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Alun
HODDINOTT

Landscapes • Song Cycles and Folk Songs

Claire Booth, Soprano • Nicky Spence, Tenor • Jeremy Huw Williams, Baritone
Andrew Matthews-Owen and Michael Pollock, Piano

27 X 93

John

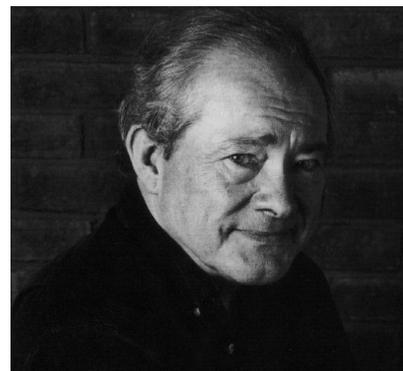
Alun HODDINOTT (1929-2008)

Landscapes (Ynys Môn), Op. 87 (1975)	13:44	One Must Always Have Love, Op. 152, No. 3 (1994)	8:20
<i>Texts: Emyr Humphreys (b. 1919)</i>			
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Alun Hoddinott, CBE (1929-2008) Landscapes: Song Cycles and Folk Songs



Alun Hoddinott was born in Bargoed, Glamorganshire on August 11, 1929 and grew up on the beautiful Gower peninsula to the west of Swansea. When he died there on March 11, 2008 he had dominated the musical scene in Wales for well over half a century. His unique achievement was fittingly recognised, in what would have been his 80th birthday year, when the new home of the BBC National Orchestra of Wales within the Wales Millennium Centre in Cardiff Bay was named BBC Hoddinott Hall in his honour. Hoddinott spent most of his professional life in Cardiff – initially as an undergraduate at the University (1946-49) and then as a lecturer at the Royal Welsh College of Music and Drama (1951-59) before returning to his *alma mater* as Lecturer (1959-67) and subsequently Professor and Head of Music from 1967 until 1987. In initial partnership with his great pianist friend John Ogdon, this pivotal year 1967 also saw Hoddinott establishing the Cardiff Festival of 20th Century Music, a pioneering event which he directed until 1989. At

the age of 60 he then retired from all administrative duties to concentrate exclusively on composition. As one of the most gifted, versatile and prolific composers of his generation internationally, Hoddinott contributed significant works to all genres – 10 symphonies, 6 operas, 13 piano sonatas, 5 string quartets, 6 violin sonatas, several large-scale choral canvases (notably *The Tree of Life*, *Sinfonia Fidei* and *The Legend of St. Julian*) and over 20 concerto-like scores for virtually every traditional instrument, including the cello concerto *Noctis Equi* for Mstislav Rostropovich in 1989. This recording brings together for the first time all his songs for high voice and piano (together with his last vocal work of all) and thus represents an important strand of his vast and prodigious output.

During his years as a student at Cardiff University and also with Arthur Benjamin in London, Hoddinott composed numerous songs which set a wide variety of poets writing in English – Romantics such as Matthew Arnold, A.E. Housman, Walt Whitman, Shelley and Keats rubbing shoulders with Shakespeare and John Fletcher (an early favourite) and, at another extreme, Cecil Day-Lewis and Edith Sitwell. But with the exception of the *Two Songs, Op. 2* (setting Fletcher for bass and piano) and the anonymous *Lullaby, Op. 4, No. 1* (for medium voice and piano) both from 1950, all these early settings were withdrawn by the composer, so that we have to wait until 1975 for the first mature collection of songs for voice and piano – the set of *Landscapes (Ynys Môn), Op. 87* – which, perhaps significantly, continues an important collaboration with a fellow Welsh artist – the distinguished and versatile writer Emyr Humphreys (born 1919) who is a prolific novelist, poet and dramatist. Hoddinott and Humphreys first worked together in 1959 and again in 1964 when the latter was producing two plays by Saunders Lewis for the BBC in Wales – *Esther* (for radio) and subsequently *Blodeuwedd* (for television) – for both of which Hoddinott was commissioned to write the incidental music. Then in 1968 Hoddinott set two texts by Humphreys – *An Apple Tree and*

a *Pig* (for unaccompanied chorus) and *Roman Dream* (for soprano and ensemble, subsequently recorded by Dame Margaret Price) – so it was perfectly natural in 1975 to find the composer turning again to Humphreys for the first of three song cycles on which they were to work together, the others being *Ancestor Worship* (for baritone Stephen Roberts and piano in 1977) and *Songs of Exile* (for tenor Robert Tear and orchestra) in 1989.

