

# WIGMORE HALL

Monday 18 March 2024  
1.00pm

Masabane Cecilia Rangwanasha soprano  
Simon Lepper piano  
Anna Blackmur violin

Richard Wagner (1813-1883)

From *Wesendonck Lieder* (1857-8)  
*Stehe still!* • *Schmerzen*

Richard Strauss (1864-1949)

Morgen Op. 27 No. 4 (1894)

Gustav Mahler (1860-1911)

Rückert Lieder (1901-2)  
*Blicke mir nicht in die Lieder* • *Ich atmet'  
einen linden Duft* • *Um Mitternacht* •  
*Liebst du um Schönheit* • *Ich bin der Welt  
abhanden gekommen*

Stephanus Le Roux Marais (1896-1979)

Heimwee (pub. 1930)

Trad/South African

Lala ho nna

May Brahe (1884-1956)

Bless This House (1927)

Alma Bazel Androzzo (1912-2001)

If I can help somebody (1946)

Traditional

Amazing Grace

Richard Rodgers (1902-1979)

Climb Ev'ry Mountain from *The Sound of Music* (1959)



This concert is being broadcast on BBC Radio 3



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The revolutionary-minded **Wagner**, who was court composer in Dresden at the time, had to get out of Germany in a hurry in 1849 following his activities during the May Uprising. His part in this consisted of making grenades, manning the barricades and writing revolutionary articles in the *Volksblätter* inciting people to revolt. He fled to Switzerland, where in 1852 while living in Zurich he met Otto Wesendonck, a wealthy silk merchant, who offered to support Wagner financially and even make a cottage on his estate available to him to live in. The following year Wagner began an affair with Otto's wife Mathilde, then aged 23. He wrote his five *Wesendonck-Lieder*, setting her poetry, in 1857-8, shortly before this affair came to an abrupt end when his wife Minna intercepted one of his love-letters to Mathilde. A confrontation followed, after which Wagner left Zurich alone for Venice. In a letter to Mathilde dated 9 October 1858 he wrote: 'I have never done anything better than these songs, and few of my works will bear comparison with them'.

'Morgen' comes from **Richard Strauss's** *4 Lieder* Op. 27, written as a wedding present to his wife, the soprano Pauline de Ahna, in 1894. The poem is by John Henry Mackay, who was born in Greenock in Scotland to a German mother and a Scottish father. His father died before John was 2 years old, and mother and child moved to Germany. He became a campaigner for gay rights, though that terminology was not in use at that time. Writing under the pseudonym Sagitta, his works include *Die Bücher der Namenlosen Liebe* ('Books of the Nameless Love'), which were issued twice a year from 1905 to 1913, available by subscription only. Strauss knew Mackay personally, so it is inconceivable that he was unaware of Mackay's work. 'Morgen' expresses the hope of a future world in which everyone, regardless of their sexual orientation, can live in happiness, free from bigotry and discrimination, and be fully accepted for who they are.

Four of **Mahler's** five *Rückert Lieder* were written in the summer of 1901 while he was recuperating from a near-fatal haemorrhage. A fifth song, 'Liebst du um Schönheit', was written the following year and, like Strauss's 'Morgen' eight years previously, was presented as a gift to the composer's new wife, Alma Schindler. All the songs exist in both piano and orchestral versions, but because of its more intimate and personal nature, Mahler did not orchestrate 'Liebst du um Schönheit'. Friedrich Rückert was fluent in over 30 languages; he worked as a journalist and translator and was Professor of Oriental Languages at the University of Erlangen and later at the University of Berlin.

Two South African songs follow. 'Heimwee' is by **Stephanus Le Roux Marais**, who studied at the South African College of Music in Cape Town and then at

the Royal College of Music in London. He is seen as a pioneer of Afrikaans art song. The poem is by Jan Reinder Leonard van Bruggen, who was born in Johannesburg in 1895 shortly after his parents emigrated to South Africa from Holland. In his 20s he went to study in Europe, but soon returned to South Africa. He wrote, 'I was not happy [in Amsterdam]. It is always a mystery to me that I, who is a descendant of Dutch parents, could never live in Holland. The dripping winter air descending low over houses, streets and canals, the caged feeling that rows and rows of similar four-five-story houses make on one, and its lack of vistas and sun... It was during this period that I wrote my poem *Heimwee*'.

'Lala ho nna' is a traditional song expressing faith in God. It is in the Sotho language, which is one of the official languages of South Africa, and is the main language spoken in the landlocked kingdom of Lesotho, which is entirely surrounded by South Africa.

