

season 25

22 | 23

chamber 4

How silver-sweet sound

Saturday, March 4, 2023, 8 PM

Sunday, March 5, 2023, 4 PM

First Church in Boston

program

Suite from *Much Ado About Nothing*, Op. 11

Erich Korngold

- I. Maiden In the Bridal Chamber
- II. March of the Watch (Dogberry and Verges)
- III. Garden Scene
- IV. Masquerade. Hornpipe

(1897-1957)

Claire Bourg *violin*

Miki Sawada *piano*

Six Studies in English Folk Song

Ralph Vaughan Williams

- Adagio: *Lovely on the water*
- Andante sostenuto: *Spurn Point*
- Larghetto: *Van Dieman's Land*
- Lento: *She borrowed some of her mother's gold*
- Andante tranquillo: *The lady and the dragon*
- Allegro vivace: *As I walked over London Bridge*

(1872-1958)

Nancy Dimock *English horn*

Mika Sasaki *piano*

Terrible Beauty, Op. 104

David Matthews

(born 1943)

- Mary Mackenzie *soprano*
- Deborah Boldin *flute*
- Gary Gorczyca *clarinet*
- Stephanie Zyzak *violin*
- Claire Bourg *violin*
- Scott Woolweaver *viola*
- Sarah Rommel *cello*
- Ina Zdorovetchi *harp*

intermission

"Court Studies" from *The Tempest*

Thomas Adès
(born 1971)

Gary Gorczyca *clarinet*
Elizabeth Fayette *violin*
Sarah Rommel *cello*
Miki Sawada *piano*

Piano Quintet in a minor, Op. 84

Edward Elgar
(1857-1934)

I. Moderato - Allegro
II. Adagio
III. Andante - Allegro

Elizabeth Fayette *violin*
Stephanie Zyzak *violin*
Scott Woolweaver *viola*
Sarah Rommel *cello*
Mika Sasaki *piano*



With special thanks to

Chameleon's 25th anniversary season programs are supported in part by the Massachusetts Cultural Council, a state agency and by the Boston Cultural Council, administered by the Mayor's Office of Arts and Culture.



texts & translations

David Matthews, *Terrible Beauty*, Op. 104

Homer, *Iliad*, Book 14, lines 159-169

Translation by David Matthews

Then the ox-eyed queen Hera considered how she might distract the mind of shield-bearing Zeus. And it seemed to her that her best plan was to go to Mount Ida, seductively dressed, and see if he might want to make love to her, and then she would pour soft, sweet sleep on to his eyes and his cunning mind. So she went to her bedroom, which her dear son Hephaistos had made for her and fitted strong doors to the door-posts, with a secret lock that no other god could open. Then she entered and closed the splendid doors.

William Shakespeare, *Antony and Cleopatra*, Act II, Scene 2

When she first met Mark Antony, she
pursed up his heart upon the river of Cydnus.

The barge she sat in, like a burnished throne,
Burned on the water. The poop was beaten gold,
Purple the sails, and so perfumed that
The winds were lovesick with them. The oars were silver,
Which to the tune of flutes kept stroke, and made
The water which they beat to follow faster,
As amorous as their strokes. For her own person,
It beggared all description: she did lie
In her pavilion—cloth-of-gold of tissue—
O'er picturing that Venus where we see
The fancy outwork nature. On each side her
Stood pretty dimpled boys, like smiling Cupids,
With divers-colored fans, whose wind did seem
To glow the delicate cheeks which they did cool,
And what they undid did.

O, rare for Antony!

Her gentlewomen, like the Nereides,
So many mermaids, tended her i' th' eyes,
And made their bends adornings. At the helm
A seeming mermaid steers. The silken tackle
Swell with the touches of those flower-soft hands
That yarely frame the office. From the barge
A strange invisible perfume hits the sense
Of the adjacent wharfs. The city cast
Her people out upon her; and Antony,
Enthroned i' th' market-place, did sit alone,
Whistling to th' air, which but for vacancy,
Had gone to gaze on Cleopatra too
And made a gap in nature.