The timing of this first cycle is interesting in that it comes hard on the heels of Hoddinott's first opera – *The Beach of Falesa*, a richly romantic score based on the short story by Robert Louis Stevenson – which was premiered by Welsh National Opera on March 21, 1974. This contained a major rôle for the Welsh baritone Sir Geraint Evans and the experience of writing for voices on a broad and dramatic scale seems to have encouraged Hoddinott then to explore solo vocal writing in its more intimate recital-based guise – and for another great Welsh singer, the tenor Stuart Burrows. He gave the first performance of *Landscapes* as part of a celebrity recital at the Reardon Smith Lecture Theatre in Cardiff on May 27, 1975 with the pianist John Samuel, followed by a radio broadcast a year later. As the subtitle *Ynys Môn* indicates, the five poems are meditations upon a variety of locations on the island of Anglesey, where Emyr Humphreys and his wife Elinor lived at the time. They explore topography, land and seascapes, history and pre-history, the natural world and the inevitable passage of time. Hoddinott's word setting follows the sense and scansion of the poetry with exemplary care and he succeeds in creating a vivid musical atmosphere for each poem. These are in no sense pastoral landscape songs related to an English tradition (or a Welsh one either for that matter) but establish instead an entirely individual vocal idiom within the stylistic parameters of Hoddinott's own distinctively coloured language. And it is perhaps not insignificant that concurrent with this song-cycle Hoddinott was planning a major orchestral triptych for the BBC which he also called *Landscapes* (Op. 86) and which conjured in music the craggy grandeur of Snowdonia from the poetry of Sir T.H. Parry-Williams – the majestic mountain range of Eryri being the dramatic backdrop and mainland context for the entire southern coastline of Anglesey.

Two further solo works were written for Stuart Burrows – and both are settings of Welsh folk-songs. The first collection, the *Six Welsh Folksongs*, selects some of the most familiar and popular from a rich and priceless heritage and was written in January 1982 for a series of performances later that year to be given by Burrows in a number of capital cities from Vienna to New York. Although they can of course be sung to the traditional Welsh words they are more often than not given in the felicitous English translations specially crafted by the composer's wife Rhiannon. These were first sung in Wales on December 2, 1982 at the National Museum of Wales in Cardiff by tenor Maldwyn Davies with the piano part very suitably adapted for the harpist Caryl Thomas and they were also subsequently transposed by the composer for baritone. There are surprisingly few first-class arrangements of Welsh folksongs by Welsh composers and it is possible that Hoddinott seems here to take a discreet leaf from the example of Benjamin Britten when writing his famous settings for Peter Pears – they came to Cardiff at Hoddinott's invitation in 1970 to give a recital at the Festival (including the public première of part of Britten's *Who Are These Children?* Op. 84) and quickly became great friends of the Hoddinotts. Pears famously wrote after a visit in 1972 – "I drove back to London next morning, with a wonderful present from Alun. He is a real Father Christmas of a man, and Rhiannon is just beautiful: she could start a Trojan War." But Hoddinott himself was a violinist and not a pianist and so his settings are in general less obtrusive in style than Britten's but just as subtle in effect – supporting but not drowning the vocal contour. Then in 1990 he selected two far less familiar songs from Glamorganshire to celebrate the 80th birthday of Sir Cennydd Traherne, whose ancestral home was the ancient and beautiful house Coedarydyglyn just outside Cardiff in the fruitful Vale of Glamorgan and who was a long-serving and distinguished Lord-Lieutenant of Her Majesty in the county of Glamorgan. The première of the beautifully-realised *Two Songs from Glamorgan* was given at a special celebration in the Edwardian splendour of Cardiff City Hall's Assembly Rooms on December 12, 1990 when

Stuart Burrows was again accompanied by John Samuel.

Another celebrated Welsh tenor – Kenneth Bowen – commissioned a cycle from Hoddinott in 1985 for performance at the Royal Academy of Music and for this the composer turned for his text to the poet Ursula Vaughan Williams (1911-2007, the great RVW's second wife and widow). They had already collaborated a year earlier on a work for the Camden Chamber Choir – a cantata called *Lady and Unicorn* – and the new piece sets a richly unified cycle of poems entitled *The Silver Hound*, which presents the life-journey of a man from *Prologue*, through his remaining Seven Ages, issuing in a poignant concluding *Epitaph* – his accumulation of memories likened to the incessant chasing of a hunting hound through his evanescent life. The author's poetic style is more florid and romantic than that of Emyr Humphreys but Hoddinott responds, paradoxically, with vocal lines of greater simplicity and spareness – a tendency which reflects the general development of his idiom at the time. The decade between *Landscapes* in 1975 and *The Silver Hound* of 1985 had seen the composition of a further four operas – two one-acters for television (*The Magician* and *The Rajah's Diamond*), one for children based on Hans Christian Andersen (*What the Old Man Does is Always Right*) and a full-scale grand opera from Thomas Hardy's novel *The Trumpet-Major* (the last three of these to libretti by Myfanwy Piper, the childrens' opera in 1977 at Fishguard also designed by her husband John, thus continuing a partnership long-established with Benjamin Britten at Aldeburgh and elsewhere). These very varied operas develop a mastery of stage-craft and vocal economy of gesture often yielding a new vein of lyricism, which trait can be heard very clearly in the seamless evolution and narrative unfolding of *The Silver Hound*, Op. 121, whose première was given in the Duke's Hall at the RAM on January 6, 1986 when the pianist was the composer and teacher Roger Steptoe.

