

WIGMORE HALL

Saturday 12 November 2022
3.00pm

Kaleidoscope Chamber Collective

Karim Sulayman tenor
Adam Walker flute
Matthew Hunt clarinet
Elena Urioste violin
Melissa White violin
Rosalind Ventriss viola

Laura van der Heijden cello
Joseph Conyers double bass
Tom Poster piano
Mishka Rushdie Momen piano
Jordan Ashman percussion

Maurice Duruflé (1902-1986)

Prélude, récitatif et variations for flute, viola and piano
Op. 3 (1928)

Germaine Tailleferre (1892-1983)

From *Impressionisme* (1970)
Monet • Degas • Renoir • Pissarro • Millet • Delacroix

Reynaldo Hahn (1874-1947)

A Chloris (1916) *arranged by Tom Poster*

Quand je fus pris au pavillon from *Rondels* (1898-9)
arranged by Tom Poster

L'énamourée (1892) *arranged by Tom Poster*

La barcheta from *Venezia* (1901) *arranged by Tom Poster*

Camille Saint-Saëns (1835-1921)

Le carnaval des animaux (1886)

*I. Introduction et marche royale du Lion •
II. Poules et coqs • III. Hémiones • IV. Tortues •
V. L'Éléphant • VI. Kangourous • VII. Aquarium •
VIII. Personnages à longues oreilles •
IX. Le Coucou au fond des bois • X. Volière •
XI. Pianistes • XII. Fossiles • XIII. Le Cygne • XIV. Finale*

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This concert showcases French music from the late 19th and 20th centuries, some of which is little known today. The composers featured lived and worked in various Parisian settings which nurtured their musical creativity – as teachers at the acclaimed Paris Conservatoire, organists at Paris's numerous churches and habitués of Parisian musical salons.

Maurice Duruflé (1902-1986) was deeply conservative and self-critical, only allowing a handful of his works to be published. He worked for most of his life as the organist of the church at St Etienne-du-Mont in Paris and taught harmony at the Paris Conservatoire for nearly 30 years. He is, perhaps not surprisingly, best known for his organ music and his heartfelt *Requiem*.

Duruflé's *Prélude, récitatif et variations* for flute, viola and piano Op. 3 (1928) provides a rare example of the composer's writing for piano, which is demanding and dominant in this dramatically fluent chamber work. The somewhat unusual pairing of flute and viola effectively brings out the rich, lower register of the flute.

The composer **Germaine Tailleferre** (1892-1983) led a dramatic life, dogged by a persistent sexist critical reception of her music and unrelenting discouragement from the various men in her life, including her father and two violent husbands. Undaunted and determined, despite lacking in self-esteem, she became a successful and respected composer, creating a rich variety of music throughout her long life.

When she was young, Tailleferre had to hide her attendance at the Paris Conservatoire from her volatile father, who saw musical training for a woman as something disreputable. Nevertheless, she soon became acclaimed as one of the group of avant-garde composers known as Les Six, encouraged and supported by the older experimental composer Erik Satie, who referred to Tailleferre as his 'musical daughter'.

Les Six (Auric, Durey, Honegger, Milhaud, Poulenc and Tailleferre) were soon valued participants in the Princesse de Polignac's salon. She supported Tailleferre in particular by inviting her to stay in various Polignac residences so that she could compose in peace and quiet, and by commissioning Tailleferre's neoclassical Piano Concerto, now one of her best-known works.

Much of Tailleferre's music was written to commission, including incidental music for the stage as well as numerous film and television scores. Her 11-movement suite *Impressionisme* for flute, double bass and two pianos is a late work, written for a planned documentary film about impressionist painters that was never produced. An alternative title for Tailleferre's work is *Impression: soleil levant* after the famous 1872 painting of a sunrise by Claude Monet which is credited for giving the name to the far-reaching artistic movement. The six movements of the suite being played this afternoon represent six painters: Monet, Degas, Renoir, Pissarro, Millet and Delacroix.

