



FROM THE  
**HILLS OF DREAM**  
The forgotten songs of Arnold Bax

Jeremy Huw Williams  
Paula Fan

# FROM THE HILLS OF DREAM

SIR ARNOLD BAX (1883–1953)

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2. *To my Homeland* (1904) [2.43]
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**TOTAL TIME:** [77.56]

**ALL WORLD PREMIÈRE RECORDINGS**

JEREMY HUW WILLIAMS *baritone* • PAULA FAN *piano*



This disc is dedicated to the memory of  
the musicologist and author **Graham Parlett**,  
a leading authority on **Sir Arnold Bax** and  
repertoire consultant to this recording.





*Arnold Bax, 1903*

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## SIR ARNOLD BAX (1883–1953)

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Arnold Edward Trevor Bax was born on 8th November 1883 in Streatham, which was then in the county of Surrey. He came from an affluent background and was able to devote most of his life to musical and literary pursuits without having to worry about earning a living. His earliest extant works are mainly piano pieces written when he was thirteen or fourteen, and in 1900 he entered the Royal Academy of Music (RAM), where he studied piano, clarinet and composition and soon fell under the sway of Wagner and Strauss. He was a superb sight-reader and could play the most complex orchestral scores on the piano, but, being of a retiring nature, he disliked performing in public.

The great turning-point in his life occurred in 1902, when he discovered the Celtic world through reading the poetry of W. B. Yeats. He became obsessed with everything to do with Ireland and soon went there to explore its landscape, culture and history. He spent much of his time in Donegal and learnt to read Irish Gaelic with ease. As well as composing music based on Irish subjects, often employing what he called melodic “figures of a definitely Celtic curve”, he also started writing poetry, plays and short stories under the pseudonym “Dermot O’Byrne”. Many of these were published, and Bax came to know several of the people associated with the Irish literary revival of that period. He returned to Ireland in 1911, newly married, and settled down on the outskirts of Dublin, where his son and daughter were born.

The Easter Rising of 1916 came as a terrible shock. He knew many of the participants and in 1918 published *A Dublin Ballad and Other Poems*, whose anti-British tone led to parts of it being suppressed by the censor. By this time Bax was living in England and, although he continued to visit Ireland regularly, the Irish side of his music came to be subsumed into a more cosmopolitan style. He also fell under the spell of Sibelius, whose *Tapiola* had moved him to tears.

During the 1920s and 1930s, Bax was regarded as one of Britain’s leading composers, alongside Elgar, Delius, Holst and Vaughan Williams. The pianist Charles Lynch claimed that Rachmaninov referred to Bax as “the greatest living composer”, although a newspaper later reported the Russian as saying “I appreciate Elgar, Arnold Bax and Sibelius, but the last great

composers were Strauss and Debussy". After a performance of his Third Symphony, a German music critic acclaimed Bax as "the head of the modern English school". Sibelius referred to him as "my son in music" and, in accepting the presidency of the now defunct Arnold Bax Society, wrote of his "great admiration for the music of the English Maestro".

In 1937 Bax was knighted by King George VI, and three years later the White Horse Hotel in the Sussex village of Storrington became his new home. In February 1942 he was appointed Master of the King's Music, but although he continued to compose, he wished that he could retire, as he put it, "like a grocer". Bax had been a prolific composer in most forms of music except opera, the backbone of his output consisting of the seven symphonies that he wrote between 1922 and 1939. His tone-poems are highly regarded, and his most famous is undoubtedly *Tintagel*. His last orchestral work was a march for Queen Elizabeth II's coronation in June 1953. Four months later, on 3rd October and only a few weeks short of his seventieth birthday, he died while on a visit to Cork and is buried there.

In his autobiography, *Farewell, my Youth*, Bax wrote that his "pristine attempt at composition was coincident (very fittingly my enemies might snarl) with an attack of sunstroke when I was twelve. A sonata of course, no less!". This story had earlier been related by James Aikman Forsyth in an issue of the *RAM Magazine* (1927): "His first composition was perpetrated when he was twelve, and was written in bed after an attack of sunstroke caught whilst playing cricket at Hampstead." This would have been the hot summer of 1896, and according to his sister, Evelyn, it was not a sonata that Bax first wrote but a song entitled *Butterflies all White*. In 1900, during the months before he entered the Royal Academy of Music in September, he wrote sixteen songs, the earliest being a setting of Robert Browning's *Wanting is – what?*. While a student, he produced at least another twenty, and then continued with the medium of voice and piano until 1930, when he was commissioned to set *Watching the Needleboats* for the famous *The Joyce Book*. Only one later song with piano accompaniment is known to exist, namely *Dream Child*, which he was asked to write in about 1943 by the author of the words, Val Newton, who had become infatuated with him.

Including his juvenilia, Bax wrote a total of approximately 125 songs (plus seventeen vocal arrangements), of which at least twenty are no longer extant but are mentioned in early

lists of his music. Most of his mature songs were published, though some still exist only in manuscript, and several of them were immensely popular during his lifetime. Among these are *The White Peace*, *I Heard a Piper Piping*, *Cradle Song* and his arrangement of *O Dear! What can the matter be?*, of which countless performances and broadcasts have been traced. A few, however, such as *Golden Guendolen*, *Carrey Clavel* and *Out and Away*, have seldom been heard.

Bax himself (like his younger brother, Clifford) had literary aspirations at an early age, writing short stories, plays and poetry, of which several collections were published during his lifetime either under the pseudonym "Dermot O'Byrne" or anonymously (e.g. *Love Poems of a Musician*). One of his best-known poems is *A Dublin Ballad*, which was praised by Yeats as a "masterpiece", while the latest extant examples are *Thunderstorm* and *Rue*, which date from August 1945. His complete poetic output may be read in Colin Scott-Sutherland's *Ideala: Love Letters and Poems of Arnold Bax* (Fand Music Press, 2001).

