

Friday 26 October, 7.30pm, Baptist Church

David Halls, piano/harpsichord

Caroline Halls, soprano

Steven Halls, cello

Daphne Moody, violin

Johann Sebastian Bach (1685-1750) Nur ein Wink from *Christmas Oratorio*

JS Bach, Ich folge dir gleichfalls from *St John Passion*

Antonín Dvorák (1841-1904), Piano Trio No. 1 in B flat

Edward Elgar (1857-1934), Four popular songs with string obbligato

Elgar, Piano Trio movements

Iain Farrington – special arrangements

For the first time ever, David Halls, Director of Music at Salisbury Cathedral, his daughter Caroline and his brother Steven combine with their long-time friend and professional colleague, Daphne Moody to present a unique programme that combines their talents in different combinations. The programme includes Dvorak's first piano trio, a baroque cantata for soprano and strings, Elgar's obbligato to popular songs written for violin and cello.

Johann Sebastian Bach (1685-1750) Nur ein Wink from *Christmas Oratorio* BWV248

4. (57.) Arie

Nur ein Wink von seinen Händen
Stürzt ohnmächtger Menschen Macht.
Hier wird alle Kraft verlacht!
Spricht der Höchste nur ein Wort,
Seiner Feinde Stolz zu enden,
O, so müssen sich sofort
Sterblicher Gedanken wenden.

4. (57.) Aria

Only a wave of His hands
topples the impotent power of humans.
Here all strength is laughable!
If the Highest speaks only a word,
to terminate the pride of His enemies,
o, then how immediately must
the thoughts of mortals be turned aside!

JS Bach, Ich folge dir gleichfalls from *St John Passion* BWV255

9. Arie

Ich folge dir gleichfalls mit freudigen Schritten
Und lasse dich nicht,
Mein Leben, mein Licht.
Befördre den Lauf,
Und höre nicht auf,
Selbst an mir zu ziehen, zu schieben, zu bitten.

9. Aria

I follow You likewise with happy steps
and do not leave You,
my Life, my Light.
Pursue your journey,
and don't stop,
continue to draw me on, to push me, to urge me

Antonín Dvorák (1841-1904)

Piano Trio No. 1 in B flat

1. *Allegro molto*

2. *Adagio molto e mesto*

3. *Allegretto scherzando*

4. *Finale. Allegro vivace*

Antonín Dvorák was born in 1841, the son of a butcher and innkeeper in the village of Nelahozeves, near the Bohemian town of Kralupy, some forty miles north of Prague. It was natural that he should at first have been expected to follow the family trade, as the eldest son. His musical abilities, however, soon became apparent and were encouraged by his father, who in later years abandoned his original trade, to earn something of a living as a zither player. After primary schooling he was sent to lodge with an uncle in Zlonice and was there able to acquire the necessary knowledge of German and improve his abilities as a musician, hitherto acquired at home in the village band and in church. Further study of German and of music at Kamenice, a town in northern Bohemia, led to his admission in 1857 to the Prague Organ School, where he studied for the following two years.

On leaving the Organ School, Dvorák earned his living as a viola player in a band under the direction of Karel Komzák, an ensemble that was to form the nucleus of the Czech Provisional Theatre

Orchestra, established in 1862. Four years later Smetana was appointed conductor at the theatre, where his operas *The Brandenburgers in Bohemia* and *The Bartered Bride* had already been performed. It was not until 1871 that Dvorák resigned from the orchestra, devoting himself more fully to composition, as his music began to attract favourable local attention. In 1873 he married a singer from the chorus of the theatre and in 1874 became organist of the church of St Adalbert. During this period he continued to support himself by private teaching, while busy on a series of compositions that gradually became known to a wider circle.