Upon her landing, Antony sent to her,
Invited her to supper. She replied
It should be better he became her guest,
Which she entreated. Our courteous Antony,
Whom ne'er the word of "No" woman heard speak,
Being barbered ten times o'er, goes to the feast,
And for his ordinary pays his heart
For what his eyes eat only.

I saw her once
Hop forty paces through the public street,
And having lost her breath, she spoke and panted,
That she did make defect perfection,
And, breathless, power breathe forth.

Now Antony must leave her utterly?

Never. He will not.

Age cannot wither her, nor custom stale
Her infinite variety.

program notes

Erich Wolfgang Korngold (1897-1957) was born in Brünn, in Moravia (now Brno, Czechoslovakia), the son of the eminent music critic Julius Korngold. As such, his obviously prodigious talent was recognized before his age reached double digits. Gustav Mahler pronounced him a genius and recommended that he be sent to Alexander von Zemlinsky for instruction. By the time he was thirteen he'd had a ballet performed at the Vienna Court Opera, and his second piano sonata had no less a champion than Artur Schnabel. The peak of Korngold's early fame came with his opera *Die tote Stadt*, completed when he was just 23 and premiered to rave reviews in Hamburg and Cologne. Nicolas Slonimsky proclaimed him to be "the very last breath of the romantic spirit of Vienna." Early success came with certain difficulties, however; Julius Korngold's obvious and outspoken bias towards his son caused conflicts with more established composers such as Strauss and Schoenberg, even at times alienating the larger musical community.

In part to establish himself separately from his father, Korngold accepted an invitation to conduct and arrange music at the Vienna State Theater, where he met and collaborated with Max Reinhardt. Reinhardt soon invited him to Hollywood to work on his famous film of Shakespeare's *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, and he worked steadily there for several years, establishing the standard for the symphonic film score with *Captain Blood*, *The Prince and the Pauper*, and *Anthony Adverse* (his first Academy Award). He went home to Vienna in 1937, but the annexation of Austria into Nazi Germany in 1938 forced him back to Hollywood, where he resumed writing film scores that stand today among the finest ever produced, including *The Adventures of Robin Hood*, for which he was awarded another Oscar.

Korngold exerted a profound influence on film composers for generations to follow by treating each score as, in his words, "an opera without singing," with a *leitmotif* for each major character. He fully intended that his densely contrapuntal, richly romantic scores would be able to stand on their own in the concert hall. After the war he returned again to Austria but received a chilly reception from the musical community, in part because of his success in American films and in part because his style, deeply rooted in late Romanticism, was so far out of fashion. Even his father berated him, accusing him of having sought commercial success over artistic integrity. Once again, he went back to California, where he died at the age of 60, believing himself

forgotten. Fortunately for us, over the last couple of decades more and more musicians have discovered the high quality and unique character of Korngold's concert music, and his rightful place on concert stages is being restored.

In 1920, Max Reinhardt directed a production of Shakespeare's *Much Ado About Nothing* at the Schönbrunn Palace in Vienna and engaged the young Erich Korngold to compose incidental music. When the run was extended and the original chamber orchestra musicians were no longer available, Korngold re-arranged the music for violin and piano and performed the piano part himself. Later he also created a version for solo piano, but what we will hear today is the concert suite extracted from the duo version.

The four movements of the suite are drawn from particularly pictorial moments in the play, and deliberately not presented in the order of events. The first depicts Hero on her wedding morning, blissfully unaware that her groom is about to be tricked into doubting her faithfulness. The second movement is a mocking portrait of the pompous constable Dogberry and his crony Verges. The scene of overheard conversations in the garden leading to Beatrice and Benedick falling in love is the setting of the third movement. The final movement of the suite is actually the earliest scene in the play, a masquerade ball with clever wordplay and lively dancing.

Ralph Vaughan Williams (1872-1958), despite a rather slow start, became the most prominent British composer of his generation. He came from a distinguished English family; his paternal grandfather was the first Judge of Common Pleas, and his mother's parents were Josiah Wedgwood III and a sister of Charles Darwin. His early musical education was in keyboard instruments, harmony, violin and viola, and he considered a career as an orchestral player. Composition always attracted him, however, and despite technique that he himself described as "amateurish," he determinedly pursued his ambition. He enrolled twice at the Royal College of Music, and traveled to Berlin in 1897 to study with Bruch and Paris in 1908 to work with Ravel.