His views on setting poems to music were stated in a 1949 radio talk in which he claimed never to have set any of Yeats's verse and expressed the opinion that "Poetry has its own precise rhythms and intrinsic melody, and at its highest should be reverently let alone." However, he did once, in 1907, set a Yeats poem (*The Fiddler of Dooney*), but when it came to be published eleven years later he anonymously wrote new words for it under the title *The Enchanted Fiddle*. He did set a few more of his own poems to music, but the ones that survive are attributed to "Dermot O'Byrne" or "Sheila MacCarthy" rather than his real name. All the songs on this disc are receiving their first recordings, and five of them have never been performed before.

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## THE GRAND MATCH

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Bax completed *The Grand Match* on 29th June 1903, when he was nineteen, and the following month (23rd July) he performed it with a fellow student at a recital in St James's Hall. A critic from *The Era* wrote: "An Irish dialect song, ... composed by Mr Bax, has decided merit, and was cleverly rendered by Mr George Clowser." This seems to have been the first confirmed public performance of a work by the composer outside of the RAM, where, on the previous evening, he had been the accompanist in excerpts from Gluck's *Orfeo ed Euridice* and Mascagni's *L'amico Fritz*. This was also the year in which he first went to Ireland and discovered the village of Glencolumbcille in Donegal, to which he would return innumerable times until the early 1930s. "Moira O'Neill", who wrote the words, was the pseudonym of Agnes Nesta Shakespeare Skrine, née Higginson (c.1865–1955), and the poem comes from her *Songs of the Glens of Antrim* (1901).

### *The Grand Match*

Dennis was hearty when Dennis was young,  
High was his step in the jig that he sprung,  
He had the looks an' the sootherin' tongue,  
An' he wanted a girl wid a fortune.

Nannie was grey-eyed an' Nannie was tall,  
Fair was the face hid in-under her shawl,  
Troth! an' he liked her the best o' them all,  
But she'd not a traneen to her fortune.

He be to look out for a likelier match,  
So he married a girl that was counted a catch,  
An' as ugly as need be, the dark little patch,  
But that was a "thrifle", he told her.

She brought him her good-lookin' gold to admire,  
She brought him her good-lookin' cows to his byre,



But far from good-lookin' she sat by his fire,  
An' paid him that "thrifle" he tould her.

He met pretty Nan when a month had gone by,  
An' he thought like a fool to get round her he'd try;  
Wid a smile on her lip an' a spark in her eye  
She said, "How is the woman that owns ye?"

Och, never be tellin' the life that he'd led!  
Sure many's the night that he'll wish himself dead,  
For the sake o' two eyes in a pretty girl's head,  
An the tongue o' the woman that owns him.

*"Moira O'Neill", Agnes Nesta Shakespeare Skrine (c.1865–1955)*

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## TO MY HOMELAND

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The manuscript of *To my Homeland* is dated July 1904, the year in which Bax wrote his first published work (*A Celtic Song Cycle*) and his earliest extant orchestral score (*Variations*), which won the Charles Lucas Medal for composition. The song's title does not appear in any lists of his music published during his lifetime, and no public performance seems to have taken place until 7th October 2003, when Shirley Keane and David Smith played it as part of a "Bax Festival" at the RAM. Stephen Lucius Gwynn (1864–1950) wrote the poem under the title *Ireland*, from *The Queen's Chronicler and Other Poems* (1901). Compared with many of his other songs, the piano part is reasonably simple.

### *To my Homeland*

O Ireland, my Ireland, centre of my longings,  
Country of my fathers, home of my heart,  
Overseas you call me Why an exile from me.  
Wherefore sea severed Long leagues apart.  
Wanderer am I like the salmon of thy rivers  
London is my Ocean murmurous and deep.

Boundless and vast, Yet this the roar of London  
Reaches me thy summons calls me in sleep.

Ah pearly are the skies in the country of my fathers,  
Purple are thy mountains home of my heart,  
Mother of my yearnings Love of all my longings,  
Keep me in remembrance, Long leagues apart.

*Stephen Lucius Gwynn (1864–1950)*

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## *LEAVES, SHADOWS AND DREAMS*

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Bax wrote more songs with words by “Fiona Macleod” than any other poet. This was the pseudonym of the Scottish writer William Sharp (1855–1905), and *Leaves, Shadows and Dreams* was a setting of his poem *The Old Bard’s Song* from *Foam of the Past* (1901). The unpublished score is dated “May 1905”, and judging by the style of the imprint on the paper it is probably a later, fair copy of another manuscript, now lost. Its first performance took place on the same date and by the same performers as *To my Homeland*.

### *Leaves, Shadows and Dreams*

I have seen all things pass and all men go  
Under the shadow of the drifting leaf:  
Green leaf, red leaf, Brown leaf,  
Grey leaf blown to and fro,  
Blown to and fro.

I have seen happy dreams rise up and pass  
Silent and swift as shadows on the grass:  
Grey shadows of old dreams,  
Grey beauty of old dreams,  
Grey shadows in the grass.

*“Fiona Macleod”, William Sharp (1855–1905)*

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## *VIKING-BATTLE-SONG*

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There exist two manuscripts of *Viking-Battle-Song*, the earlier headed *Mircath* – the Scottish Gaelic for “battle frenzy”. Fiona Macleod’s title was *The War-Song of the Vikings* in *From the Hills of Dream* (1896). The song is dated 1905, and in an early list of his works it is given as

being with orchestral accompaniment, but this version has not been traced. The later score, with its piano part a little less complex, is the one sung here. It was first performed by John Hancorn and John Thwaites on 18th May 1996 at Christ's Hospital, Horsham, the second day of "The Bax Weekend". At the words "High in Valhalla" there is a quotation of the "Valhalla" motif from Wagner's *Ring*.

