

## At the Heart of Hope

*A musical night of witness - in support of Aid to the Church in Need*

Monday, 23 November 2020, 7pm  
Live stream concert from 1901 Arts Club, London

*Imma Setiadi and Nigel Clayton, piano four hands.*

### **Programme**

*Introduction from Patricia Hatton, Head of Fundraising and Marketing, ACN (UK)*

**Schubert** (1797 – 1828) Marche Caractéristique in C Major, D. 886

*Psalm 131: 1-3*

**Brahms/arr. Anderson** (1833 – 1897) Wiegenlied (Lullaby) from Op. 49, No. 4

**Fauré** (1845 – 1924) Dolly Suite Op. 56  
i. Berceuse  
ii. Mi-a-ou  
iii. Le jardin de Dolly  
iv. Kitty-Valse  
v. Tendresse  
vi. Le pas espagnole

*Myra Brooks Welch – The Touch of the Master's Hand*

**Dvořák** (1841 – 1904) Silent Woods, from the Bohemian Forest Op. 68, No. 5

**Mendelssohn** (1809 – 1847) Duett, Andante und Allegro brillant Op. 92

*Christina Rosetti – The Patience of Hope*  
*Read by Catharine Crowson*

**Bach / arr. Duck** (1685 – 1750) Wachet auf, ruft uns die Stimme, from Cantata BWV 140

**Smetana** (1824 – 1884) Vltava (Moldau), from Ma Vlast

*Postlude:*

*George Herbert - Virtue*

**Fauré / arr. Setiadi** In Paradisum, from Requiem, Op. 48 No. 7

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### Programme Notes

*“Rejoice in your hope, be patient in tribulation” (Rom 12:12)*

“How is hope born? From the Cross...” - It is from the depth of human abasement which is also the loftiest point of love that hope burgeons.<sup>1</sup> Hope keeps man from discouragement, it sustains man during times of abandonment, and it opens up his heart in expectation of eternal blessings.<sup>2</sup> “Hope springs eternal in the human breast,” as Alexander Pope said. The music performed this evening tries to capture a childlike hope and dream, a yearning hope that comes from suffering and hope that looks to future Glory.

On his deathbed, Beethoven is said to have looked at some of Schubert’s works and exclaimed “Truly, the spark of divine genius resides in this Schubert!” During his mere 31 years of life, Schubert’s musical output was extraordinary – and this includes his love for the genre of piano four-hands. This evening’s programme begins with Schubert’s *Marche Caractéristique in C Major, D. 886*, displaying what seems like a musical heartbeat: this jaunty, but “uncharacteristic” March (as it is in a 6/8 metre instead of the usual 2/4) is indeed, a little gem setting us off on our journey of hope.

How wonderful it is to see the simplicity of a child who dares to ask his parents for the moon! How beautiful it is to see the wonder of a child dreaming of his future, yet resting in peace, abandoning himself to the care of his parents. *In peace I will lie down and sleep, for you alone, Lord, make me dwell in safety (Ps 4:9).*

A simple yet poignant reflection of the maternal voice, Brahms’ *Wiegenlied (Lullaby) Op. 49 No 4* is perhaps one of his best-known songs. Originally written for voice and piano, this cradle-song was dedicated to his friend, Bertha Faber, for the birth of her second son, and premiered by Luise Dustmann (singer) with Clara Schumann on the piano (we shall “see” her again later).

If you knew the BBC Radio programme called “Listen with Mother”, you will know its signature tune, which is the first piece of Fauré’s *Dolly Suite Op. 56*. This charming, affectionate set of pieces was written to mark the birthdays and other events in the life of Régina-Hélène Bardac, known as “Dolly” to her family. *Berceuse* marks Dolly’s first birthday in a dreamlike lullaby, while *Mi-a-ou* was written for her second birthday and referred to her attempts to pronounce her elder brother’s name, Raoul. *Le Jardin de Dolly*, which evokes the calm of the perfect garden as a young girl might imagine it, was a present for New Year’s Day 1895. *Kitty-Valse* was actually a portrait of the household’s dog, Kitty, perhaps with its tail-wagging tendencies! The introspective *Tendresse* is a real contrast to the energetic Spanish rhythm in *Le pas espagnole* which was dedicated to Fauré’s friend Emmanuel Chabrier.