It soon became clear to the young Vaughan Williams that the most fertile material for inspiration lay not in imitating continental composers but in the music of his own land, and he pursued a study of English folksong, as well as Elizabethan and Jacobean music. Along with his good friend and trusted colleague Gustav Holst (until Holst's death in 1934 the two composers met regularly to critique each other's work), he developed a philosophy of musical

citizenship that would become a central facet of his public persona. Over the course of his long and distinguished career, Vaughan Williams would earn fame not only for the deeply expressive, visionary music he wrote for the concert hall, but also for choral music intended to be sung by amateurs and incidental music for film and other occasions. And despite his own personal atheism, his deep and sincere consideration of the common people of Great Britain led him to compose a great deal of church music and devote many months to work on *The English Hymnal*.

Vaughan Williams gained international fame as a symphonist and conductor, traveling widely to perform his *A London Symphony*. He also taught at the Royal College of Music, mentoring such composers as Gordon Jacob. By the time of his death in 1958, he had clearly earned the love of the English people, and his ashes were interred at Westminster Abbey in front of a large crowd.

The Six Studies in English Folksong were composed after years of musicological research into the traditional music of Vaughan Williams' homeland. They are not simply transcriptions, but lovingly set fantasies on the source materials, freely yet sparingly ornamented in a manner that leaves the original songs entirely recognizable.

The first performance of the set was given on June 4, 1926 by cellist May Mukle, for whom they were written. Vaughan Williams and others transcribed it for various other instruments, however, as the charmingly lyrical qualities of the piece are suitable for virtually any instrumental color. We will hear it today in a popular version for English horn and piano.

With a singular body of work spanning almost 60 years, **David Matthews** has established an international reputation as one of the leading symphonists of our time. Born in London in 1943, he began 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. In the 1970s a friendship with the Australian composer Peter Sculthorpe (leading to collaboration and numerous trips to Sydney) helped Matthews find his own distinctive voice.

The natural world provides Matthews with a constant source of inspiration, and his scores often evoke strong feelings of place and are filled with birdsong. As well as growing out of his English background, his musical

language is also strongly connected to the central European tradition – back through Mahler to Beethoven. He has been preoccupied with working in the great inherited forms of the past – symphony, string quartet, and oratorio – and the task of finding new ways to renew them. Matthews’s music unashamedly embraces his own brand of tonality, and he retains a firm commitment to a music that is grounded in song and dance and is connected to the vernacular.

Matthews has been the recipient of numerous BBC Proms commissions, including *Cantiga*, his dramatic 1988 scena for soprano and orchestra, and the *Concerto in Azzurro* for cellist Steven Isserlis, which was nominated for a 2003 BBC Radio 3 Listeners’ Award. Matthews has written prodigiously for string quartet and in his vocal music has set poets from e.e. cummings and Rilke to Housman and D.H. Lawrence, Hill, Eliot and Auden to Sappho (in the original Greek). Choral music is equally important; Matthews composed his most ambitious work to date, *Vespers* for soloists, chorus and orchestra, for the Huddersfield Choral Society in 1994, and his 2014 anthem *To what God shall we chant our songs of battle?* was broadcast live on BBC Television as part of a vigil at Westminster Abbey commemorating the outbreak of the First World War.

Since 1985 Matthews has split his time between London and Deal, where from 1989 to 2003 he was Artistic Director of the Deal Festival. Matthews 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, editing the music of Vaughan Williams, and orchestrating film music (most notably for Carl Davis). He has written books on the music of Tippett and Britten, and penned numerous reviews for music journals. A collection of writings by and about Matthews was published by Plumbago Books to mark his 70th birthday in 2014.