Further recognition came to Dvorák in 1874, when his application for an Austrian government award brought his music to the attention of the critic Eduard Hanslick in Vienna and subsequently to that of Brahms, a later member of the examining committee. The granting of this award for five consecutive years was of material assistance. It was through this contact that, impressed by Dvorák's Moravian Duets entered for the award of 1877, Brahms was able to arrange for their publication by Simrock, who commissioned a further work, *Slavonic Dances*, for piano duet. The success of these publications introduced Dvorák's music to a much wider public, for which it held some exotic appeal. As his reputation grew, there were visits to Germany and to England, where he was always received with greater enthusiasm than might initially have been accorded a Czech composer in Vienna. Elgar played for him and enthused in 1884 in a letter to Charles Buck: *I wish you could hear Dvorák's music. It is simply ravishing, so tuneful & clever & the orchestration is wonderful; no matter how few instruments he uses, it never sounds thin. I cannot describe it; it must be heard.* – Ed.

The Trio in B flat major for violin, cello and piano is the first of a series of four surviving piano trios (preceded by at least two trios from the beginning of the 1870s which Dvorak later destroyed). The work was written at a very productive time in the composer's life, in the spring of 1875. In January of that year he had received his first state scholarship and was thus able to focus fully on his composition work. The trio appeared almost simultaneously with Dvorak's famous *Serenade in E major*; in fact, the autographs of both works bear the same completion date: 14 May 1875. It would appear that the trio originally had a different third movement. In the year it was written, *Dalibor* magazine described this movement as "Alla polacca with a trio in a march tempo". The new version – *Allegretto scherzando* – was also modified later on, when Dvorak reworked its middle section. He probably decided to make these changes in view of the forthcoming première (held in Prague on 17 February 1877) or before the work's publication by Schlesinger three years later. The response to the première was largely positive. As maintained by *Svetozor* magazine, the new work demonstrated that "the composer is not only talented but he is now also a mature artist who uses inspired motifs to subtly create an ornate, yet clear and tasteful musical structure." In 1881 the British journal *Musical Times* printed a comprehensive, two-part study by the eminent music critic Joseph Bennett on Dvorák's musical career to date and included a detailed analysis of the Trio in B flat major. According to Bennett, "Here the thematic material is undoubtedly rich and abundant, but the composer is not thereby tempted into diffuseness. He recognises the truth propounded by William Penn, "Form is good, but not formality," and keeps himself sternly within the laws of symmetry and well-ordered sequence. "

The trio is another opus in a series of Dvorak's chamber works which well document the tempo with which the composer developed his creative potential during the mid-1870s. The trio gives a strong impression of Dvorak's individual style, and the formal arrangement of the piece is convincing. The first movement, characteristic for its exuberance, is written in sonata form and treats three themes. The development works exclusively with the main subject and incorporates a highly varied set of modulations. The slow second movement has a dream-like atmosphere and, in its emotional depth, already anticipates the composer's masterful adagios of subsequent years. The movement is dominated by two themes, with the main subject in G minor, and the subordinate in A major. As the movement gains momentum and reaches its culmination, the first of these opens out into a four-part canon. The third movement is a scherzo somewhat subtly stylised in the manner of a polka, with a more tranquil trio. The final movement in sonata form has three themes, the first of which begins irregularly, not in B flat major, but in G minor. The development section incorporates a quotation from the slow movement (the principle of reminiscence – recalling fragments from previous movements – is typical for Dvorak's oeuvre in general). The movement is also noteworthy for its changes of mood: from the relentless, passionate expression of the introduction, to its triumphant, jubilant close.

Edward Elgar (1857-1934)

Four popular songs with string obbligato

In Italian, *obbligato* literally means 'fixed', implying that a part so described is indispensable to the performance. It has acquired a number of specific meanings, some apparently self-contradictory. Its

direct ancestor is probably the Baroque meaning where a *basso continuo* part that consists simply of chord indications around which the player is meant to extemporise is replaced by one written out exactly as the composer wants it so the fixed part becomes of equal importance to the main melodic part.

