'été,
La lune vient boire.
Cela me met en gaieté,
Je n'y veux point croire.
Car lorsqu'au bleu firmament
Son œil froid s'irise,
Ce n'est pas d'eau seulement
Que la lune est grise.

LOUIS-ALEXANDRE FORTOUL 'LUDOVIC FORTOLIS'

The Moon

*It is said that in summer
The moon comes to drink from streams.
I am thrilled by this thought,
I don't even want to think if it is true.
For when in the blue sky
Its chilly eye glistens,*

*It's not only on water
That the moon is drunk.*

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6. L'Ondine

L'aigre bise qui soupire
Dans la harpe des roseaux
A surpris l'éclat de rire
D'une ondine au fond des eaux !
La Bise ayant de colère
Brisé les roseaux jaseurs
Vit bientôt l'ondine en faire
Une flûte aux sons moqueurs !

LOUIS-ALEXANDRE FORTOUL 'LUDOVIC FORTOLIS'

The Water Nymph

*The sharp north wind sighing
Through the harp-strings of the reeds
Has surprised the laughter
Of an underwater nymph!
The north wind having angrily
Snapped the prattling reeds
Will soon find the nymph turning them into
Flutes on which to play mocking tunes!*

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7. L'Hiver

L'âpre hiver au creux du val
A soufflé sur la rivière.
Un lourd manteau de cristal
S'est étendu sur l'eau claire.
Les poissons bleus ont filé
Dans les algues serpentes,
Et l'âpre hiver a gelé
Les doigts roses des ondines!

LOUIS-ALEXANDRE FORTOUL 'LUDOVIC FORTOLIS'

Winter

*The harsh winter deep in the valley
Has blown over the river.
A heavy coat of ice
Has spread over the clear water.
The fish have fled
Into the waving algae,
And the harsh winter has frozen
The pink fingers of the water sprites!*

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8. Meeres Stille

Tiefe Stille herrscht im Wasser,
Ohne Regung ruht das Meer,
Und bekümmert sieht der Schiffer
Glatte Fläche rings umher.
Keine Luft von keiner Seite!
Todesstille fürchterlich!
In der ungeheueren Weite
Reget keine Welle sich.

JOHANN WOLFGANG VON GOETHE (1749–1832)

Silence of the Sea

*Deep silence rules on the water,
Motionless the sea rests,
And anxiously the boatman sees
A smooth surface all around.
No breeze from any direction!
Fearful, deadly silence!
In the immense vastness
Not one ripple moves.*

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9. Gruppe aus dem Tartarus

Horch – wie Murmeln des empörten Meeres,
Wie durch hohler Felsen Becken weint ein Bach,

Stöhnt dort dumpfigtief ein schweres – leeres,
Qualerpresstes Ach!

Schmerz verzerret

Ihr Gesicht – Verzweiflung sperret

Ihren Rachen fluchend auf.

Hohl sind ihre Augen – ihre Blicke

Spähen bang nach des Cocytus Brücke,

Folgen tränend seinem Trauerlauf.

Fragen sich einander ängstlich leise,

Ob noch nicht Vollendung sei?

Ewigkeit schwingt über ihnen Kreise,

Bricht die Sense des Saturns entzwei.

JOHANN CHRISTOPH FRIEDRICH VON SCHILLER (1759–1805)

Group from Hades

*Hark! Like murmuring in the angry sea,
Or as a stream sobs through pools in hollow rocks,
Resounds deep and muffled a heavy, empty,
Tormented groan!*

Pain twists

Their faces – despair forces open

Their cursing mouths.

Their eyes are hollow – their terrified gaze

Strains towards Cocytus's bridge,

*And as they weep it follows that river's mournful
course.*

Frightened, softly, they ask each other

If the end is nigh?

Eternity swirls over them in circles,

Breaking Saturn's scythe in two.

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10. Lied eines Schiffers an die Dioskuren

Dioskuren, Zwillingsterne,
Die ihr leuchtet meinem Nachen,
Mich beruhigt auf dem Meere
Eure Milde, euer Wachen.

Wer auch fest in sich begründet,
Unverzagt dem Sturm begegnet,
Fühlt sich doch in euren Strahlen
Doppelt mutig und gesegnet.

Dieses Ruder, das ich schwinge,
Meeresfluten zu zerteilen,
Hänge ich, so ich geborgen,
Auf an eures Tempels Säulen.