Longtime Music Advisor to the English Chamber Orchestra, Matthews also enjoys particularly close relationships with the BBC Philharmonic Orchestra, the Nash Ensemble, and the Britten Sinfonia, with whom he was Composer in Residence from 1997-1999. His music has been recorded extensively, with his symphonic output attracting particularly appreciative reviews: “one of our leading composers” wrote Calum MacDonald in *BBC Music Magazine*, “a leading 21st-century exponent of the form” wrote Arnold Whittall in *Gramophone*. In 2011, the Dutton recording of his Second and Sixth Symphonies with the BBC National Orchestra of Wales was awarded a prestigious BBC Music Magazine Award.

Composer's program note:

When I was asked to choose a text from Shakespeare, I looked for a passage of description, appropriate to either a woman's or a man's voice, and decided on Enobarbus's eulogy of Cleopatra from *Antony and Cleopatra*. Enobarbus paints a dazzling picture of Cleopatra in her gilded barge, as she progresses down the River Cydnus attended by her gentlewomen dressed as sea nymphs, and watched by the citizens of Tarsus. Only Antony stays away, but he invites her to supper; she responds by inviting him, and that evening her plan of seduction is accomplished. Shakespeare's text is closely modelled on a passage from Plutarch's life of Antony; Plutarch in turn quotes from Homer's account of Hera's seduction of her husband Zeus in the Iliad. In my piece a few lines from this episode of Homer, in the original Greek, set the scene for Cleopatra's entrance. This prologue is written for voice and harp in a style somewhat similar to Cretan folk music, which may still have a link to the music of Ancient Greece.

The main part of the piece is in the form of an operatic scena, with a mixture of recitative and arioso. A central instrumental interlude reflects on Antony and Cleopatra's love. The music is mostly slow and sensuous, but there is a brief fast aria ("I saw her once / Hop forty paces . . ."), which leads to the work's climax, a passionate outburst on the famous lines: "Age cannot wither her, nor custom stale / Her infinite variety." The music dies down, then returns swiftly to the opening of the piece. The final, decisive G minor chord hammers home the dramatic and tragic consequences of both seductions: in one case, the fall of Troy – for Hera succeeds in distracting Zeus from his support of the Trojans; in the other, Antony's downfall and death followed by Cleopatra's suicide.

My title *Terrible Beauty* – which comes from Yeats's poem "Easter, 1916," another kind of tragedy – was suggested to me by my composer friend Julian Broughton. The beauty of both goddess and queen is indeed terrible, yet irresistible; and my piece does not attempt to weigh love and death in the balance, but acknowledges the power of each to give our lives meaning.

Born in London in 1971, **Thomas Adès** studied piano at the Guildhall School of Music & Drama, and read music at King's College, Cambridge. A prodigious composer, conductor and pianist, Adès was described by *The New York Times* in 2007 as one of today's "most accomplished overall musicians."

Adès's chamber opera *Powder Her Face* (1995) has been performed worldwide while *The Tempest* (2004) was commissioned by London's Royal Opera House and has since been taken up by international houses including New York's Metropolitan Opera, where it was recorded for a Deutsche Grammophon DVD which subsequently won a Grammy Award. Adès's third opera, after Luis Buñuel's *The Exterminating Angel*, premiered at the Salzburg Festival in July 2016 before travelling to London, New York and Copenhagen.

Between 1993 and 1995, Adès was Composer in Association with the Hallé Orchestra, producing *These Premises Are Alarmed* for the opening of the Bridgewater Hall in 1996. *Asyla* (1997) was written for Sir Simon Rattle and the CBSO. In 2005 Adès premiered his Violin Concerto *Concentric Paths*, with Anthony Marwood and the Chamber Orchestra of Europe, at the Berlin Festspiele and the BBC Proms. His chamber music includes the clarinet quintet *Alchymia* (2021), two string quartets *Arcadiana* (1994) and *The Four Quarters* (2010), a Piano Quintet (2000), and *Lieux retrouvés* for cello and piano (2009).

