

# WIGMORE HALL

Friday 18 March 2022 7.30pm

## Kaleidoscope Chamber Collective

**Fleur Barron** mezzo-soprano     **Rosalind Ventris** viola  
**Elena Urioste** violin             **Tony Rymer** cello  
**Savitri Grier** violin               **Tom Poster** piano

CLASSIC *f*M Wigmore Hall £5 tickets for Under 35s supported by Media Partner Classic FM

**Samuel Coleridge-Taylor** (1875-1912)     Piano Quintet in G minor Op. 1 (c.1893)  
*I. Allegro con moto • II. Larghetto • III. Scherzo • IV. Allegro molto*

**Amy Beach** (1867-1944)             Ecstasy Op. 19 No. 2 (1893)  
Chanson d'amour Op. 21 No. 1 (1893 arr. 1899)  
Hymn of Trust Op. 13 (1891 arr. 1901)

Juni Op. 51 No. 3 (1903)

Interval

**Florence Price** (1887-1953)             The Heart of a Woman (1941) *arranged by Tom Poster*  
Sunset *arranged by Tom Poster*

Don't You Tell Me No (c.1930s) *arranged by Tom Poster*

**Edward Elgar** (1857-1934)             Piano Quintet in A minor Op. 84 (1918-9)  
*I. Moderato – Allegro • II. Adagio • III. Andante – Allegro*

### Welcome back to Wigmore Hall

We are grateful to our Friends and donors for their generosity as we rebuild a full series of concerts in 2021/22 and reinforce our efforts to reach audiences everywhere through our broadcasts. To help us present inspirational concerts and support our community of artists, please make a donation by visiting our website:

[Wigmore-hall.org.uk/donate](https://www.wigmore-hall.org.uk/donate). Every gift is making a difference. Thank you.

*Wigmore Hall is a no smoking venue. No recording or photographic equipment may be taken into the auditorium nor used in any other part of the Hall without the prior written permission of the management.*

*In accordance with the requirements of City of Westminster persons shall not be permitted to stand or sit in any of the gangways intersecting the seating, or to sit in any other gangways. If standing is permitted in the gangways at the sides and rear of the seating, it shall be limited to the number indicated in the notices exhibited in those positions.*

*Disabled Access and Facilities - full details from 020 7935 2141.*

*Wigmore Hall is equipped with a 'Loop' to help hearing aid users receive clear sound without background noise. Patrons can use this facility by switching hearing aids to 'T'.*



*Please ensure that watch alarms, mobile phones and any other electrical devices which can become audible are switched off. Phones on a vibrate setting can still be heard, please switch off.*

**The Wigmore Hall Trust** Registered Charity No. 1024838  
36 Wigmore Street, London W1U 2BP • [Wigmore-hall.org.uk](https://www.wigmore-hall.org.uk) • John Gilhooly Director

**Wigmore Hall Royal Patron** HRH The Duke of Kent, KG

**Honorary Patrons** Aubrey Adams OBE; André and Rosalie Hoffmann; Louise Kaye; Kohn Foundation; Mr and Mrs Paul Morgan



**Samuel Coleridge-Taylor** was born in Holborn and studied composition with Stanford at the Royal College of Music. After meeting the poet Paul Laurence Dunbar, Coleridge-Taylor became increasingly interested in his heritage and in promoting the dignity of people of African descent. His orchestral work *Ballade* was commissioned by the Three Choirs Festival at the insistence of Edward Elgar, the organisation's first choice. Elgar wrote: 'I wish, wish, wish you would ask Coleridge-Taylor to do it. He still wants recognition, and he is far and away the cleverest fellow going amongst the young men.' Publisher August Jaeger (inspiration for Elgar's 'Nimrod') declared that Coleridge-Taylor was 'a genius'.

Coleridge-Taylor's Piano Quintet in G minor was written when he was 18, and was first performed in Croydon on 9 October 1893 at a concert devoted to his music; the *Croydon Advertiser* called the piece 'astonishing'. The Quintet was not performed again for over a century, but Coleridge-Taylor used the first movement's secondary theme in his *African Dance* for violin and piano, and the trio section of the *Scherzo* in the 'Valse de la Reine', the third of his orchestral *Characteristic Waltzes*.

The first movement of the Quintet contrasts an arresting string theme in octaves with a graceful melody introduced by the piano. The *Larghetto* opens with a singing cello solo, the texture building towards a tempestuous central section; peace is restored with the coda. Coleridge-Taylor's admiration for Dvořák is apparent in the folk-like *Scherzo*, its trio theme returning in a knotty passage during the tautly structured finale, which evolves from brooding introspection to determined optimism.