Tonight's pianist, **Tom Poster**, has arranged a group of four songs by the prolific composer **Reynaldo Hahn**

(1874-1947) for voice and piano quintet. Born in Venezuela, Hahn's family moved to France when he was a young child. After studying at the Paris Conservatoire, Hahn became a well-known figure in fin-de-siècle musical salons, such as that of the Princesse de Polignac. Here he developed close and lasting relationships, perhaps most notably with the writer Marcel Proust.

Although Hahn is now best known as a songwriter, he also composed works in many other genres, including chamber music, orchestral works, operetta and opera. Neglected after his death, his music is being increasingly recognised in the early 21st Century. Tonight's songs clearly demonstrate Hahn's gift for creating melodious and compelling love songs.

'À Chloris' is a lyrical setting of a poem by the 17th-century poet Théophile de Viau, and one of Hahn's most often-performed songs. In contrast, 'Quand je fus pris au pavillon' is a lively take on a rondeau by the 15th-century aristocrat Charles d'Orléans. 'L'énamourée' changes the mood again; this is a wistful and moving song, to words by the 19th-century poet Théodore de Banville. The atmospheric 'La barcheta' is the second of a group of six songs, *Venezia*, to words in Venetian dialect by various Italian poets, a collection doubtless inspired by Hahn's stay at the Polignacs' Venetian palazzo in 1900. In 'La barcheta' the singer addresses his beloved Nina as they are rowed across a lagoon in a small boat.

Camille Saint-Saëns (1835-1921) was one of the leading French composers of his generation. He firmly defended the idea of 'art for art's sake' and, for his music, believed in the typically French values of order and precision over passionate drama.

Le carnaval des animaux, scored for two pianos, two violins, viola, cello, double bass, flute, clarinet, harmonium and xylophone, is probably one of his best-known works. It was written in a couple of days in 1886 while Saint-Saëns was on holiday in Austria and he was so unimpressed with what he had produced that he forbade performances, other than of the best-known movement *Le Cygne* ('The Swan'), and did not give the work an opus number. There is a great deal of humour in these delightful short depictions of various animals and Saint-Saëns was doubtless concerned for his reputation as a serious composer of large-scale concert works.

Saint-Saëns's 14-movement animal carnival offers the listener inventive musical depictions of a variety of animals, such as the pecking staccato of hens and roosters; the ponderous elephant, portrayed by the double bass; the virtuoso flute twitterings of the aviary or the clever references to other music (listen out for 'Twinkle, twinkle little star') for the fossils. Saint-Saëns's 'animals' include pianists, who work furiously at their scales and exercises. The much-loved penultimate movement features an elegiac cello representing the melancholy beauty of the 'swan song', supposedly voiced by the otherwise silent bird just before it dies.

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Maurice Duruflé (1902-1986)

Prélude, récitatif et variations for flute,
viola and piano Op. 3 (1928)

Germaine Tailleferre (1892-1983)

From *Impressionisme* (1970)

Monet
Degas
Renoir
Pissarro
Millet
Delacroix

Reynaldo Hahn (1874-1947)

A Chloris (1916)
arranged by Tom Poster
Théophile de Viau

S'il est vrai, Chloris, que tu
m'aimes,
Mais j'entends, que tu
m'aimes bien,
Je ne crois pas que les rois
mêmes
Aient un bonheur pareil au
mien.
Que la mort serait
importune
A venir changer ma fortune
Pour la félicité des
cieux!
Tout ce qu'on dit de
l'ambrosie
Ne touche point ma
fantaisie
Au prix des grâces de tes
yeux.

To Chloris

If it be true, Chloris, that
you love me,
(and I'm told you love me
dearly),
I do not believe that even
kings
can match the happiness
I know.
Even death would be
powerless
to alter my fortune
with the promise of
heavenly bliss!
All that they say of
ambrosia
does not stir my
imagination
like the favour of your
eyes!