Tevot (2007), was commissioned by the Berlin Philharmonic and Carnegie Hall while *In Seven Days* (a concerto for piano with moving image) was premiered in 2008 in London and Los Angeles. *Polaris* (2011) was premiered by the New World Symphony with Michael Tilson Thomas in Miami and was later choreographed to acclaim by Crystal Pite as part of an all-Adès evening at Sadler's Wells. In addition to Wayne McGregor and Pite, other choreographers who have worked with his music include Karole Armitage, Kim Brandstrup, and Ashley Page. *Totentanz* for mezzo-soprano, baritone and large orchestra was premiered at the 2013 Proms by the BBC Symphony Orchestra.

As a conductor, Adès appears regularly with the Los Angeles Philharmonic, London Symphony Orchestra, Royal Concertgebouw, and Finnish Radio Orchestra. He was the inaugural Artistic Partner with the Boston Symphony Orchestra, with whom he premiered a Concerto for Piano and Orchestra with Kirill Gerstein as soloist in March 2019. Other recent works include *Dawn*, a chacony for orchestra at any distance (2020), *Shanty – over the Sea* for strings (2020) and *Märchentänze* for solo violin and piano/orchestra (2021). *Air – Homage to Sibelius* for violin and orchestra was premiered at the 2022 Lucerne Festival, where Adès was Composer-in-Residence.

Adès has won numerous awards, including the 2015 Léonie Sonning Music Prize, the Leos Janáček Award, and the Grawemeyer Award (2000), of which he was the youngest ever recipient. He was awarded a CBE in the 2018 Queen's Birthday Honours. Adès was Artistic Director of the Aldeburgh Festival from 1999 to 2008 and coaches piano and chamber music at the International Musicians Seminar, Prussia Cove.

Composer's program note:

For this series of *Court Studies* I have extracted six solo numbers for members of the Court of Naples from my and Meredith Oakes's opera *The Tempest* and transcribed them freely for four instruments (violin, clarinet, cello and piano). The first three form a sequence in the opera. Antonio: "Sir, I saw him in the water/Striking bravely for the land;" Sebastian: "Milan, your vanity, your self-promotion/Have brought us to this godforsaken shore;" and the King of Naples: "Oh Prince of Naples and Milan/What fish has made its meal on you?" Ariel's ventriloquistic interjections are omitted here, so the argument between Antonio and Sebastian is purely human and musical in origin.

The next two numbers are presented out of sequence. Antonio: "You'll forgive at no cost/You've won I've lost" is this last of the court arias, from near the end of the opera; whereas Gonzalo: "Sir, be cheerful/This is remarkable/Please don't weep/Your Majesty" is the first, sung when they've only just come onto the shore.

The final number – The King of Naples: "The sea mocks/Our search on land/He's lost/Whom we strain to find/Vain/He's gone" – was composed, coincidentally, in a room on the front at Aldeburgh.

Sir Edward Elgar (1857-1934) grew up in the central English city of Worcester, where his father was organist at a Catholic church and had a business tuning pianos. One of 7 children, Edward capitalized on his musical talents to establish himself as a busy freelance musician in Worcester by his mid-teens, performing on violin, piano, organ, and even bassoon. Worcester had an active musical culture for a city its size, especially as it was one of three rotating locations, with Gloucester and Hereford, for the annual Three Choirs Festival. By about 1882 Elgar was also building a career as a conductor and composer, as well as working in the nearby larger city of Birmingham. While

the early compositions from his mid-twenties are not particularly memorable, Elgar was developing fluency and craft, able to write quickly for upcoming performance demands. He was also beginning to look beyond his local musical community, trying to make plans to study in Leipzig or elsewhere but stifled for lack of resources.

In 1889 Elgar met and married Alice Roberts, eight years older and from a higher social class, born in India to a Major-General, fluent in German, and generally more worldly than her husband. Alice's encouragement, support, and partnership proved crucial to his eventual success. Together they moved to London, but it was difficult going to build enough of a career, and by June 1891 they returned to the midlands where he was better known. Over the next decade he gained momentum, composing several cantatas and oratorios, conducting the newly-formed Worcestershire Philharmonic Society from 1897 until 1904, and finally achieving widespread national recognition in 1899 for his Variations on an Original Theme ("Enigma"), Op. 36. The premiere was conducted by Hans Richter at St. James's Hall in London, and it was quickly apparent that this was the most ambitious and successful work for symphony orchestra yet by an Englishman.