### ***Viking-Battle-Song***

Let loose the hounds of war, the whirling swords!  
Send them leaping afar,  
Red in their thirst for war; Odin laughs in his car  
At the screaming of the swords!

Far let the white-ones fly,  
The whirling swords!  
Far off the ravens cry Death-shadows cloud the sky. Let the wolves,  
the wolves of the Gael die. 'Neath the screaming swords!

Ye Shining Ones yonder High in Valhalla Shout now with thunder;  
Drive the Gaels under,  
Cleave them asunder,  
Swords of Valhalla.

*"Fiona Macleod", William Sharp (1855–1905)*

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### ***I FEAR THY KISSES, GENTLE MAIDEN***

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*I fear thy kisses, gentle maiden* is the first line of Percy Bysshe Shelley's poem *To –* (1824), and the song is dated "June 15th 1906", the day on which Bax also completed his own poem *In the Meadows of Heartland*. It was first sung by Adam Green with Llŷr Williams at the British Library Conference Centre on 3rd March 2002 ("London Concerts in Context: Bax and his Circle"). He set a total of six poems by Shelley, the most extensive being a scene from the lyrical drama *Prometheus Unbound*, which became *Enchanted Summer* for two sopranos, chorus and orchestra.



*Drawing of Bax by "Wilson"*

### *I fear thy kisses, gentle maiden*

I fear thy kisses, gentle maiden,  
Thou needest not fear mine;  
My spirit is too deeply laden  
Ever to burthen thine.

*Percy Bysshe Shelley (1792–1822)*

I fear thy mien, thy tones, thy motion,  
Thou needest not fear mine;  
Innocent is the heart's devotion  
With which I worship thine.

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### *THE TWA CORBIES*

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In 1906 Bax wrote two recitations with piano accompaniment: *The Blessed Damozel* and *The Twa Corbies*. It is possible that they may have been prompted by the efforts of Stanley Hawley (1867–1916), who produced many such pieces, and by Frederick Corder (1852–1932), Bax's composition teacher, who was an enthusiast for this art form. But a more immediate source of inspiration was undoubtedly Mary Field, one of Bax's girlfriends, who, to judge from three letters that he wrote to her, seems to have had some skill in recitation. In one letter he wrote that this was "the most intimate of interpretative arts" and "nearest allied to that of 'story-telling' of old times and all its lovely romantic associations of firelight and the rhapsodic interludes on the harp or some other simple instrument, now developed (not altogether to the betterment of the emotional effect) into the Enoch Arden of Richard Strauss and similar complexities." In his autobiographical volume *Inland Far* (1925), Clifford Bax states that "Holst and my brother opined that declamation was a nobler art than 'singing cantabile'. The latter affirmed that a singer's part is merely to supply an intelligible rubric to the instrumental music." This may account for the complexity of the piano parts in many of Bax's songs.

The score was completed on 20th September 1906, and it is probable that Bax was in Ireland at the time; he was certainly in Sligo five days earlier completing his poem *In the House of Memory*. The work bears a dedication to the composer, poet and mathematician Roland Bocquet (1878–1956), a friend of Bax who was born in India, studied at the RAM and lived most of his life in Dresden, Germany. Another friend, Henry Balfour Gardiner (1877–1950), read through the recitation in his capacity as an adviser for Charles Avison Ltd, but it was never

published and is receiving its very first performance on this disc. The words are traditional, with “twa” being a dialectal form of “two”, and “corbie” a carrion crow or raven. The title is prefixed by the word “Ballad”, and the manuscript gives the source as “From ‘Border Minstrelsy’”, which clearly refers to Sir Walter Scott’s *Minstrelsy of the Scottish Border*, vol. 2 (1802), in which the author states that “This poem was communicated to me by Charles Kirkpatrick Sharpe, Esq. jun. of Hoddom, as written down, from tradition, by a lady”.

### *The Twa Corbies*

As I was walking all alane  
I heard twa corbies making a mane  
The tane unto the t’other say:  
Whar sall we gang and dine the day?

In behint yon auld fail dyke  
I wot there lies a new-slain knight  
And nobody kens that he lies there  
But his hawk, his hound and his lady fair.

His hound is to the hunting gane,  
His hawk, to fetch the wild fowl hame,  
His lady has ta’en another mate.  
So we may mak our dinner sweet.

*Traditional*

Ye’ll sit on his white hause-bane  
And I’ll pike out his bonny blue e’en  
Wi’ ae lock of his gowden hair  
We’ll theek our nest when it grows bare.

Mony a one for him makes mane  
But nane sall ken whar he is gane.  
O’er his white banes when they are bare  
The wind sall blaw for evermair.

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## *LONGING*

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*Longing* is a setting of a poem by Fiona Macleod from *Through the Ivory Gate* (1901). The song was completed on 8th May 1907 and dedicated to “D.P.”, who was Dorothy Pyman (1885–1967), one of Bax’s girlfriends at the time. A singer and an organist, she was the eldest daughter of a shipping magnate and was identified by Bax’s sister as being the “tall, calm-eyed Scandinavian girl” of *Farewell, my Youth* with whom in 1907 he left Dresden for Böhmische

Schweiz. He clearly remained in touch with her because in a letter to the pianist Harriet Cohen dated 3rd March 1933 he mentions having met “Dorothy Paradise” (her married name) the previous evening. The song remained unplayed until Roxanne Korda and Pascal Pascalev performed it as part of a “Baxfest!” at the Royal Birmingham Conservatoire on 19th June 2018.