In today's performance, the meaning is paradoxical but specific. The songs as usual comprise a melody carrying the words and a separate piano accompaniment, the two parts forming a coherent whole with no further embellishment intended. But Elgar, probably for his cellist friend Doctor Charles Buck in Settle or possibly a more local Worcestershire player, composed for private performance cello *obbligati* for three popular songs and a violin obbligato for another. I am indebted for John Norris for alerting me to these and to Chris Bennett of the Birthplace for supplying manuscript copies of the four works.

***For Ever & For Ever!* – words by “Violet Fane” (Mary Montgomerie Lamb, Lady Currie, 1843-1905); music by Sir Francesco Paoli Tosti (1846-1916)**

The Italian composer, Paoli Tosti, was born in Ortano and received his violin and compositional education in Ortano and Naples. Whilst acknowledged as a fine musician, he was desperately poor and ill until taken up by the pianist/composer Giovanni Sgambati and the future Queen of Italy. The now well-connected composer became famous in London for his songs and *For Ever and For Ever!* was an instant success. He was appointed a Professor at the Royal Academy of Music, became a British citizen and was knighted by King Edward VII. He returned to Italy in 1913 where he died three years later.

Mary, Baroness Currie, was a noted Victorian poet and essayist. Her second husband, Sir Philip Currie was created Baron Currie in 1899 and served as the Ambassador to the Ottoman Empire from 1889 to 1893, and then Ambassador to Rome from 1898 to 1903.

The song was dedicated to Mrs. L. Moncrieff, about whom I can find nothing. The poem depicts a woman in thrall to a man who knows she will be better distant from him and yet cannot tear herself away:

Ah, leave me not! I love but thee!
Blessing or curse, which e'er thou be,
Oh! Be as thou hast been to me,
For ever and for ever!

The manuscript has *CWB* written at the end in Elgar's hand, showing this to be intended for Dr. Buck.

***Out on the Rocks* - words by “Claribel” (1830-1869); music by Charlotte Helen Sainton Dolby (1821-1885)**

Born in London, Charlotte Sainton studied at the Royal Academy of Music from 1832 to 1837, winning eventual renown as a composer and as a contralto soloist in oratorio and ballads

She was highly regarded by Mendelssohn, who brought about performances by her at the Leipzig Gewandhaus and wrote the contralto music in *Elijah* for her. She was also a principal soloist in the first English performance of Bach's *Saint Matthew Passion* in 1854 and married the violinist Prosper Sainton in 1860. Ten years later she retired as a public singer and founded in 1872 a vocal academy in London. She pursued her composing career in parallel, and her cantatas *The Legend of St Dorothea* (1876), *The Story of the Faithful Soul* (1879), and *Florimel* (1885), enjoyed considerable success. A scholarship in her memory was founded at the Royal Academy of Music.

Out on the Rocks was composed in 1860 and dedicated to “Madame Patey Whytock” who was born Janet Monach Whytock in 1842 and became a well known contralto soloist whose portrait is in the collection of the National Portrait Gallery. After Sainton-Dolby's retirement from the concert platform, Whytock, who had married the bass singer John Patey, was England's pre-eminent contralto in oratorio and ballads. She died in 1894.

As I cannot fathom what the poem's protagonists originally said to each other, I reproduce the words by the enigmatic Claribel below, so you can try for yourselves.

Do you remember it, Darling, I wonder,

do you remember it so long ago?
All that we said as we strolled there together,
Out on the rocks when the tide was low.

What did I say as we stroll'd on together,
What did you answer me timid and low?
What did you promise me, do you remember it?
Out on the rocks when the tide was low.

Never remember it, never remember it,
I have forgiven it long, long ago.
Only I think of it, only I think of it,
Out on the rocks when the tide is low.

The three verses of the song are “through-composed” and thus the *obbligato* accompanies throughout.