Even though Hoddinott composed only one set of songs for soprano and piano – *One Must Always Have Love* in 1994 – it would be wrong not to point here to two very significant earlier works of his for soprano and orchestra, the ravishing *A Contemplation upon Flowers*

for Dame Felicity Palmer in 1976 (setting the metaphysical poets George Herbert, born in Montgomery Castle in 1593, and Henry King in a sequence designed by Myfanwy Piper) and the magisterial *Symphony No. 9: A Vision of Eternity* (to poems by Blake and Shelley) written in 1992 for Dame Gwyneth Jones. The soprano cycle with piano, however, was not written with a specific voice in mind but was the result of an epistolary friendship with the American poet Alice Witherspoon Bliss, who had heard some of Hoddinott's music and so determined to commission from him a work in memory of her mother Evelyn Lee Witherspoon. The result was the set of *Three Motets* for chorus and organ (written in 1993) for which he chose suitably meditative words by Donne, Blake and 'Silurian' Welshman Henry Vaughan. Alice Bliss was so taken with the piece that she immediately commissioned another work – and for this soprano cycle Hoddinott wove poems by Christina Rossetti, Emily Dickinson and W.B. Yeats around a *Tasmanian Poem* by Bliss herself. A new sense of freedom and ecstasy informs the vocal writing here and following the US première in Georgia, the Welsh première of *One Must Always Have Love*, Op. 152, No. 3, was given by the gifted Welsh soprano Gail Pearson (and a student of Hoddinott's at Cardiff) with pianist Michael Pollock on June 27, 1998 at the Lower Machen Festival in St Michael's Church, an idyllic country village on the north-eastern fringes of Cardiff in rural Monmouthshire.

Many of Hoddinott's later vocal works were commissioned by or written for the young Welsh baritone Jeremy Huw Williams who, in 1999, appeared as Emrys, the pit manager, in the documentary-style music-drama *Tower* (Hoddinott's last opera, produced by Opera Box in Swansea and on tour) – a moving and visceral recreation of the heroic struggle to buy the last working colliery in South Wales and which starred the famous Welsh opera-singer Robert Lloyd as the charismatic Tyrone O'Sullivan who led the miners to a famous victory. A year earlier the 1998 Beaumaris Festival commissioned a work from Hoddinott for Jeremy Huw Williams and piano quintet which led to a setting of part of *Grongar Hill*, the glorious extended poem by John Dyer (1700-58). Not only was this a talismanic location at the heart of rural

Carmarthenshire (near Llangathen and Aberglasney Gardens and just within sight of the new National Botanic Garden of Wales) and well-known to the Hoddinotts from their childhood years, but they had now just returned from Cardiff to live in West Wales, at Three Crosses on Gower and from where Grongar was but a short and favourite journey. Another source of inspiration was the special connection with John and Myfanwy Piper. At her suggestion in 1982, Piper provided illustrations for a special limited edition of Dyer's poem by the Stourton Press. He recalled in his *Foreword* to the volume that in youth he had thought of the Towy Valley's landscape (running from Llandovery down through Llandeilo to Carmarthen) as the mythical 'Promised Land' (it does in fact include a tiny hamlet called Bethlehem which for many years was the home of iconic Welsh Nationalist Leader and first Plaid Cymru MP Gwynfor Evans!) and that in the late 1930s he'd returned there to make a collage painting of Grongar Hill followed by a lithograph of neighbouring Castell Dryslwyn in the 1950s. With so many resonances in common – location, paintings and poem were a frequent source of discussion between the Hoddinotts and the Pipers during their many festive sessions together either at Maesawelon in Lisvane near Cardiff or at Fawley Bottom Farmhouse just outside Henley – sessions however which were now to be no more. John Piper had died on June 28, 1992 and after a brave and energetic widowhood, Myfanwy followed him suddenly on January 18, 1997. Although never stated explicitly it would nevertheless be hard not to think of *Grongar Hill, Op. 168* as a beautiful joint memorial to a remarkable creative couple and it is worth noting that John Piper eloquently described *Grongar Hill* as 'one of the best purely topographical poems in existence, because it is so visual. I return to it whenever I feel depressed about the countryside getting spoilt.'

Hoddinott himself returned to the poem a few years later in 2005-06 when the young Welsh pianist Andrew Matthews-Owen (and the mastermind behind this recording) asked for a new work to be scored for soprano, baritone and piano duet – and with Claire Booth, Jeremy Huw Williams, himself and Michael Pollock in mind as the

performers. The commission of *Towy Landscape, Op. 190* was funded by the Arts Council of Wales in partnership with the PRS Foundation and the première was given in Swansea during the Crwth Chamber Music Series at the historic Brunswick Church on September 30, 2006 by these artists in the composer's presence. The London première followed at The Warehouse, London on December 6, 2007 as part of the *Cutting Edge Series* under the auspices for the BMIC (now Sound and Music).