### ***Longing***

O would I were the cool wind that's blowing from the sea,  
Each loneliest valley I would search till I should come to thee.  
In the dew on the grass is your name, dear, 't the leaf on the tree.  
O would I were the cool wind that's blowing from the sea.  
O would I were the cool wind that's blowing far from me.  
The grey silence, the grey waves, the grey wastes of the sea.  
*“Fiona Macleod”, William Sharp (1855–1905)*

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## ***FROM THE HILLS OF DREAM***

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Two holograph manuscripts of *From the Hills of Dream* exist, both dating from 6th September 1906, and the words are taken from Fiona Macleod's poem (1896). The dedicatee is “G.N.L.,” who is Gladys Noel Lees (1882–1965), a violin student at the RAM and later a composer of popular songs under her married name, Gladys Ross. She was once engaged to Bax, according to his sister, who also wrote that she “had a special shrine in Arnold's heart”. Her letters (now in the British Library) are often signed “June”, and her name for him was “Lorrie”. This recording is the first known performance of the song.

### ***From the Hills of Dream***

Across the silent stream  
Where the slumber shadows go,  
From the dim blue Hills of Dream  
I have heard the west wind blow.  
  
Who hath seen that unknown land,  
Who hath seen that unscanned west?

Only the listless hand  
And the unpulsing breast.

But when the west wind blows  
The Host of Faerie flows  
Athwart the Hills of Dream.

And a strange song I have heard  
By a shadowy stream,  
And the singing of a snow-white bird  
On the Hills of Dream.

*"Fiona Macleod", William Sharp (1855–1905)*

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## LANDSKAB

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In 1908 Bax set Jens Peter Jacobsen's poem *Landskab* (*Landscape*), completing it on 15th July. The song has the Danish words only, was never published and is receiving its first performance in this recording. Two complete manuscripts of the song exist, each containing differences from the other, and Bax started writing out a third score but stopped before completing it. The version sung here incorporates his latest amendments before reverting to the second manuscript.

Bax had become interested in the Nordic world and its languages at an early age. When he was thirteen he wrote the first chapter of a short story called *Halfda: A tale of the Norse sea kings*, and around 1905 he went to Norway with his mother, perhaps to visit their musical friend Arne Ole van Erpekum (1873–1951). In 1907 he made a literal translation of a Swedish poem, *Vårt land*, by Johan Ludvig Runeberg, and then asked his brother, Clifford, to turn it into a poem that he could set to music; this became his *Fatherland* for tenor, chorus and orchestra, which is dedicated to van Erpekum. In 1926 he went on a cruise to Norway, Iceland and the Faroe Islands, which prompted him to start translating three plays by Dano-Norwegian authors, though none was apparently finished. The following year he composed *Three Songs from the Norse*, dedicated to his Oslo-born friend Lydia Jellinek (née Møller).



### *Landskab*

Stille, du elskede Kvinde!  
Tyst maa vi træde, vi to.  
Der sover en Sang her inde  
I Skovens natlige Ro.

Stille er Vover og Vinde,  
Tavs er hver Sangfuglemund,  
Tiende Kilderne rinde  
Blankt over mossede Bund.

Maanestraalerne spille  
Tyst mellem Bøgene frem,  
Langs ad Stierne stille  
Blunder en lyslig Bræm.

Sølvskyen selv der oppe  
Hviler paa Vingen bred,  
Højt over Træernes Toppe  
Skuer den lyttende ned.

Stille er Vover og Vinde,  
Tyst maa vi træde vi to.  
Der sover en Sang her inde  
I Skovens natlige Ro.

*Jens Peter Jacobsen (1847–1885)*

### *Landscape*

Silent, you beloved woman!  
Quietly we have to walk, us two.  
There's a song sleeping in here  
In the nightly calm of the forest.

Silent are the waves and the winds,  
Still is every songbird mouth,  
Quietly, the streams are flowing  
Bright over mossy bottom.

The moonbeams play  
Quietly between the beeches forth,  
Along the calm paths  
A luminous edge is slumbering.

The silver cloud itself up there  
Is resting on the broad wing,  
High above the tops of the trees  
The listener looks down.

Silent are the waves and the winds,  
Quietly we have to walk, us two.  
There's a song sleeping in here  
In the nightly calm of the forest.

*Translation: Jakob Holm*

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## *MARGUERITE*

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The famous Pre-Raphaelite designer, poet and novelist William Morris (1834–1896) was a good friend of Bax's uncle, the socialist philosopher Ernest Belfort Bax (1854–1926), and the composer set four of his poems to music. The earliest was *From the Upland to the Sea* (1905),

which is his only song with two-piano accompaniment. The title *Marguerite* derives from the last line of each verse in Morris's poem *The Eve of Crécy*: "Ah! qu'elle est belle La Marguerite". The text refers to the evening before the famous battle between the French and the English that took place on 26th August 1346 – part of the Hundred Years' War. The song was finished on 8th June 1909 but was never published and has remained unperformed until now.

### *Marguerite*

Gold on her head, and gold on her feet,  
And gold where the hems of her kirtle meet,  
And a golden girdle round my sweet;  
Ah! qu'elle est belle La Marguerite.

Margaret's maids are fair to see,  
Freshly dressed and pleasantly;  
Margaret's hair falls down to her knee;  
Ah! qu'elle est belle La Marguerite.

If I were rich I would kiss her feet;  
I would kiss the place where the gold hems meet,  
And the golden girdle round my sweet:  
Ah! qu'elle est belle La Marguerite.

*William Morris (1834–1896)*

Yet even now it is good to think,  
While my few poor varlets grumble and drink  
In my desolate hall, where the fires sink,  
Ah! qu'elle est belle La Marguerite,

Of Margaret sitting glorious there,  
In glory of gold and glory of hair,  
And glory of glorious face most fair;  
Ah! qu'elle est belle La Marguerite.