JOHANN BAPTIST MAYRHOFER (1787–1836)

Song of a Boatman to the Dioscuri

*Dioscuri, twin stars,
Shining on my boat,
Your gentleness and watchfulness
Calm me on the sea.*

*Those who believe firmly in themselves,
Those who face the storm without fear,
Feel doubly brave and blessed
In your light.*

*This oar on which I pull
To split the sea's waves,
I will hang, once I am safely ashore,
On the pillars of your temple.*

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11. The Storm

Piling its dragon coils into a heap,
Far off, and yet inaudible, but dread,
The breaker rears its crested neck and head,
And now flings out in very act to leap
Its long upgathered bosom of the deep.
At once, like armed men with earthquake tread,
Waved on through breach and gap, where Captain led,
O'er rock, up beach, swift unleashed waters sweep:
Rush! Roar! Recoil! In Froth, and flake, and foam,
Back, back they fall; but clamorous of fight,
Pressed on by fresh battalions' fiercer rage,
So scours that nomad horde without a home,
Billows, that from lone Labrador took flight,
The war-hounds of old Atlas' unequalled age.

ERASMUS HENRY BRODIE (1833–1906)

12. Twilight

The yellow moon is a dancing phantom
Down secret ways of the flowing shade;
And the waveless stream has a murmuring whisper
Where the alders wave.
Not a breath, not a sigh, save the slow stream's whisper:
Only the moon is a dancing blade
That leads a host of the Crescent warriors
To a phantom raid.
Out of the Lands of Faerie a summons,
A long, strange cry that thrills through the glade:
The grey-green glooms of the elm are stirring,
Newly afraid.
Last heard, white music, under the olives
Where once Theocritus sang and played –
Thy Thracian song is the old new wonder,
O moon-white maid!

WILLIAM SHARP (1855–1905)

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13. Lobgesang

Wie das Meer
ist die Liebe:
unerschöpflich,
unergründlich,
unermesslich:
Woge zu Woge
stürzend gehoben,
Woge von Woge
wachsend verschlungen,
sturm-und-wetter-gewaltig nun,
sonneselig nun,
willig nun dem Mond
die unaufhaltsame Fläche –
doch in der Tiefe
stetes Wirken ewige Ruhe,
ungestört,
unentwirrbar dem irdischen Blick,
starr verdämmernd in gläsernes Dunkel –
und in der Weite
stetes Wirken ewiger Regung,
ungestillt,
unabsehbar dem irdischen Blick,
mild verschwimmend im Licht der Lüfte:
Aufklang der Unendlichkeit
ist das Meer,
ist die Liebe.

RICHARD DEHMEL (1863–1920)

Song of Praise

*Love is
like the sea:
inexhaustible,
unfathomable,
immeasurable:
wave to wave*

*rising and falling,
wave on wave
surging and crashing,
empowered now by storm and weather,
blessed now by the sun,
obedient now to the moon,
the never-ending expanse.
Yet in the deep
there exists eternal silence,
undisturbed,
indiscernible to earthbound sight,
still and fading into glassy darkness.
And in the distance
there exists the hovering sense of eternal movement,
unsubdued,
interminable to earthbound sight,
gently blurred in the light of the air:
an echo of infinity
is the sea,
is love.*

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14. Requiés

O is it death or life that sounds
Like something strangely known
In this subsiding out of strife,
This low sea monotone?

A sound scarce heard through sleep
Murmurous as the August bees
That fill the forest hollows deep
About the roots of the trees.

O is it life or death? O is it
Hope or memory
That quiets all things with this breath

Of the eternal sea?

ARTHUR SYMONS (1865–1945)

15. Before the Squall

The wind is rising on the sea,
The windy white foam dancers leap;
And the sea moans uneasily,
And turns to sleep and cannot sleep.

Ridge after rocky ridge uplifts wild hands,
And hammers at the land,
Scatters in liquid dust, and drifts
To death among the dusty sand.

On the horizon's nearing line,
Where the sky rests a visible wall,
Grey in the offing I divine
The sails that fly before the squall.

ARTHUR SYMONS

16. After Sunset

The sea lies quieted beneath
The after sunset flush
That leaves upon the heaped grey clouds
The grapes' faint purple blush.

Pale, from a little space in heaven
Of delicate ivory,
The sickle moon and one gold star
Look down upon the sea.

ARTHUR SYMONS

17. Sea Slumber Song

Sea birds are asleep,
The world forgets to weep,
Sea murmurs her soft slumber-song

On the shadowy sand
Of this elfin land;
'I, the Mother mild,
Hush thee, O my child,
Forget the voices wild!
Isles in elfin light
Dream, the rocks and caves,
Lulled by whispering waves,
Veil their marbles bright,
Foam glimmers faintly white
Upon the shelly sand
Of this elfin land;
Sea-sound, like violins,
To slumber woos and wins,
I murmur my soft slumber-song,
Leave woes, and wails, and sins,
Ocean's shadowy might,
Breathes good-night,
Good-night!'

RODEN NOEL (1834–1894)

18. In Haven

Closely let me hold thy hand,
Storms are sweeping sea and land;
Love alone will stand.