Anglo-American composer **Amy Beach**, like Coleridge-Taylor, was prodigiously gifted and an admirer of Dvořák, whose use of Native and African American themes inspired her 'Gaelic' Symphony. As a girl she could improvise vocal countermelodies and replicate four-part hymns at the piano, and she gave her first public recital aged seven. Amy's studies continued with one Dr Beach, whom she married in 1885 but who curtailed her career as a pianist. She focused on composition, teaching herself using theory books.

'Ecstasy' is the second of Beach's 3 Songs Op. 19. Beach wrote the song's text, its reference to 'storm and sunshine' conveyed as the piano's harmonic progressions shift through light and shade, while the voice and violin soar above, tracing ardent, intertwining lines. In the 'Chanson d'amour' Op. 21 No. 1, to a text by Victor Hugo, the cello's deep voice duets with the soprano, but the violin returns for the tender 'Hymn of Trust' Op. 13, a paean to love by Oliver Wendell Holmes, and 'Juni', Op. 51 No. 3, to words by Erich Jansen.

In 1943 **Florence Price** wrote to the conductor Serge Koussevitzky: 'My dear Dr Koussevitzky, To begin with I have two handicaps – those of sex and race'. Koussevitzky ignored her but Price was undeterred, and by the 1930s she had become the most

famous African American woman composer in the world. When Marian Anderson performed Price's *Songs to the Dark Virgin*, the *Chicago Daily News* hailed the occasion as 'one of the greatest immediate successes ever won by an American song'.

Price's 'The Heart of a Woman' is to words by Georgia Douglas Johnson, a poet born into a mixed-race family in Atlanta, Georgia. Johnson's poem embraces vulnerability and defiance, qualities accentuated in Price's setting: 'The heart of a woman falls back with the night, / And enters some alien cage in its plight ...' These words were written in 1918 when American women were pushing for the vote: the caged bird trying to break free. A stash of Price's scores languished, forgotten, until 2009; many are undated. This is the case with 'Sunset' and 'Don't You Tell Me No' (to Price's own words; a light-hearted song of bluesy harmonies and allusions to cakewalk and ragtime).

Although **Elgar**'s reputation was not hindered by the prejudices of race and sex encountered by the other composers on this programme, he was perpetually conscious of being an outsider. As a boy he accompanied his piano-tuner father to grand houses – in stark contrast with their humble home – and as a teacher he felt awkward around gentlemen who did not have to work for a living. By 1918 Elgar was an established figure, but a period of fragile health caused a hiatus in his compositional activity. This ended with three chamber works: the Violin Sonata, String Quartet and Piano Quintet in A minor Op. 84, started in a cottage in West Sussex and completed in 1919. Lady Alice, Elgar's wife, noted in her diary: 'E. writing wonderful new music, different from anything else of his ... wood magic, so elusive and delicate.'

As a Catholic – and in an Anglican country this also made him something of an outsider – Elgar was familiar with plainchant, and the Quintet opens with a four-note motif reminiscent of the 'Salve Regina' chant; this idea recurs throughout the work. Alice described the first movement: 'Wonderful weird beginning ... reminiscence of sinister trees ... sad "dispossessed" trees & their dance & unstilled regret for their evil fate – or rather curse.' She was right: Elgar marked the movement 'Bedham, 1918' after Bedham Copse, about which there were numerous ghostly local legends.

The profoundly eloquent slow movement opens with strings alone and a viola solo before the entry of the piano, and the finale begins with an ethereal *Andante*, after which a proud triple-time theme unfolds and grows, contrasted with a syncopated theme and a gentler section in which the 'Salve Regina' idea returns. Elgar deftly ties everything together in the closing bars, concluding a work of which George Bernard Shaw declared: 'The Quintet knocked me over at once'. Elgar's Piano Quintet was given its first public performance at Wigmore Hall on 21 May 1919.

© Joanna Wyld 2022

*Reproduction and distribution is strictly prohibited.*

## Samuel Coleridge-Taylor (1875-1912)

### Piano Quintet in G minor Op. 1 (c.1893)

*I. Allegro con moto*

*II. Larghetto*

*III. Scherzo*

*IV. Allegro molto*

## Amy Beach (1867-1944)

### Ecstasy Op. 19 No. 2 (1893)

*Amy Beach*

Only to dream among the fading flowers,  
Only to glide along the tranquil sea;  
Ah dearest, dearest, have we not together  
One long, bright day of love, so glad and free?

Only to rest through life, in storm and sunshine,  
Safe in thy breast, where sorrow dare not fly;  
Ah dearest, dearest! Thus in sweetest rapture  
With thee to live, with thee at last to die!

### Chanson d'amour Op. 21 Song of love

#### No. 1 (1893 arr. 1899)

*Victor Hugo*

L'aube naît et ta porte est close!	Day dawns and your door is closed!
Ma belle, pourquoi sommeiller?	Why, my sweet, do you still sleep?
A l'heure où s'éveille la rose	At the hour when the rose awakes,
Ne vas-tu pas te réveiller?	are you not going to wake?