Often it is in quiet that one discovers the heart’s true yearning, its unspoken sorrow and joy. Silence is often more powerful than any words. Maybe that’s why Dvořák was originally going to call the **Silent Woods**, the fifth piece from the set *From the Bohemian Forest Op. 68*, “The Silence” or “Quiet”. One can imagine Dvořák walking meditatively around the quiet woods in Bohemia, perhaps with his friends. He later arranged this piece for Cello and Orchestra (for the cellist Hanuš Wihan) before he embarked for the US.

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<sup>1</sup> Pope Francis, general audience, April 2017

<sup>2</sup> Cf. Catechism of the Catholic Church point 1818

In a letter, Mendelssohn once described death as a place “where, it is to be hoped, there is still music, but no more sorrow or partings”. Grandson of the philosopher Moses Mendelssohn, Felix Mendelssohn was a true child prodigy, excelling as poet, painter, linguist, athlete and musician; during his 38 years of life, he promoted works by other composers, most notably Bach, Handel and Schubert. Mendelssohn also had a strong affiliation with Great Britain and visited Britain ten times, whilst his two most popular works, The Scottish Symphony and the Hebrides Overture, were inspired by Scotland. He met and performed in front of Queen Victoria and Prince Albert, had dinner with Charles Dickens - we now find a blue plaque for him at 4 Hobart Place, Belgravia, London! The *Andante und Allegro Brilliant Op. 92* opens with “comfort food for the soul”, a Mendelssohnian ‘song without words’ Andante, followed by a nimble and playful Allegro, full of *brilliant* passages. The yearning and lyrical Andante theme continues its narrative even throughout the Allegro section. Mendelssohn premiered this piece himself with Clara Schumann, in a concert at which Clara and Robert Schumann, who had recently married, appeared professionally together.

“Therefore keep watch, because you do not know on what day your Lord will come” (Mt 24:42). *Wachet auf, ruft uns die Stimme!* (Awake, calls the voice to us!) is a church cantata by Bach based on a hymn in three stanzas by Philip Nicolai. It is based in turn on the Parable of the Ten Virgins where the five foolish virgins are not ready for the arrival of the bridegroom, while the five wise virgins are ready with their lamps. It is often considered a “perfect” cantata, and performed during the liturgical season of Advent.

Our journey of hope will finally be accompanied by Smetana’s journey along the river Vltava. Often regarded as the father of Czech music, personal sorrow accompanied Smetana throughout his life. His three daughters died relatively young, his wife suffered from tuberculosis, and by October 1874, in the middle of composing *Vltava*, Smetana rapidly became deaf (unlike Beethoven who went deaf gradually).

*Vltava* (The Moldau) is the second and perhaps best-loved of the six symphonic poems that constitute Smetana’s grand patriotic cycle *Má Vlast* (My Homeland), composed between 1874 and 1879. For each of the six works of the cycle the composer provided a programmatic description; his note for *Vltava* reveals his passionate affection for the ancient richness of the Czech countryside. The journey of the river Vltava starts from its twin sources, the two streams where he heard this gentle poetic song in the Šumava Mountains, and continues to Prague and beyond. On the way it passes a hunting party and a village wedding - Sprites dance on its moonlit waters before the current builds as the river reaches the St. John rapids. The river then flows broadly through Prague, passing below the fortress of Vyšehrad (the castle on the city’s outskirts, a site of historical importance to the Czechs), and disappears into the distance where it flows majestically into the Elba river...

*Programme notes compiled by Imma Setiadi,*

*with special thanks to Helena Scott, Amanda Glauert, Fr. Paul Hayward and Nigel Clayton.*

## **POEM TEXTS**

### **Psalm 131: 1-3**

A song of ascents. Of David.