Closely cling, for waves beat fast,
Form-flakes cloud the hurrying blast;
Love alone will last.

Kiss my lips, and softly say:
'Joy, sea-swept, may fade to-day;
Love alone will stay.'

CAROLINE ALICE ELGAR (1848–1920)

19. Sabbath Morning at Sea

The ship went on with solemn face:
 To meet the darkness on the deep,
 The solemn ship went onward.
 I bowed down weary in the place;
 For parting tears and present sleep
 Had weighed mine eyelids downward.

The new sight, the new wondrous sight!
 The waters around me, turbulent,
 The skies, impassive o'er me.
 Calm in a moonless, sunless light,
 As glorified by even the intent
 Of holding the day glory!

Love me, sweet friends, this sabbath day,
 The sea sings round me while ye roll
 Afar the hymn, unaltered,
 And kneel, where once I knelt to pray,
 And bless me deeper in your soul
 Because your voice has faltered.

And though this sabbath comes to me
 Without the stoled minister,
 And chanting congregation,
 God's Spirit shall give comfort. He
 Who brooded soft on waters drear,
 Creator on creation.

He shall assist me to look higher,
 Where keep the saints, with heart and song,
 An endless sabbath morning,
 And, on that sea commixed with fire,
 Oft drop their eyelids raised too long
 To the full Godhead's burning.

ELIZABETH BARRETT BROWNING (1806–1861)

20. Where Corals Lie

The deeps have music soft and low
 When winds awake the airy spry,
 It lures me, lures me on to go
 And see the land where corals lie.

By mount and mead, by lawn and rill,
 When night is deep, and moon is high,
 That music seeks and finds me still,
 And tells me where the corals lie.

Yes, press my eyelids close, 'tis well;
 But far the rapid fancies fly
 To rolling worlds of wave and shell,
 And all the lands where corals lie.

Thy lips are like a sunset glow,
 Thy smile is like a morning sky,
 Yet leave me, leave me, let me go
 And see the land where corals lie.

RICHARD GARNETT (1835–1906)

21. The Swimmer

With short, sharp, violent lights made vivid,
 To southward far as the sight can roam,
 Only the swirl of the surges livid,
 The seas that climb and the surfs that comb.
 Only the crag and the cliff to nor'ward,
 And the rocks receding, and reefs flung forward,
 Waifs wreck'd seaward and wasted shoreward,
 On shallows sheeted with flaming foam.

A grim, grey coast and a seaboard ghastly,
 And shores trod seldom by feet of men –
 Where the batter'd hull and the broken mast lie,
 They have lain embedded these long years ten.

Love! when we wandered here together,
Hand in hand through the sparkling weather,
From the heights and hollows of fern and heather,
God surely loved us a little then.

The skies were fairer and shores were firmer –
The blue sea over the bright sand roll'd;
Babble and prattle, and ripple and murmur,
Sheen of silver and glamour of gold.

So, girt with tempest and wing'd with thunder
And clad with lightning and shod with sleet,
And strong winds treading the swift waves under
The flying rollers with frothy feet.
One gleam like a bloodshot sword-blade swims on
The sky line, staining the green gulf crimson,
A death-stroke fiercely dealt by a dim sun
That strikes through his stormy winding sheet.

O, brave white horses! you gather and gallop,
The storm sprite loosens the gusty reins;
Now the stoutest ship were the frailest shallop
In your hollow backs, on your high-arched manes.
I would ride as never a man has ridden
In your sleepy, swirling surges hidden;
To gulfs foreshadow'd through strifes forbidden,
Where no light wearies and no love wanes.

ADAM LINDSAY GORDON (1833–1870)

22. Sea Wrack

The wrack was dark an' shiny where it floated in
the sea,
There was no one in the brown boat but only him
an' me;
Him to cut the sea wrack, me to mind the boat,
An' not a word between us the hours we were afloat.

The wet wrack,
The sea wrack,
The wrack was strong to cut.

We laid it on the grey rocks to wither in the sun,
An' what should call my lad then, to sail from Cushendun?
With a low moon, a full tide, a swell upon the deep,
Him to sail the old boat, me to fall asleep.

The dry wrack,
The sea wrack,
The wrack was dead so soon.

There' a fire low upon the rocks to burn the wrack to kelp,
There' a boat gone down upon the Moyle, an' sorra one to help!
Him beneath the salt sea, me upon the shore,
By sunlight or moonlight we'll lift the wrack no more.

The dark wrack,
The sea wrack,
The wrack may drift ashore.

MOIRA O'NEILL (1864–1955)

BETH TAYLOR

Lauded by *The Guardian* for her ‘dark and focused’ voice, ‘sensational coloratura’ and ‘spectacular singing’, and by *The Times* for her ‘fierce, indeed terrifying, cane-swishing’ characterizations, Beth Taylor is one of today’s most electrifying young mezzo-sopranos.