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## *DAS TOTE KIND*

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Bax started learning German at quite an early age, when he became enthralled by the music and libretti of Wagner, and he later set several poems in the language, of which most are no longer extant. *Das tote Kind* was completed on 5th January 1911 and is a setting of a poem by the Swiss writer Conrad Ferdinand Meyer (1825–1898) from his *Stimmung* (1870). As with *Leaves, Shadows and Dreams*, the manuscript of this song is probably a fair copy of an original version, now lost. It received its first performance, by Jack Dolan and Edward Leung, at the Royal Birmingham Conservatoire's "Baxfest!" on 19th June 2018.

### ***Das tote Kind***

Es hat den Garten sich zum Freund gemacht,  
Dann welkten es und er im Herbst sacht,  
Die Sonne ging, und es und er entschlief,  
Gehüllt in eine Decke weiss und tief.

Jetzt ist der Garten unversehns erwacht,  
Die Kleine schlummert fest in ihrer Nacht.  
"Wo steckst du?" summt es dort und summt es hier.  
Der ganze Garten frägt nach ihr, nach ihr.

Die blaue Winde klettert schlank empor  
Und blickt ins Haus: "Komm hinterm Schrank hervor!  
Wo birgst du dich? Du tust dirs selbst zuleid!  
Was hast du für ein neues Sommerkleid?"

*Conrad Ferdinand Meyer (1825–1898)*

### ***The Dead Child***

It made the garden its friend;  
Then, in the autumn, both gently wilted.  
The sun set, and both fell asleep,  
Shrouded in a blanket white and deep.

Now, suddenly, the garden has awakened;  
The little one is slumbering soundly, wrapped in her darkness.  
"Where have you got to?" it buzzes here and buzzes there.  
The whole garden is asking for her — for her.

The slender vines of the morning-glory climb up  
And the blue flowers peer into the house: "Come out from behind the wardrobe!  
Where are you hiding? You'll hurt yourself!  
What is your new summer dress?"

*Translation: Rupert Marshall-Luck*

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## WELCOME, SOMER and OF HER MERCY

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In the autumn of 1914 Bax wrote *Three Rondels* by Chaucer, entitled *Roundel, Welcome, Somer and Of her Mercy*. A rondel is a form of verse usually containing thirteen or fourteen lines, whereas a roundel usually contains eleven, both being variants of the French *rondeau*. The *Roundel* was a setting of Chaucer's *Merciles Beautè: I Captivity* and was the only one of the three to be published during the composer's lifetime. *Welcome, Somer*, which was issued by the Fand Music Press in 2012, was completed on 20th October 1914 and dedicated to his friend Joan Thornycroft (1888–1989), who, four days later, married the writer Herbert Farjeon; it was doubtless intended as a wedding present. It is a setting of a poem from Chaucer's *The Parlement of Foules* (1382?) and its first performance was given on 19th May 2012 by Alison Smart and Katharine Durran at an 80th Anniversary Concert for the composer Carey Blyton. *Of her Mercy* was finished on 31st October 1914 and the words are from Chaucer's *Merciles Beautè: II Rejection*. Its first performance was on 19th June 2018, when Miles Taylor and James Allen presented it at the Royal Birmingham Conservatoire's "Baxfest!".

### *Welcome, Somer*

Now welcome, somer with thy sonne softe  
that hast this wintres weders over shake,  
And driven away the longe nightes blake!

Saint Valentine, that art full hy in lofte,  
Thus singen smalle foules for thy sake:  
Now welcome, somer, with thy sonne softe  
that hast this wintres weders over shake.

Wel have they cause for to gladden ofte,  
Sith ech of hem recovered hath his make;  
Ful blissfully they singen when they wake:  
Now welcome, somer with thy sonne softe  
that hast this wintres weders over shake.

*Geoffrey Chaucer (1343–1400)*

### *Of her Mercy*

So hath your beauty from your herte chased  
Pity that me ne availeth not to plain  
For Daunger halt thy mercy in his chain.

Guiltless my Death thus have ye me purchased.  
I say you sooth me needeth not to feign.  
So hath your beauty from your herte chased  
Pity that me ne availeth not to plain.

Alas! that nature hath in you compassed  
so great beauty that no man may attain  
to mercy though he sterve for the pain.

So hath your beauty from your herte chased  
Pity that me ne availeth not to plain  
For Daunger halt thy mercy in his chain.

*Geoffrey Chaucer (1343–1400)*

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### *A LEADER*

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The unpublished song *A Leader* has “(C-S-P)” written above the opening line, followed by a brace extending over five bars. The initials stand for Charles Stewart Parnell (1846–1891), leader of the Irish Nationalist Party, known as the “Uncrowned King of Ireland”, and in a letter written to Harriet Cohen on 15th November 1916 Bax provides an explanation: “I have just finished ‘A Leader’. It struck me afterwards that the subject that runs through it is very like Parnell, the Irish leader of the ‘80s, in its tragic and bitter pride.”

Among his surviving collection of books is a copy of R. Barry O’Brien’s *The Life of Charles Stewart Parnell* (1910). The dedication is “In memory of certain Irish patriots”, amongst whom was undoubtedly Patrick Pearse (1879–1916), whom the composer had met on one occasion and who was executed by the British after the Easter Rising. Bax’s orchestral work *In*

*Memoriam* is the earliest known piece of music commemorating this event. The poem (1913) is by the Irish writer, painter, economist and philosopher George Russell (1867–1935), also known as “Æ”, who was a good friend of Bax and a close neighbour when he and his wife, Elsa, were living in Rathgar, on the outskirts of Dublin, from 1911 to 1914. The song remained unperformed until John Hancorn and John Thwaites played it at Christ’s Hospital, Horsham, on 18th May 1996 – the second day of “The Bax Weekend”.

### *A Leader*

Though your eyes with tears were blind,  
Pain upon the path you trod:  
Well we knew, the hosts behind,  
Voice and shining of a god.