***Absent, yet Present* – words by Edward George Earle Lytton Bulwer-Lytton (1803-1873); music by Maude Valérie White (1855–1937)**

Born in France to upper middle class parents, Maude White’s childhood was spent in England, Paris and Heidelberg and she showed early musical accomplishment, helped with private tuition. Having persuaded her reluctant mother, in 1876 she went to the Royal Academy of Music to study under George Alexander Macfarren and, in 1879, was the first woman to be awarded the prestigious Mendelssohn Scholarship. When her mother died in 1881, White was devastated, and went to Chile to be with her sister and to recuperate and recover her health. Upon returning to London in 1882, she made a successful career as a professional musician and composer, concentrating on songs. She also taught the piano and, later, using her linguistic skills, she earned a living by translating books and plays.

Lord Lytton was an immensely popular poet, novelist and playwright whose works earned him a considerable fortune. The song *Absent, yet Present* is an ardent ten-verse declaration of love starting with

As the flight of a river
That flows to the sea,
My soul rushes ever
In tumult to thee.

and continuing in similar vein. Mercifully, White set only six verses but Elgar, who penned his contribution on 9 September 1885, was clearly inspired by an equal (and punning) passion to write his *obbligato*: he wrote at the end of his manuscript “Lobster Cutlet Oh!!!!
Steven Halls

***Alice, Where Art Thou?* – words by Wellington Guernsey (1817–1885); music by Joseph Ascher (1829–1869)**

Wellington Guernsey was born in Mullingar, Ireland on 8 June 1817; died in London on 13 November 1885. He wrote the words of many song but also composed religious music. L. Joseph Ascher was a Dutch-Jewish composer who became a cantor in London, and composed mainly piano pieces rather than songs. Nevertheless, this song from 1861 was his most popular composition. Although it is a passionate love song, it was acceptable in the middle-class home because its narrative makes clear that Alice dwells “amid the starshine,” and is no longer on earth.

The birds sleeping gently,
Sweet Lyra gleameth bright,
Her rays tinge the forest,
And all seems glad tonight.
The wind sighing by me,
Cooling my fevered brow;
The stream flows as ever,
Yet Alice, Where art thou?
One year back this even,

The silver rain falling,
Just as it falleth now,
And all things slept gently,
Oh! Alice, where art thou?
I've sought thee by lakelet,
I've sought thee on the hill;
And in the pleasant wildwood,
When winds blow cold and chill.
I've sought thee in forest,

And thou wert by my side,
One year back this even,
And thou wert by my side.
Vowing to love me;
Alice, What e'er might betide!

I'm looking heav'nward now.
I've sought thee in forest
I'm looking heav'nward now,
Oh! there amid the starshine
Alice I know, art thou!

Edward Elgar

Three Piano Trio Movements Completed and transcribed by Paul Adrian Rooke

1. Unfinished piano trio, 1920: Lento assai (1920);

Elgar left this piano trio in fragmentary form: it is to be found in a British Library manuscript but its history, and even its date of composition, remain uncertain. One fragment dated '21st September 1920' appears to have no connection with the remainder and it may be that all other material is contemporary with the one other dated sketch: 10 February 1886. However, Elgar's handwriting developed distinctively during his life and annotations in his mature handwriting suggest that he revisited the sketches in later life. 1920 was a significant year in Elgar's life in that Alice, his devoted wife and constant encouragement, died. One can speculate that, coming shortly after the marked success of his three major chamber works and the 'Cello Concerto, Elgar may have been contemplating further chamber works and, coming across these sketches, toyed with the idea of turning them into a complete three-movement piano trio, but his grief following Alice's death prevented him from doing so.

After a 14-bar Lento introduction, the remainder of the movement is an Allegro moderato, completed for performance by Paul Adrian Rooke.

2. Menuetto (1882) & **Rosemary op. 12 (1913)**

This was originally composed during a visit to Yorkshire in 1882 as a trio for Elgar, his friend Dr. Buck and the latter's mother to play through. It was recast for piano, with the title *Douce Pensée*. With the new title, *Rosemary*, and a subtitle *That's for Remembrance*, the work was revised to become a piece for violin & piano and, at the request of the publisher Elkin in 1913, share the same opus number as *Salut d'Amour*, and *Carissima*.