It is hardly surprising that the abundant riches of Dyer's poem *Grongar Hill* (cast throughout in octosyllabic couplets) with its many associations should have triggered a new setting of different lines from within it by Hoddinott, and he was especially inspired by the exciting new possibilities of blending two voices with a piano duet accompaniment. He finds six contrasted sections to set – varying the vocal conjunctions accordingly – and though he did not think of this as his last vocal work there is a particular poignancy in that these very local and personal words should have been his *envoi* to a lifetime of writing for the human voice.

Although Hoddinott realised in 2007 that his final orchestral score – *Taliesin* – had reluctantly, but inevitably, to be his musical swansong, he retained a strong creative vision for the future, which included a ballet with a vocal part for the National Dance Company of Wales and much more beyond. Our regret at these unrealised projects should however be tempered by the extraordinary richness of the musical treasure-trove which Hoddinott left for posterity. I think now of the magical landscape overlooking the Duad valley from the restored farmhouse of Llwynalennig (where Alun's ashes rest) at Alltwalis to the north of Carmarthen and which Rhiannon – and her son Ceri and family – can view and ponder as they listen to this haunting yet powerful final vocal canvas. Here is a legacy which enshrines not only the spirit of the most all-encompassing Welsh composer to date but also the distinctive perspective which he translated into music – the personal becoming the universal in a manner unique to both composer and his muse.

Geraint Lewis

Landscapes (Ynys Môn)

Texts: Emyr Humphreys (b. 1919)

1 MYNYDD BODAFON

This is a complex mountain
Older than the Alps
Worn down with keeping
The Harlech dome in its place
The Boss of our island shield

We must show it respect
Take off our shoes
And use the path like a carpet
A cloak of heather
Hides the northern side
From the wind across the sea

But facing the mainland
The old outcrops frown towards Arfon
And warn the stone tents
Of an army of sleeping mountains
Never to move.

2 DIN LLIGWY

Did they ever have time to garden?
I mean the builders of this village fortress
Four circles a square a rectangle
And maybe a defensive wall

An old woman sleeps on straw
Outside the stone hut
And sees Orion's belt
A glittering bracelet
Above the tops of the trees
A bracelet lost on earth
But found again in heaven

Did they ever have time to garden?
Between the nervous watch on the sea
And the feverish hunting
Did they grow flowers?

A thoughtful man from the hut circles
Ventures alone to the deserted beach
Unarmed except for a stick

With this he touches a jellyfish
As big as a shield
He scars it with his stick and mutters 'to be so cold
And still to be alive'

Four circles of stone a square a rectangle
Dead like the ghost of a leaf in a dying fire
Someone has planted daffodils among you
And in springtime
They are flowers on all your graves.

3 LLYS DULAS

The tide has left a mirror on the shore
Into which the sky can smile

The lady of the manor
Long since dead
Built a refuge on the rocky island
And left food and drink there
For any shipwrecked mariner
But ships for us
Are toys on the horizon
And only rats live on her island

The lady of the manor
Long since dead
Built a dove-cote
As beautiful as a baptistery
To be reflected in the tidal mirror
But there are no doves
And only rats live in her dove-cote

The house itself among the trees
Is now decaying
The minstrel gallery
She had built with love is broken
And from the music room
Comes the clamour of caged birds

That from time to time
Are also attacked by rats.

4) TRAETH BYCHAN

Love easily finds its way
Along this rocky shore
And the blue of the sea
Is easily reflected in her eyes

The path is practised
To receive the footsteps of lovers
In the wild hedge
The flowers offer themselves
To lovers' hands

Distress and disappointment
Like the salt on the wind
Are widely dispersed
The little waves
Are laughter

And at the water's edge
There is a glass mirror
For smiles and reconciliation

5) HEN GAPEL

On the green headland
A single ruin stands above the sea
In springtime it seems the skylark's chapel
Because he soars above it
Weaving lanes of song
High into the well of heaven

In winter the cold ruin
Knows only the wind and the rain
Behind the thick wall
Half starved sheep shelter
The hermit's cell is empty
The alter a fallen stone

We have counted the stones
And measured them
But nothing can teach them to sing
Except the skylark
When he rises again
Like a new prayer
To the presence of the sun
A high strong song
From the dried foundation of faith

*Landscapes: A Song Cycle for Irish Voice and Piano
by Alun Hoddnitt, words by Emyr Humphreys
(London: Oxford University Press, 1976).*

Two Songs of Glamorgan

Texts: Traditional. English translations by Geraint Lewis

6) 1. In Pontypridd dwells my true love
In Pontypridd my turtle-dove
In Pontypridd my heart doth beat
And in the church our souls shall meet.