Naught we knew of the high land,  
Beauty burning in its spheres;  
Sorrow we could understand  
And the mystery told in tears.

For your darkness was our day:  
Signal fires, your pains untold  
Lit us on our wandering way  
To the mystic heart of gold.

*George Russell (1867–1935)*

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## *THE SPLENDOUR FALLS*

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*The Splendour Falls on Castle Walls* is the title that Bax gave to his setting of Alfred, Lord Tennyson’s *Blow, Bugle, Blow* from *The Princess* (1847). The song took him several years to complete, since the manuscript is dated “Nov 1912–Jan 1917”. In a letter of 14th January 1917, after Bax had played it through to her, Harriet Cohen wrote: “Your Tennyson song was adorable. Will you bring it again[?]”. The fifth edition of Grove’s *Dictionary* lists three songs for voice and orchestra, including this title, but only *A Lyke Wake* and *Wild Almond* are extant (both scored in 1934). There is no evidence that the original piano version of this song was ever performed before 18th May 1996, when Jenevora Williams and John Thwaites presented it at Christ’s Hospital during “The Bax Weekend”.

### *The Splendour Falls*

The splendour falls on castle walls  
And snowy summits old in story:  
The long light shakes across the lakes,  
And the wild cataract leaps in glory.  
Blow, bugle, blow, set the wild echoes flying,  
Blow, bugle, Answer, echoes, dying, dying, dying.  
O hark, O hear! how thin and clear,  
And thinner, clearer, farther going!  
O sweet and far from cliff and scar  
The horns of Elfland faintly blowing!  
Blow, let us hear the purple glens replying:  
Blow, bugle; Answer, echoes, dying, dying, dying.  
O love, they die in yon rich sky,  
They faint on hill or field or river.  
Our echoes roll from soul to soul,  
And grow for ever and for ever.  
Blow, bugle, blow, set the wild echoes flying.  
Blow, bugle; Answer, echoes, dying, dying, dying.  
*Alfred, Lord Tennyson (1809–1892)*

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### *LE CHANT D'ISABEAU*

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The setting of *Le Chant d'Isabeau* was finished on 24th July 1920 and first performed the following year, on 13th February, at the Grafton Galleries by the soprano Anne Thursfield, with the composer at the piano. The programme lists it as no.1 of the *Traditional Songs of France*, but, when that collection of five songs was published the same month, *Le Chant d'Isabeau* was omitted and issued separately, as it was the only one that was French Canadian. The printed score bears an acknowledgement: "The composer desires to thank M. [Octave] Uzanne the collector of 'French Songs of Old Canada' [1904] for very courteously permitting the verses and melody of the above ballad to be printed in this arrangement."

### *Le Chant d'Isabeau*

Isabeau s'y promène  
Le long de son jardin,  
Sur le bord de l'île,  
Sur le bord de l'eau,  
Sur le bord du vaisseau.

Elle fit un' rencontre  
De trente matelots.

Le plus jeune des trente  
Il se mit à chanter.

'La chanson que tu chantes  
Je voudrais la savoir.'

'Embarque dans ma barque  
Je te la chanterai.'

Quand ell' fut dans la barque  
Ell' se mit à pleurer.

'Je pleurs mon anneau d'ore  
Dans l'eau-z-il est tombé.'

'Ne pleurez point la belle  
Je vous le plongerais.'

De la première plonge  
Le galant est noyé.

*Traditional*

### *Isabeau's Song*

Isabeau goes walking  
around her garden,  
along the coast of the island,  
by the edge of the water,  
by the side of a ship.

There she encounters  
Thirty sailors.

The youngest of them,  
He sets off singing.

'The song you are singing  
I'd like to learn it.'

'Come onto my boat  
And I'll sing it to you.'

When she goes inside the boat  
She starts to weep.

'I'm crying for my gold ring  
That has fallen in the water.'

'Don't cry at all, lovely one,  
I'll dive for it for you.'

On the first dive  
The young lover was drowned.

*Translation: William Hedley*

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## *A RABELAISIAN CATECHISM*

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Bax's setting of *A Rabelaisian Catechism*, a traditional *chanson de série* from Bassac, Charente in western France, is subtitled *La foi d'la loi* and was completed on 16th August 1920. The pagination of the manuscript suggests that (like *Le Chant d'Isabeau*) it was originally intended



as part of the *Traditional Songs of France*, and this is confirmed by a note (not in Bax's hand) on the first page: "leave out this (pp.16–28)", implying that it was omitted from the cycle when the other songs came to be published, presumably because it is written for a lower voice. The song takes the form of a dialogue between Le Prieur and Frère Grégoire in which the former asks "La premièr' partie d'la foi d'la loi, dit' la moi, Frère Grégoire", to which the latter responds with "Un bon farci sans os". The question is put twelve times and the answer is given cumulatively with all the other answers, in the manner of *The Twelve Days of Christmas*. At the twelfth and final time of asking, Le Prieur is accompanied by a quotation (thus marked) from Vaughan Williams's *Sea Symphony* in the piano part ("O vast rondure dwelling [swimming] in space") – a jocular reference, no doubt, to the increasing rotundity of the two friars as the list of delicacies comes to an end. Bax also quotes the opening theme from Wagner's *Tristan und Isolde* at the start of the eleventh verse, which refers to "Onze demoiselles fort gentill's et belles garnies de tétions, voilà qu'est bon". Perhaps because it contains some saucy phrases, the song remained unpublished until 2010, when it was issued by the Fand Music Press, and this recording is its very first performance.

### **A Rabelaisian Catechism**

La premièr' partie d'la foi d'la loi,  
Dit' la moi, frère Grégoire.  
Un bon farci sans os.

La deuxièm' partie d'la foi d'la loi,  
Dit' la moi, frère Grégoire.  
Deux ventres de veau.