18 She has performed Tippett’s *A Child of Our Time* with the BBC Scottish Symphony Orchestra and Ryan Wigglesworth, and Elgar’s *Sea Pictures* with the London Philharmonic Orchestra and Edward Gardner. Her performances as the Angel in *The Dream of Gerontius* with the BBC SSO were remarked on by *The Times* as ‘immensely powerful, with melting quality and electrifying musicality ... a natural successor to Janet Baker’. Other highlights include the BBC Proms as the soloist in Mahler’s Symphony No. 3 with the BBC National Orchestra of Wales and Ryan Bancroft, Mahler’s Symphony No. 2 with Symphonieorchester des Bayerischen Rundfunks and Sir Simon Rattle, and *The Dream of Gerontius* with Münchner Philharmoniker. With Berliner Philharmoniker and Kirill Petrenko, she has performed Beethoven’s Symphony No. 9 and Mahler’s Symphony No. 8.

Beth made her Carnegie Hall debut in May 2025 with The English Concert and Harry Bicket, performing Cornelia in Handel’s *Giulio Cesare*. She also made her debut with LA Phil in Mahler’s Symphony No. 2 in LA, Tokyo, Seoul, Taipei and Tainan, conducted by Gustavo Dudamel.

Over the last several years, Beth has made a number of important debuts. In summer 2022, she made her acclaimed debut at the Glyndebourne Festival as Bradamante in a new production of *Alcina* and as Cornelia in the well-loved revival of *Giulio Cesare*. Following her Deutsche Oper Berlin debut as La Cieca in *La Gioconda*, she returned to this theatre to make her role debuts as Arsace in a new production of Rossini’s *Semiramide*, and as Erda in *Das Rheingold*, Erste Norn in *Götterdämmerung* and Schwertleite in *Die Walküre* in Stefan Herheim’s new *Ring* cycle under the musical direction of Sir Donald Runnicles. Her recent debut in the title role of Cenerentola with the Opéra national de Nancy-Lorraine received huge accolades for her ‘bold, unique and polished interpretation’ and ‘radiant coloratura’.

In recital, Beth particularly treasures her collaborations with pianists Marcia Hadjimarkos, Malcolm Martineau, Julius Drake and rising star Hamish Brown. Together, she has performed at festivals across France, Denmark, Spain, Italy, France and the UK, including the Leeds Song Festival, Wigmore Hall and the Edinburgh International Festival.

She is a grand finalist of the 2023 BBC Cardiff Singer of the World competition, the winner of the 2022 Elizabeth Connell Award, third prize winner of the 2019 Wigmore Hall Competition and the winner of the 2018 Gianni Bergamo Classical Music Awards. She was shortlisted for the 'Newcomer' award at the International Opera Awards 2023. Beth continues to be a strong advocate for accessibility in the arts and for the rights of all musicians and creatives to fulfil their personal artistic potential without barriers.

bethmtaylor.com

HAMISH BROWN

Hamish Brown is a British pianist, based in London. An award-winning and highly versatile collaborative artist, his international work in the fields of art song, chamber music, concertos and orchestral keyboard has taken him to Wigmore Hall, Royal Albert Hall, Oxford International Song Festival, Beethovenfest Bonn, Cadogan Hall, Klosters Music Festival, Royal Festival Hall, Schubertiáda Vilabertran, Kings Place, Sadler's Wells, Saffron Hall, Buxton International Festival, Heidelberger Frühling, Aldeburgh Festival, Edinburgh Fringe Festival, Hay Festival, Three Palaces Festival, International Lied Festival Zeist, V&A Museum, Leeds Lieder Festival, Deal Festival, St John's Smith Square, Lichfield Festival, Legislative Assembly of Madeira, The Danish Song Society, Syde Manor, St George's Bristol and Lewes Festival of Song. His performances have been broadcast on BBC Radio 3, BBC Radio 4, BBC Four and Danish Radio.

20 Hamish has performed with the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra, Royal Philharmonic Concert Orchestra, BBC Symphony Orchestra, Orpheus Sinfonia and Southbank Sinfonia, under conductors including Vasily Petrenko, John Wilson, Vladimir Jurowski, Thomas Adès and Alexander Shelley. In recent years, he has featured as soloist in the Schumann Piano Concerto in A minor and Mozart Piano Concerto No. 23 in A major. Hamish has also performed in innovative multi-genre projects, such as *Adding Machine* (by Joshua Schmidt), *Sideshow* (by Leo Geyer), *The Sound Voice Project* (by Hannah Conway), *A Child In Striped Pyjamas* (by Noah Max), and *Le Chat Noir* (by Lost Estate).

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