I listen to the river's flow
Within my heart true love does grow
My cart to market will I take
Oh come to me my pretty Kate.

7) 2. Oh Llangyfelach fare thee well
And all the girls who there do dwell
I'm on my way to East and West
To see if here or there is best.

I marched in step with all my might
Till Cowbridge town was well in sight
And there the men were full of sport
Enlisting for the Duke of York.

I turned inside to seal my fate
Where gold and silver filled my crate
The fifes and drums called out their tune
And so I joined the light dragoons.

If any ask who made the song
Tell them the truth and tell no wrong
A fair young maid who hopes to see
Her own true love back home and free.

The Silver Hound

Texts: Ursula Vaughan Williams (1911-2007)

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8) PROLOGUE

Memory is my silver hound stalking days that time
has hidden,
Searching for a past that's lost in shadows grown
as thick as grass.
Give him courage, let him pass,
Find the secret and forbidden,
Open graves and free each ghost.
Let my seven selves be found quarry for my silver hound.

9) LULLABY

I was a cradled child who woke to see the stars
I thought that I could touch the sky beyond the window bars.
I heard the song of rain,
I laughed with the morning light,
I smelled the budding leaves of spring,
And knew that sleep was night.
The bough was rocked by wind,
The treetop cradle fell.
I knew the cold of sudden fear but had no words to tell.

10) THE SCHOOLBOY

When learning came,
Tall as a giant, talking of centuries,
Showing me measure,
Weight and volume,
Teaching me dimension,
Brining me languages,
Laying before me all of man's achievement.

I was amazed by all these opened doors,
Enchanted by the music and the stories.
But being young I often turned away,
Calling my friends to come with me to play.

11) THE SOLDIER

Look in the mirror,
Soldier, soldier.
What do you see?

My share of pride,
Of courage,
Of duty and victory.

Look at the prisoners,
Soldier, soldier.
What do you see?

My own reflection,
My wounds, my hunger, my enemy.

Look at the shrouded,
Soldier, soldier.
What do you see?

My shadow,
My brother,
My youth,
My loss,
All history.

12) THE LOVER

My love has no measure but the words of other lovers
Yet my hope is boundless,
Garlanded and certain.

I give my promise,
I give my truth
I commit my years to you with joy.
I ask nothing – I ask everything.
Do you understand this,
Beauty,
As I speak to you in the words of other lovers?

13 THE STATESMAN

I have served,
So now I may command.

I have listened,
Now is the time to speak.
I have endured,
Now I offer justice.
Rich, let me remember poverty.
Fortunate,
Let me become wise.
Steel should not forget the pain of fire to which
it owes its strength.

14 THE OLD MAN

I am my own ghost now,
Dreams are my company.
Saplings I set are forest trees.
Love is an echo,
Hope is a shadow.
I sit with a rug across my knees
while small birds feed on my window ledge.

15 EPITAPH

What was your quarry,
Silver hound?
The dead man's name means little here.
What did you find, ranging through time,
His joy?
His power?
His youth?
His fear?
Did seven selves make one man whole?

One Must Always Have Love

Songs for soprano and piano

16 SONNET

Text: Christina Rossetti (1830-94)

I wish I could remember that first day,
First hour, first moment of your meeting me,
If bright or dim the season, it might be
Summer or winter for aught I can say;
So unrecorded did it slip away,
So blind was I to see and to foresee,
So dull to mark the budding of my tree
That would not blossom yet for many a May.
If only I could recollect it, such
A day of days! I let it come and go
As traceless as a thaw of bygone snow;
It seem'd to mean so little, meant so much;
If only now I could recall that touch,
First touch of hand in hand—Did one but know!

17 DAISY

Text: Emily Dickinson (1830-86)
The daisy follows soft the sun,
And when his golden walk is done,
Sits shyly at his feet.
He, waking, finds the flower near.
"Wherefore, marauder, art thou here?"
"Because, sir, love is sweet!"

We are the flower, Thou the sun!
Forgive us, if as days decline,
We nearer steal to Thee,—
Enamoured of the parting west,
The peace, the flight, the amethyst,
Night's possibility!

18 TASMANIAN POEM

Text: Alice Bliss

Like a lighted house on a hill
You stand steadfast and firm
And I cling to the thought of you.
Though I fly
Spring into flight, scattering my thought arrows abroad.
My gleaming shafts of thoughts that descend
like burning sparks.
But into that light house creeps nocturnal fog.
And for that reason I flee you.

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19 THE RAGGED WOOD

Text: W.B. Yeats (1865-1939)

O hurry where by water among the trees
The delicate-stepping stag and his lady sigh,
When they have but looked upon their images —
Would none had ever loved but you and I!

Or have you heard that sliding silver-shoed
Pale silver-proud queen-woman of the sky,
When the sun looked out of his golden hood? —
O that none ever loved but you and I!