The "Enigma" Variations was followed quickly by a commission for a large-scale cantata for the Birmingham Triennial Choral Festival of 1900, which was to be *The Dream of Gerontius*. Despite his growing acclaim, however, the Elgars were still struggling to make enough money, and it was a few years yet before his income would catch up to his reputation, with an endowed professorship at Birmingham University. Real success and many commissions did come though, and by 1912 they were able to move back to London and live in comfort.

Alice passed away in 1920 after a long illness, and Edward's creative output suffered considerably with her loss. Their only daughter Carice helped him manage his affairs for the rest of his life, as he continued to compose at a slower pace and enjoy the renown as England's most prominent musician. He died in 1934 and was laid to rest next to Alice in Little Malvern. Her collection of press clippings, preserved letters, manuscript sketches, and the like constitutes an unusually extensive archive, and there is a museum dedicated to Elgar's memory at the site of the cottage where he was born in the village of Broadheath.

From the second half of 1918 through the beginning of 1919, Edward and Alice rented a cottage in Sussex called Brinkwells in order to have a restful stay in the country following the exhausting trauma of the first World War.

He worked simultaneously on three major chamber works there: the Violin Sonata and String Quartet, both in e minor, and the Piano Quintet in a minor. The Quintet was the most ambitious of the three; as Elgar wrote to a friend it “runs gigantically and in a large mood.” Alice suggested at least the hint of a programmatic inspiration in her diaries, recounting a local legend about a group of sacrilegious Spanish monks who had been struck by lightning and turned into a grove of withered trees near their cottage. She speculated that the “wonderfully weird beginning” of the first movement represented those trees. Elgar himself described the opening of the work as “ghostly stuff.” Whatever the truth behind the story or how specifically programmatic the initial idea may have been, the Quintet was, like so much of Elgar’s work, clearly inspired by the natural beauty of his beloved English countryside. Compositionally, the Quintet is distinguished by a wonderful palette of ensemble textures, ranging from the simple, clear serenity of the middle movement Adagio to the dense, Brahmsian counterpoint of the outer movements, sounding almost symphonic in breadth and sonority.

- Gabriel Rice

Mathews and Adès biographies and notes provided by the composers, edited by Gabriel Rice
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2022-2023
 Our 13th Season of Bringing
 Music to the Ears & Food to the Table

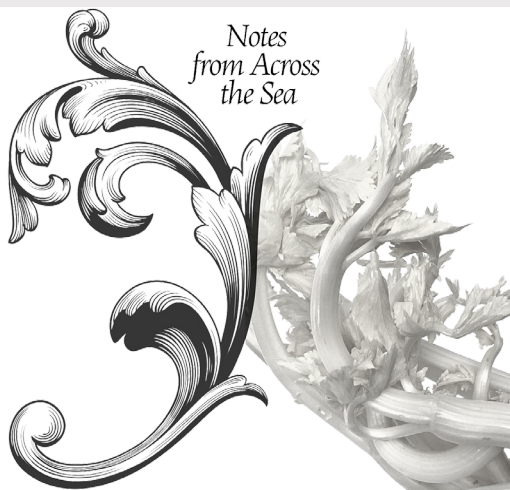
September 18 *Voices from France*
 Franck Piano Quintet,
 Debussy Cello Sonata, and
 Martin *Quatre sonnets à
 Cassandre*

November 20 *Voices from
 Eastern Europe*
 Bartok Violin Sonata No. 2,
 Szymanowski Nocturne and
 Tarantelle, Ligeti Sonata for
 Viola Solo, and songs from
 Eastern Europe

February 19 *Voices from the
 United Kingdom*
 Bridge Piano Quartet,
 Benjamin “Viola, Viola,”
 Britten String Quartet, and
 songs from Great Britain

April 23 *Voices from Germany*
 Brahms Piano Quintet,
 Beethoven String Quartet
 Op. 59, No. 1, and songs
 from Germany

Notes
 from Across
 the Sea



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