O, ma charmante,	O my charming one,
Ecoute ici.	listen
L'amant, qui chante,	to your lover who sings
Et pleure aussi!	and also weeps!

Tout frappe à ta porte bénie,	All things knock at your hallowed door.
L'aurore dit: je suis le jour!	The dawn says: I am the day!
L'oiseau dit: je suis l'harmonie!	The bird says: I am harmony!
Et mon cœur dit: je suis l'amour!	And my heart says: I am love!

O ma charmante, ...	O my charming one...
---------------------	----------------------

Je t'adore, ange, et t'aime, femme.	I adore you, angel, and love you, woman.
Dieu, qui par toi m'a complété	God, who has perfected me through you,
A fait mon amour par ton âme, Et mon regard pour ta beauté.	has created my love for your soul, and my gaze for your beauty!

O ma charmante, ...	O my charming one...
---------------------	----------------------

### Hymn of Trust Op. 13 (1891 arr. 1901)

*Oliver Wendell Holmes*

Love Divine, that stooped to share  
Our sharpest pang, our bitt'rest tear,  
On Thee we cast each earthborn care,  
We smile at pain while Thou art near!

Though long the weary way we tread,  
And sorrow crown each ling'ring year,  
No path we shun, no darkness dread,  
Our hearts still whisp'ring, Thou art near!

When drooping pleasure turns to grief,  
And trembling faith is changed to fear,  
The murm'ring wind, the quiv'ring leaf  
Shall softly tell us, Thou art near!

On Thee we fling our burd'ning woe  
O Love Divine, forever dear,  
Content to suffer while we know,  
Living and dying, Thou art near!

### Juni Op. 51 No. 3 (1903)

*Erich Jansen trans. Isidora Martinez*

O sunny days of June divine,  
Fresh beauty each hour discloses!  
Of blossoming meadows, and zephyrs benign,  
And in the gardens with fruit and vine,  
Heart's-ease and Roses!

Heart's-ease and Roses; a perfume strong  
The mellowing vineyards are giving!  
The nights so lang'rous, the days so long!  
So beaming the brow and so ringing the song!  
Such joy but in living!

Yon leafy arbor all tremulous there,  
Doth sigh as at night it reposes,  
Rich blessings fill all the scented air  
With rapture surpassing; and ev'rywhere  
Heart's-ease and Roses!

---

## Interval

---

## Florence Price (1887-1953)

### The Heart of a Woman (1941)

*Georgia Douglas Johnson*

arranged by Tom Poster for voice and string quartet

The heart of a woman goes forth with the dawn,  
As a lone bird soft winging so restlessly on  
Afar on life's turrets and vales does it roam  
In the wake of those echoes the heart calls home.

The heart of a woman falls back with the night  
And enters some alien cage in its plight  
And tries to forget it has dream'd of the stars  
While it breaks, breaks, breaks, breaks on the sheltering bars.

### Sunset

*Odessa P. Elder*

arranged by Tom Poster for voice and string quartet

When the golden West reflects her beauty,  
Comes to me a happy duty;  
And I must write of that golden town  
That beckons me when the sun goes down.

'Tis a story from the golden sky  
As the clouds go sailing by.  
I sit and watch for that golden town  
That beckons me when the sun goes down.

I'll seek this home in the golden West  
That lures me on my joyful quest,  
And find new life in that golden town  
That beckons me when the sun goes down.

### Don't You Tell Me No

*Florence Price*

arranged by Tom Poster for voice and string quartet

Always there's something you cannot get,  
Maybe the girl that you have just met,  
Or some sweet baby whom you have lost  
Before you stopped to count the cost.

There's something I want now:  
Oh mama, my mama,  
Don't you tell me 'No'  
'Cause mama you see I'm yearning so.

Oh mama, sweet mama, my hands won't behave.  
For your dear charms they creep and crave.  
Don't scold me, just hold me, and fold me tight, oh tight!  
Say, baby, I'll lose my mind if you don't treat me kind.

So mama, sweet mama, honey to the bee  
Is not as sweet as you to me.

## Edward Elgar (1857-1934)

### Piano Quintet in A minor Op. 84 (1918-9)

*I. Moderato – Allegro*

*II. Adagio*

*III. Andante – Allegro*

*'Chanson d'amour' translated by Richard Stokes. 'Juni' singable translation by Isidora Martinez. 'The Heart of a Woman' Music by Florence Price, text by Georgia Douglas Johnson, © Copyright 1941 G. Schirmer Inc. Reproduced by permission. 'Sunset' (from 'In Summer Fields') Music by Florence Price, text by Odessa P. Elder, © Copyright G. Schirmer Inc. Reproduced by permission. 'Don't You Tell Me No' Music and text by Florence Price © Copyright G. Schirmer Inc. Reproduced by permission.*