O hurry to the ragged wood, for there
I will drive all those lovers out and cry —
O my share of the world, O yellow hair!
No one has ever loved but you and I.

20 TOWY LANDSCAPE

Scena for soprano, baritone and piano duet
Text: John Dyer (1699-1757)

Fancy! Nymph, that loves to lye
On the lonely Eminence,
Darting Notice thro' the Eye,
Forming Thought, and feasting Sense,
Thou! That must lend Imagination Wings,
And stamp Distinction, on all wordly Things
Come, and with thy various Hues,
Paint and adorn thy Sister Muse
Now, while the Sun's hot Coursers, bounding high;
Shake Lustre, on the Earth, and burn along the Sky.

Thou, awful Grongar,
In whose mossy cells sweetly musing quiet dwells
Thou awful Grongar
Deep beneath whose shado'wy side
Of my sick Mind serene Refreshment took
Near the cool winding of some bubbling brook
There have I pensive press'd the grassy Bed
Strayed my charm'd eyes o'er Towy's wandering Tide
Swift as a start of thought,
From Wood to mead Glancing from dark to bright
from vale to hill.

Widening beneath the Mountain's bushy brow
The unbounded landskip softens off below
No skreeny vapours intervene
But the splendid scene
Does nature's smiling face all open show
In the mix'd glowings of the tinctur'd bow
And gently changing into soft and light,
Expands immensely wide and leads the journeying sight.

White on the rugged cliffs old castles rise,
And shelter'd villages lie warm and low,
Close by the streams that at their bases flow.
Each watery face bears pictur'd words and skies,
Whereas the surface curls when breezes rise,
Faint fairy Earthquakes tremble to the eyes.
Up thro' the Forest's gloom distinguish'd bright
Tops of high buildings catch the light.

The quick'ning Sun a show'ry Radiance,
Sheds and lights up all the Mountain's heads.
Gilds the fair Fleeces of the distant flocks,
And glittering plays betwixt the broken rocks.
Deep at its base, In Towy's bordering Flood,
Its bristly sides are shagg'd with sullen wood.
Thick round the ragged walls pale ivy creeps.
Whose circling arms the nodding fabrick keeps,
While both combine to check th'insulting wind.
As friends in danger,
Mutual comfort find.

Once a proud palace a seat of kings,
Now 'tis the raven's bleak abode,
And shells in marbly damps the inbred toad.
The prince's tenure in his roofs of gold,
Ends like the peasant's homelier hold.
Life's but a road,
And he who travels right,
Treats fortune as an Inn and rests his night.

Here while on humble Earth unmark'd I lie,
I subject Heav'n and Nature to my eye.
Solid my joys and my free thoughts run high.
To sooth my ear those waters murmur deep.
To shade my eye these bowry Woodbines creep.
Wanton to yield me sport these Birds fly low,
And a sweet chase of Harmony bestow.
Like me too yon sweet stream serenely glides,
Just views and quits the charms which tempt its sides.
Calmly regardless hastening to the sea,
As I thro' life shall reach Eternity.

Six Welsh Folksongs

Texts: Traditional.

English translations by Rhiannon Hoddinott

21 TWO HEARTS REMAIN

The girl I love lives far away
Across the silver sea,
And I am longing for the day
When she comes back to me.

Her smile is lovelier than the dawn
With all its beauty rare,
That she should love me, so forlorn,
Is joy beyond compare.

*Riches are vain and inconstant,
Beauty will wither and wane,
But love so pure Will aye endure,
While our two hearts remain.*

And now for love of her I pine,
How sad it was to part,
Where'er she walks seems ground divine
To my poor aching heart.

For ev'ry day my choice I bless
My love I'll never rue,
Her gentle voice, her sweet caress,
She's constant, fair, and true.

*Riches are vain and inconstant,
Beauty will wither and wane,
But love so pure Will aye endure,
While our two hearts remain.*

22 O GENTLE DOVE

O gentle dove with soft grey wings
Come be my faithful servant,
And hasten, hasten to the one
For whom my love is constant.

When you find her
Whisper to her
Tell her of a yearning lover,
Spent with weeping,
Rent with longing,
A heart burning with love undying,
May Heav'n forgive the beauteous maid,
my happiness destroying.

While jaunting to the fair one day
My heart with gladness singing,
I chanced upon the fairest maid
So light of step and winning.

When I saw her
Straight I loved her,
At such beauty gazed in wonder,
Eyes beguiling,
Smile bewitching,
Her sweet and gentle ways enchanting,
An angel she must truly be,
so deep a love inspiring.

23 IF SHE WERE MINE

If she were mine and loved me true
With all her heart, sincerely,
I would not of her wealth partake
Lest I should love less dearly.

Her beauty and her gentle smile,
Her charms by all commended.
She must be mine, and mine alone,
Until our days are ended.