**Quand je fus pris au
pavillon from *Rondels***
(1898-9)
arranged by Tom Poster
Charles d'Orléans

Quand je fus pris au
pavillon
De ma dame, très gent et
belle,
Je me brûlay à la
chandelle,
Ainsi que fait le papillon.

Je rougis comme vermillon,
A la clarté d'une étincelle,
Quand je fus pris au
pavillon
De ma dame, très gent et
belle.

Si j'eusse été esmerillon
Ou que j'eusse eu aussi
bonne aile,
Je me fusse gardé de
celle
Qui me bailla de
l'aiguillon,
Quand je fus pris au
pavillon.

L'énamourée (1892)
arranged by Tom Poster
Théodore de Banville

Ils se disent, ma colombe,
Que tu rêves, morte
encore,
Sous la pierre d'une
tombe:
Mais pour l'âme qui
t'adore
Tu t'éveilles ranimée,
Ô pensive bien-aimée!

Par les blanches nuits
d'étoiles,
Dans la brise qui murmure,
Je caresse tes longs voiles,
Ta mouvante chevelure,
Et tes ailes demi-closes
Qui voltigent sur les roses!

Ô délices! je respire
Tes divines tresses blondes!
Ta voix pure, cette lyre,
Suit la vague sur les
ondes,
Et, suave, les effleure,
Comme un cygne qui se pleure!

**When I was caught
in the pavilion**

When I was caught in the
pavilion
of my most beautiful and
noble lady,
I burnt myself in the
candle's flame,
as the moth does.

I flushed crimson
in the brightness of a spark,
when I was caught in the
pavilion
of my most beautiful and
noble lady.

If I had been a merlin
or had wings as
strong,
I should have shielded
myself
from her who pierced me
with her arrows,
when I was caught in the
pavilion.

The loved one

They say, my dove,
that, though dead, you
dream
beneath the headstone of
a grave:
but for the soul that
adores you,
you waken, restored to life,
O pensive beloved!

During sleepless, starlit
nights,
in the murmuring breeze,
I caress your long veils,
your billowing hair,
and your half-folded wings
that flutter over roses!

O delight! I inhale
your divine blonde tresses!
Your pure voice, this lyre,
follows the waves across
the water,
and softly ripples them,
like a lamenting swan!

**La barcheta from
Venezia** (1901)
arranged by Tom Poster
Pietro Buratti

La note è bela,
Fa presto, o Nineta,
Andemo in barcheta
I freschi a
ciapar!
A Toni g'ho dito
Ch'el felze el ne cave
Per goder sta
bava
Che supia dal mar. Ah!

Che gusto contarsela
Soleti in laguna,
E al chiaro de luna
Sentirse a vogar!
Ti pol de la
ventola
Far senza, o mia
cara,
Chè zefiri a
gara
Te vol sventolar. Ah!

Se gh'è tra de lori
Chi tropo
indiscreto
Volesse dal pèto
El velo strapar,
No bada a ste
frotole,
Soleti za semo
E Toni el so' remo
Lè a tento a menar. Ah!

The little boat

The night is beautiful.
Make haste, Nineta,
let us take to our boat
and enjoy the evening
breeze.
I have asked Toni
to remove the canopy
so that we can feel the
zephyr
blowing in from the sea. Ah!

What bliss it is to exchange
sweet nothings
alone on the lagoon
and by moonlight,
to be borne along in our
boat!
You can lay aside your
fan, my dear,
for the breezes will vie
with each other
to refresh you. Ah!

If among them
there should be one so
indiscreet
as to try to lift the veil
shielding your breast,
pay no heed to its
nonsense,
for we are all alone
and Toni is much too intent
on plying his oar. Ah!

*Translation of 'La barcheta' by Laura Sarti. All other Hahn translations
by Richard Stokes from A French Song Companion (Johnson/Stokes)
published by OUP.*

Camille Saint-Saëns (1835-1921)

Le carnaval des animaux (1886)

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