<sup>1</sup> My heart is not proud, Lord,  
my eyes are not haughty;  
I do not concern myself with great matters  
or things too wonderful for me.

<sup>2</sup> But I have calmed and quieted myself,  
I am like a weaned child with its mother;  
like a weaned child I am content.

<sup>3</sup> Israel, put your hope in the Lord  
both now and forever more.

### ***Wiegenlied* (Lullaby), Brahms**

(The lyrics are from *Des Knaben Wunderhorn*, a collection of German folk poems)

Guten Abend, gut' Nacht, mit Rosen bedacht, mit Naglein besteckt, schlupf' unter die Deck': Morgen fruh, wenn Gott will, wirst du wieder geweckt. —First edition (1868)	<i>Good evening, good night, With roses covered, With carnations adorned, Slip under the covers. Tomorrow morning, if God wills, you will wake once again.</i>
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(Brahms afterwards adapted a second verse from an 1849 poem by Georg Scherer):

Guten Abend, gut' Nacht, von Englein bewacht, die zeigen im Traum dir Christkindleins Baum: schlaf nun selig und suss, schau im Traum's Paradies. —Georg Scherer (1849)	<i>Good evening, good night. By angels watched, Who show you in your dream the Christ-child's tree. Sleep now blissfully and sweetly, see paradise in your dreams.</i>
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### **The Touch of the Master's Hand**

'Twas battered and scarred, and the auctioneer thought it scarcely worth his while  
To waste much time on the old violin, but held it up with a smile;  
“What am I bidden, good folks,” he cried, “Who'll start the bidding for me?”  
“A dollar, a dollar”; then “two!” “Only two? Two dollars, and who'll make it three?  
Three dollars, once; three dollars twice; going for three—” But no,  
From the room, far back, a gray-haired man came forward and picked up the bow;  
Then, wiping the dust from the old violin, and tightening the loose strings,  
He played a melody, pure and sweet as caroling angel sings.

The music ceased, and the auctioneer, with a voice that was quiet and low,  
Said; "What am I bid for the old violin?" And he held it up with the bow.  
"A thousand dollars, and who'll make it two? Two thousand! And who'll make it three?  
Three thousand, once, three thousand, twice, and going, and gone," said he.  
The people cheered, but some of them cried, "We do not quite understand  
What changed its worth." Swift came the reply: "The touch of a master's hand."

And many a man with life out of tune, and battered and scarred with sin,  
Is auctioned cheap to the thoughtless crowd, much like the old violin,  
A "mess of pottage," a glass of wine; a game—and he travels on.  
"He is going" once, and "going" twice, "He's going, and almost gone."  
But the Master comes, and the foolish crowd never can quite understand  
The worth of a soul and the change that's wrought by the touch of the Master's hand.

—*Myra Brooks Welch (1877 – 1959)*

### **Patience of Hope**

The flowers that bloom in sun and shade  
And glitter in the dew,  
The flowers must fade.  
The birds that build their nest and sing  
When lovely spring is new,  
Must soon take wing.

The sun that rises in his strength  
To wake and warm the world,  
Must set at length.  
The sea that overflows the shore  
With billows frothed and curled,  
Must ebb once more.

All come and go, all wax and wane,  
O Lord, save only Thou  
Who dost remain  
The Same to all eternity.  
All things which fail us now  
We trust to Thee.

—*Christina Rossetti (1830 – 1894)*

### **Virtue**

Sweet day, so cool, so calm, so bright,  
The bridal of the earth and sky;  
The dew shall weep thy fall to-night,  
For thou must die.

Sweet rose, whose hue, angry and brave  
Bids the rash gazer wipe his eye;  
Thy root is ever in its grave,  
And thou must die.

Sweet spring, full of sweet days and roses,  
A box where sweets compacted lie;  
My music shows ye have your closes,  
And all must die.

Only a sweet and virtuous soul,  
Like season'd timber, never gives;  
But though the whole world turn to coal,  
Then chiefly lives.

—*George Herbert (1593 – 1633)*