If she were mine and loved me true
I would cherish her forever,
Her name is music to my ears,
To please I would endeavour.

But should I doubt her constancy
Or found that she pretended,
I would not wish her to be mine
Until my days are ended.

24 AP SHENKIN

His name was Ap Shenkin, he lived all alone,
Light hearted and blithe in a cottage of stone,
Despite some sweet glances and simpering smiles
He spurned all advances and feminine wiles.

His horses, his barley, his fields and his gold
attracted some lively young women, I'm told,
But long did he ponder, and wisely he thought,
Not wishing to squander that love is not bought!

*So therefore Ap Shenkin, his name will endure,
Instead of a wedding, he shared with the poor
All his horses, his barley, his fields and his gold,
O'er hill and o'er valley the tale will be told.*

His skill as a huntsman was known far and wide,
His luck as a fisherman never denied,
He was canny and kindly, and handsome and strong,
His voice rang out clearly in verse and in song.

Fond maidens adoring, all others refused,
Surveyed him with longing, their poor hearts bruised,
Yet love's sweet contentment he never desired,
Of beauty's enchantment he easily tired.

*So therefore Ap Shenkin, his name will endure,
Instead of a wedding, he shared with the poor
All his horses, his barley, his fields and his gold,
O'er hill and o'er valley the tale will be told.*

25 THE GOLDEN WHEAT

I'm a fond and foolish youth
Love's lonely vigil keeping,
And though I tend the golden wheat
Another does the reaping.

Hear me then, let love prevail,
And we'll rejoice together,
For ev'ry day, my dearest one,
You seem to grow still fairer.

With each day your beauty grows,
Or else my love must blind me,
By Him who blessed you with such grace,
Show me, your servant, mercy.

Lift your head, look in my eyes,
Give me your hand, sweet maiden,
Without your love, I'll surely die
With grief and sorrow laden.

FAIREST GWEN

Your beauty is renowned,
Fairest Gwen, Fairest Gwen,
In you all charms abound,
Fairest Gwen.

Together we could wander
Towards my castle yonder,
While our two hearts grow fonder,
Will you venture, Fairest Gwen?

Will you my true love be,
Fairest Gwen, Fairest Gwen,
And venture forth with me,
Fairest Gwen?

Across the dark'ning meadows
Where mountains cast their shadows
Above the mullioned windows,
Will you venture, Fairest Gwen?

Within those castle walls,
Fairest Gwen, Fairest Gwen,
There's light when darkness falls,
Fairest Gwen.

There's warmth in wintry weather
And joy for us together
If you be mine forever
Will you venture, Fairest Gwen?

Claire Booth



Photo: Sven Arnstein

British soprano Claire Booth has become internationally renowned for her commitment to an astonishingly wide range of repertoire both on the operatic stage and concert platform. In the 2012-13 season alone her diverse performances included Kurtág's *Kafka Fragments* in Netia Jones's ground-breaking multimedia production at the Royal Opera House, Mozart concert arias with the Deutsches Symphonie-Orchester at the Berlin Philharmonie and Oliver Knussen's *Whitman Settings* with the Boston Symphony Orchestra. Her operatic rôles have included Rosina in *The Barber of Seville* and Dorinda in Handel's *Orlando* (Scottish Opera), Nora in Vaughan Williams's *Riders to the Sea* (English National Opera), Anne Truelove in Stravinsky's *The Rake's Progress* with the City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra, Lucia in Britten's *Rape of Lucretia*, the Narrator in George Benjamin's *Into the Little Hill* (Aldeburgh Festival), Zerlina in Mozart's *Don Giovanni*, First Niece in Britten's *Peter Grimes* (Opera North), Despina in Mozart's *Così fan tutte* (Opera Nantes-Angers) and Mélisande in *Pelléas et Mélisande* (Opera Theatre Company Dublin). Most recently she made her début at Welsh National Opera singing Pakati in Jonathan Harvey's *Wagner Dream*.

Nicky Spence



Photo: Raphaëlle Photography

Having studied at the Guildhall School and National Opera Studio, Nicky Spence took an inaugural place as a Harewood Artist at English National Opera. Following successes with ENO, Welsh and Scottish Opera, and Opera North, he has gone on to win international acclaim performing at houses such as La Monnaie, Oper Frankfurt, De Nederlands Opera, New Zealand Opera and the Metropolitan Opera, New York. In concert he sings regularly with some of the finest orchestras and enjoys successful collaboration in recital internationally. His song discography includes première recordings of works by Jonathan Dove with Andrew Matthews-Owen, Benjamin Britten song-cycles, a recital disc of Shakespeare Songs with Malcolm Martineau, Hugo Wolf *Lieder* for Oxford Lieder Live and a disc of chamber works by Mark-Anthony Turnage.