La troisièm' partie d'la foi d'la loi,  
Dit' la moi, frère Grégoire.  
Trois aloyaux rôtis au maluraux.

La quatrièm' partie d'la foi d'la loi,  
Dit' la moi, frère Grégoire.  
Quatre, quatre pieds de porc.

La cinquièm' partie d'la foi d'la loi,

### **A Rabelaisian Catechism**

The first part of the doctrine of faith,  
Tell me what it is, Brother Gregory.  
One dish stuffed and boneless.

The second part of the doctrine of faith,  
Tell me what it is, Brother Gregory.  
Two breasts of veal.

The third part of the doctrine of faith,  
Tell me what it is, Brother Gregory.  
Three sirloins roasted with [?].

The fourth part of the doctrine of faith,  
Tell me what it is, Brother Gregory.  
Four pigs' trotters.

The fifth part of the doctrine of faith,

Dit' la moi, frère Grégoire.  
Cinq pieds de moutons, voilà qu'est bon.  
La sixième' partie d'la foi d'la loi,  
Dit' la moi, frère Grégoire.  
Six perdrix aux choux, voilà tout.  
La septième' partie d'la foi d'la loi,  
Dit' la moi, frère Grégoire.  
Sept lapins en broche rôtis à la sauce.  
La huitième' partie d'la foi d'la loi,  
Dit' la moi, frère Grégoire.  
Huit plats de salade pour garnir la table.  
La neuvième' partie d'la foi d'la loi,  
Dit' la moi, frère Grégoire.  
Neuf plats de chapitre pour servir de suite.  
La dixième' partie d'la foi d'la loi,  
Dit' la moi, frère Grégoire.  
Dix futailles pleines qui feront merveilles.  
La onzième' partie d'la foi d'la loi,  
Dit' la moi, frère Grégoire.  
Onze demoiselles fort gentill's et belles  
garnies de tétons, voilà qu'est bon.  
La douzième' partie d'la foi d'la loi,  
Dit' la moi, frère Grégoire.  
Douze mousquetaires avec leurs rapiers.

*Traditional*

*[Note: The word "maluroux" in the third verse appears in Bax's manuscript and in other sources, but it is not French; it may be a mis-transcription of the Occitan (Provençal) "malurant". There is no definitive version of the text and many variants exist.]*

Tell me what it is, Brother Gregory.  
Five sheeps' feet, that's what's good.  
The sixth part of the doctrine of faith,  
Tell me what it is, Brother Gregory.  
Six partridges in cabbage, that's all.  
The seventh part of the doctrine of faith,  
Tell me what it is, Brother Gregory.  
Seven skewered rabbits roasted in sauce.  
The eighth part of the doctrine of faith,  
Tell me what it is, Brother Gregory.  
Eight plates of salad to grace the table.  
The ninth part of the doctrine of faith,  
Tell me what it is, Brother Gregory.  
Nine chapter dishes to serve at once.  
The tenth part of the doctrine of faith,  
Tell me what it is, Brother Gregory.  
Ten full barrels that will work wonders.  
The eleventh part of the doctrine of faith,  
Tell me what it is, Brother Gregory.  
Eleven young girls, kind and beautiful  
with generous bosoms, that's what's good.  
The twelfth part of the doctrine of faith,  
Tell me what it is, Brother Gregory.  
Twelve musketeers with their rapiers.

*Translation: William Hedley*

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## CARREY CLAVEL

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*Carrey Clavel* is a setting of a poem by Thomas Hardy (1840–1928) from *Time's Laughingstocks and Other Verses* (1909). It has been described as “the complaint of an innocent country lad whose love is scorned”, with young Carrey favouring his rival, Charley. The song was completed on 6th August 1925 and dedicated to William Grant Oliver (1884–1958), a dental surgeon, amateur composer, singer and astronomer. He was a friend at the time, although Bax later referred to him as “that rogue” and added “I don’t like him much in these days”. Seven months after its composition, on 28th March 1926, they both paid a visit to the famous writer in Dorchester, and the next day Bax wrote to Harriet Cohen: “In the morning we went to see Hardy – a dear old man, rather shaky physically, but in every other way most alert. He told me to come and see him again and said I could set any of his poems free of charge. I think he liked me – we stayed there an hour. Mrs Hardy was rather suspicious and forbidding at first but thawed later.” Grant Oliver also made at least one setting of Hardy’s verse (*My spirit will not haunt the mound*), which was broadcast by soprano Joan Hammond on 22nd June 1943. *Carrey Clavel*, although published a year after it was written, has seldom been sung, the earliest performance so far traced being a radio broadcast by René Soames and Frederick Stone on 24th January 1951.

### *Carrey Clavel*

You turn your back, you turn your back,  
And never your face to me,  
Alone you take your homeward track,  
And scorn my company.

What will you do when Charley’s seen  
Dewbeating down this way?  
You’ll turn your back, as now, you mean?  
Nay, Carrey Clavel, nay!

*Thomas Hardy (1840–1928)*

You’ll see none’s looking; put your lip  
Up like a tulip, so;  
And he will coll you, bend, and sip:  
Yes Carrey, yes; I know!

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## JEREMY HUW WILLIAMS *baritone*

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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 debut with WNO as Guglielmo (*Così fan tutte*) and has since appeared in more than seventy operatic roles. He has given performances at major venues in North and South America, Australia, China, India and most European countries.