Elgar first met Dr. Charles Buck at a concert given to entertain the members of a convention of the British Medical Association in Worcester in 1882. This proved to be the start of what was to become a life-long friendship, and an invitation for Elgar to stay with Buck at his home in Giggleswick, Yorkshire soon followed. Buck was a competent amateur cellist and his mother played the piano. So that they could make their own musical entertainment during his visit, Elgar took sketches for a trio section for piano he had penned the previous year and expanded it, adding a minuet section to form an essentially complete movement for piano trio. On his return from Giggleswick, Elgar recast the completed trio section once more for piano, calling it *Douce pensée* (Gentle Thought).

The years immediately preceding the First World War were pioneering days for gramophone recordings, a medium in which Elgar was a great exponent, conducting recordings of many of his works for The Gramophone Company, later to become HMV and then EMI. In 1913 Elgar was invited by W W Elkin, a publisher of light music, to produce two further orchestral pieces as companions for *Salut d'amour*. In response, together with *Carissima*, Elgar wrote the intense, brooding *Sospiri* which Elkin considered an unsuitable companion. Elgar therefore turned to his sketchbooks and quickly produced an orchestral arrangement of *Douce pensée* which he renamed *Rosemary* (with the subtitle 'That's for Remembrance'), the name by which the trio tune is now most familiar.

But for today's performance, Paul Adrian Rooke returned to the original Giggleswick sketches to complete a performing version for piano trio, close to what Elgar and the Bucks must have played in 1882.

3. March for the Grafton Family (1924) – Nobilmente

It is moot whether this version, or the orchestral Empire March came first. Whichever, the Empire March was originally intended to be heard for the first time at the opening of the Wembley Exhibition on 23 April 1924. The King requested that Elgar conduct Land of Hope & Glory instead and the first performance actually took place at Wembley on 21 July 1924 under Henry Jaxon. It was also performed at the opening service for the Hereford Three Choirs Festival.

March for the Grafton Family

Following his wife Alice's death in 1920, Elgar composed little for many years. But when, in 1924, it was decided to hold a grand British Empire Exhibition at the recently-completed Wembley Stadium, it was natural that the organisers should commission Elgar to compose music for the opening ceremony. Elgar wrote Pageant of Empire, a cycle of eight songs celebrating the world-wide expanse of the Empire, and the self-standing Empire March. The march we shall hear today is a piano trio version of the Empire March.

It would be natural to assume that Elgar composed the trio arrangement as a first step towards the orchestral score, and Elgar biographer Michael Kennedy records the March for the Grafton Family as a sketch for the Empire March. Yet the trio arrangement is dated 1924, strongly indicating that the Empire March, scheduled for performance at the Empire Exhibition's opening ceremony on 23 April 1924 (St George's Day) and largely composed in January of that year, must have come first. (A further time complication was revealed by the Proms première in 2006 of Anthony Payne's completion of Elgar's sixth Pomp and Circumstance March, a work for which Elgar may have first jotted down sketches as early as 1909 and whose trio tune is also that of the Empire March.)

So why, having completed the Empire March, did Elgar make an unpublished piano trio arrangement of it? The Grafton family concerned are Elgar's 'favourite' sister Susannah Mary (known to the family as Pollie), her husband Will and their three daughters and two sons. While Elgar was not the only musically talented member of his family (his younger brother Joe had already gained the sobriquet 'the Beethoven of the family' by the time of his early death at the age of seven), the Grafton siblings are not on record as having a particular musical talent.

However, May, the eldest sister, performed secretarial duties for many years and, after Alice's death, the three sisters took turns to act as housekeeper for Elgar. It may be that Elgar completed the trio arrangement as a token of gratitude for their efforts on his behalf. Of less uncertainty is that we will today hear the first public performance of the piano trio arrangement for, when Paul Adrian Rooke set about re-originating the scores from the surviving manuscripts, he found the piano score to be several bars longer than the violin and 'cello parts! Notes by Steven Halls, John Norris and Paul Adrian Rooke