Jeremy Huw Williams



The Welsh baritone Jeremy Huw Williams studied at St John's College, Cambridge, at the National Opera Studio, and with April Cantelo. He made his début with Welsh National Opera as Guglielmo (*Così fan tutte*) and has since appeared in sixty operatic rôles. He has given performances at major venues in North and South America, Australia, Hong Kong, and most European countries. He is renowned as a fine exponent of contemporary music, having commissioned much new music. He frequently records for BBC Radio 3, and has made many commercial recordings, including eight solo discs of songs. He was awarded an Honorary Fellowship by Glyndwr University in 2009 for services to music in Wales, and received the Honorary Degree of Doctor of Music from the University of Aberdeen in 2011. He received the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy for his studies of *Serialism, Modality and Poetic Rhetoric in Alun Hoddinott's Five Poems of Gustavo Adolfo Bécquer, Op. 152, No. 2 (1994)*.

Andrew Matthews-Owen



Photo: Nicholas Dawles

Following studies at the Royal Academy of Music, where he won numerous prizes and awards, and where he was recently elected an Associate, Andrew Matthews-Owen partners many of today's leading singers. Recent performances include appearances and BBC Radio 3 broadcasts at the Southbank Centre, Wigmore Hall, Kings Place, Warehouse and the National Portrait Gallery with singers Patricia Bardon, Claire Booth, Anne Sophie Duprels, Helen Field, Gail Pearson, Natalya Romaniw and Nicky Spence. He has also appeared in recital with French horn player Richard Watkins, percussionist Joby Burgess and the Allegri and Brodowski string quartets. Andrew has a passionate commitment to contemporary music. He has commissioned and given first performances of scores by Michael Berkeley, Charlotte Bray, Philip Cashian, Laurence Crane, Jonathan Dove, Alun Hoddinott, Simon Holt and Ariene Sierra. With Claire Booth, he was invited to appear on the final Cutting Edge Tour. Andrew's recent recording of world première song cycles by Jonathan Dove (Naxos 8.573080) was released to critical acclaim.

Michael Pollock

Michael Pollock won a Demyship to read music at Magdalen College, Oxford, and after graduating he studied piano accompaniment with Roger Vignoles at the Royal College of Music. The many singers whom he has accompanied include Dame Kiri Te Kanawa (on tour to the Far East as well as in France, Belgium, Norway, and at the 50th Israel Festival in Jerusalem) and Bryn Terfel (in the UK, Norway, Asia and Australia, as well as in a recital at the Amsterdam Concertgebouw); he has also appeared with Dame Anne Evans, Gwyn Hughes Jones, Katarina Karnéus, Christopher Maltman, Dennis O'Neill, Adrian Thompson and Sir Willard White. On three occasions he was official accompanist for the BBC Cardiff Singer of the World competition. Michael Pollock also enjoys collaborating with instrumentalists. His recordings include both of Brahms's clarinet sonatas, together with the sonata by Nino Rota (with Leslie Craven), and a number of recordings with singers. In addition to performing he is much in demand as a coach and teacher at various conservatoires and opera companies.



Photo: Hanya Chlala



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In addition the Society produces a Journal, *British Music*, packed full of scholarly articles and reviews, as well as a regular e-newsletter for members. Our website lists forthcoming BMS events as well as performances of British music, and also provides a forum for discussion and debate.

www.britishmusicsociety.com

Alun Hoddinott dominated musical life in his native Wales for over half a century. One of the most versatile and gifted composers of his generation he excelled in all genres, from operas and symphonies to piano sonatas. This recording brings together all of his songs for high voice and piano, revealing the vivid atmosphere he was able to evoke in each setting. It includes his *Six Welsh Folksongs* and his last vocal work, *Towy Landscape*, for soprano, baritone and piano duet, Hoddinott's epilogue to a lifetime of writing for the voice.



Alun
HODDINOTT
(1929-2008)

Landscapes: Song Cycles and Folk Songs

- | | | | |
|--------------|---|----------|--------------|
| 1-5 | Landscapes (Ynys Môn), Op. 87 (1975) | 1 | 13:44 |
| 6-7 | Two Songs from Glamorgan (1990) | 2 | 4:25 |
| 8-15 | The Silver Hound, Op. 121 (1985) | 3 | 11:11 |
| 16-19 | One Must Always Have Love, Op. 152, No. 3 (1994) | 4 | 8:20 |
| 20 | Towy Landscape, Op. 190 (2006) | 5 | 10:36 |
| 21-26 | Six Welsh Folksongs (1982) | 6 | 11:53 |

Claire Booth, Soprano ^{4,5} • **Nicky Spence, Tenor** ^{1-3,6}

Jeremy Huw Williams, Baritone ⁵

Andrew Matthews-Owen, Piano ^{1-4,6}

Andrew Matthews-Owen, Piano (*primo*) and **Michael Pollock, Piano** (*secondo*) ⁵

Previously released on BMS

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The sung texts can be found inside the booklet.

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