He has given recitals at the Wigmore Hall and Purcell Room, and at many major music festivals. He has appeared with the BBC National Orchestra of Wales in Tippett's *King Priam* at the Royal Festival Hall, the CBSO in Lambert's *Summer's Last Will and Testament* at Symphony Hall, the Hallé in Handel's *Messiah* at the Bridgewater Hall, the Philharmonia in Mozart's *Requiem* at St David's Hall, the BBC Symphony Orchestra in Nielsen's Third Symphony at the Royal Albert Hall during the BBC Proms, the Royal Liverpool Philharmonic Orchestra in Rawsthorne's *Medieval Diptych*, the BBC Scottish Symphony Orchestra in Adams's *The Wound Dresser* at City Halls, the BBC Philharmonic in Schubert's *Mass in A-flat*, the LSO in Bernstein's *Candide* at the Barbican, the RPO in Beethoven's Ninth Symphony, the LPO in Watson's *O! Captain*, the Ulster Orchestra in McDowall's *Theatre of Tango*, the Bournemouth Symphony Orchestra in Mathias's *This Worlde's Joie* at the Three Choirs Festival, and the BBC Concert Orchestra in Stainer's *The Crucifixion* at Southwark Cathedral for BBC Radio 2. He frequently records for BBC Radio 3 (in recital, and with the BBC National Orchestra of Wales, CBSO, BBC Symphony Orchestra, BBC Scottish Symphony Orchestra, BBC Philharmonic and BBC Concert Orchestra), and has made many commercial recordings, including more than ten solo song discs.

As a principal singer with WNO he appeared at the opening night of the Wales Millennium Centre, and received the inaugural Sir Geraint Evans Award from the Welsh Music Guild. He



was awarded an Honorary Fellowship by Glyndŵr University in 2009 for services to music, and received the Honorary Degree of Doctor of Music from the University of Aberdeen in 2011.

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## PAULA FAN *piano*

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Pianist Paula Fan has performed on five continents as soloist and chamber musician, recorded over twenty commercial albums, and has broadcast for the BBC, NPR, Radio Television China, and international stations from Bosnia to Australia. As one of the first recipients of the doctorate in Collaborative Piano, she has lectured on the subject worldwide. She has taught at the University of Arizona as its only Regents' Professor from the Fine Arts, and as Visiting Professor at the Eastman School of Music. She was also Principal Keyboardist with the Tucson Symphony Orchestra for more than thirty seasons.

As both performer and teacher, one of her greatest interests has been building bridges between classical music and audiences of all ages and backgrounds, as well as between disciplines. In collaboration with the Arizona Research Institute for Solar Energy, she was co-founder of the Solar Storytellers, a piano trio playing electric instruments powered by a golf cart with a solar panel for a roof, which performed on the National Mall in Washington DC, at the Aspen Science Center, and in Arizona. She now serves as the first Senior Fellow at the University of Arizona's Conflucenter for Creative Inquiry and continues to tour internationally as pianist and lecturer.



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Recorded on 13th, 14th, 16th, 22nd and 23rd October 2020 at the Jeff Haskell Recording Studio,  
University of Arizona, and on 13th November 2020 at the Jim Brady Recording Studios

Recording Engineer: WILEY ROSS

Recording Producer: JEREMY HUW WILLIAMS

EM Records Executive Producer: EM MARSHALL-LUCK

Repertoire consultant for this recording: GRAHAM PARLETT

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*The Grand Match; To my Homeland; Leaves, Shadows and Dreams; Viking-Battle-Song; I fear thy kisses,  
gentle maiden; The Twa Corbies; Longing; From the Hills of Dream; Landskab; Marguerite; Das tote Kind;  
Of her Mercy; A Leader; and The Splendour falls, SIR ARNOLD BAX ESTATE, unpublished*

*Welcome, Somer* published by FAND MUSIC PRESS, 2012

*Le Chant d’Isabeau* published by MURDOCH, MURDOCH & CO., 1921

*A Rabelaisian Catechism* published by FAND MUSIC PRESS, 2010

*Carrey Clavel* published by MURDOCH, MURDOCH & CO., 1926

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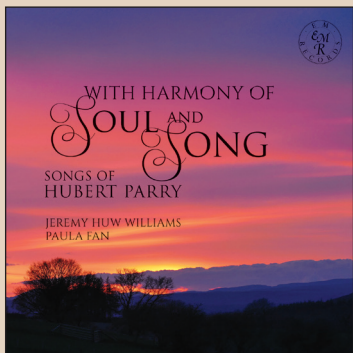
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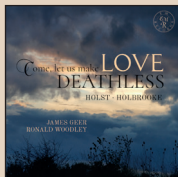
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# FROM THE HILLS OF DREAM

*the forgotten songs of Arnold Bax*



SIR ARNOLD BAX (1883–1953)

1. <i>The Grand Match</i> (1903)	[4.31]	11. <i>Das tote Kind</i> (1911)	[2.14]
2. <i>To my Homeland</i> (1904)	[2.43]	12. <i>Welcome, Somer</i> (1914)	[2.55]
3. <i>Leaves, Shadows and Dreams</i> (1905)	[4.23]	13. <i>Of her Mercy</i> (1914)	[5.34]
4. <i>Viking-Battle-Song</i> (1905)	[3.35]	14. <i>A Leader</i> (1916)	[3.32]
5. <i>I fear thy kisses, gentle maiden</i> (1906)	[2.07]	15. <i>The Splendour falls</i> (1917)	[5.35]
6. <i>The Twa Corbies</i> (1906)	[3.57]	16. <i>Le Chant d'Isabeau</i> (1920)	[7.25]
7. <i>Longing</i> (1907)	[4.16]	17. <i>A Rabelaisian Catechism</i> (1920)	[7.00]
8. <i>From the Hills of Dream</i> (1907)	[4.17]	18. <i>Carrey Clavel</i> (1925)	[2.22]
9. <i>Landskab</i> (1908)	[5.47]	<b>TOTAL TIME:</b>	<b>[77.56]</b>
10. <i>Marguerite</i> (1909)	[4.53]	<b>ALL WORLD PREMIÈRE RECORDINGS</b>	

JEREMY HUW WILLIAMS *baritone*

PAULA FAN *piano*

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