We end this afternoon's recital with four more songs of devotion. **May Brahe** (née Dickson) was born in 1884 in Melbourne, Australia. She worked as a piano accompanist and married her first husband Frederick Brahe at the age of 19. Nine years later she came to London, where she began to write songs - some under her married name, others under a series of male pseudonyms as many publishers would not issue her songs under a woman's name. 'Bless This House' was written when she was 43 and became by far the most popular of her nearly 400 published songs, the royalties of which enabled her to live in comfortable retirement back in Australia from the age of 55.

**Alma Bazel Androzzo** was a Black American pianist and composer, born in Tennessee in 1912. 'If I can help somebody' was written when she was 33 for the National Tuberculosis Society of America and has been recorded by numerous artists ranging from Gracie Fields to Sir Bryn Terfel.

'Amazing Grace' is the earliest published item in this programme. The words were written in 1772 by the English poet John Newton, who worked in the slave trade for nine years as captain of a series of slave ships, before converting to Christianity and campaigning for the abolition of the slave trade. He was ordained into the Church of England in 1764 and lived to see his life's goal of abolition in 1807, a few months before his death.

'Climb Ev'ry Mountain' is from the 1959 **Rodgers and Hammerstein** musical *The Sound of Music*, where it is sung by the Mother Abbess at the end of Act I. Like Strauss's 'Morgen', this is a song of hope for the future.

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## Richard Wagner (1813-1883)

### From *Wesendonck Lieder* (1857-8)

*Mathilde Wesendonck*

#### Stehe still!

Sausendes, brausendes Rad  
der Zeit,  
Messer du der Ewigkeit;  
Leuchtende Sphären im  
weiten All,  
Die ihr umringt den  
Weltenball;  
Urewige Schöpfung, halte  
doch ein,  
Genug des Werdens, lass  
mich sein!

Halte an dich,  
zeugende Kraft,  
Urgedanke,  
der ewig schafft!  
Hemmet den Atem, stillet  
den Drang,  
Schweigend nur eine  
Sekunde lang!  
Schwellende Pulse, fesselt  
den Schlag;  
Ende, des Wollens ew'ger  
Tag!

Dass in selig süßem  
Vergessen  
Ich mög alle Wonne  
ermessen!  
Wenn Auge in Auge  
wonnig trinken,  
Seele ganz in Seele  
versinken;  
Wesen in Wesen sich  
wiederfindet,  
Und alles Hoffens Ende  
sich kündigt,  
Die Lippe verstummt in  
staunendem Schweigen,  
Keinen Wunsch mehr will das  
Innre zeugen:  
Erkennt der Mensch des  
Ew'gen Spur,  
Und löst dein Rätsel, heil'ge  
Natur!

#### Stand still!

Rushing, roaring wheel of  
time,  
you that measure eternity;  
gleaming spheres in the  
vast universe,  
you that surround our  
earthly sphere;  
eternal creation  
– cease:  
enough of becoming, let  
me be!

Hold yourselves back,  
generative powers,  
Primal Thought, that  
always creates!  
Stop your breath, still  
your urge,  
be silent for a single  
moment!  
Swelling pulses, restrain  
your beating;  
eternal day of the Will –  
end!

That in blessed, sweet  
oblivion  
I might measure all my  
bliss!  
When eye gazes blissfully  
into eye,  
when soul drowns utterly  
in soul;  
when being finds itself in  
being,  
and the goal of every  
hope is near,  
when lips are mute in  
silent wonder,  
when the soul wishes for  
nothing more:  
then man perceives  
Eternity's footprint,  
and solves your riddle,  
holy Nature!

## Schmerzen

Sonne, weinest jeden  
Abend  
Dir die schönen  
Augen rot,  
Wenn im Meeresspiegel badend  
Dich erreicht der frühe Tod;

Doch erstehst in  
alter Pracht,  
Glorie der düstren Welt,  
Du am Morgen neu  
erwacht,  
Wie ein stolzer  
Siegesheld!

Ach, wie sollte ich da klagen,  
Wie, mein Herz, so schwer  
dich sehn,  
Muss die Sonne selbst  
verzagen,  
Muss die Sonne untergehn?

Und gebietet Tod  
nur Leben,  
Geben Schmerzen Wonne nur:  
O wie dank ich, dass  
gegeben  
Solche Schmerzen mir Natur!

## Agonies

Every evening, sun, you  
redden  
your lovely eyes with  
weeping,  
when, bathing in the sea,  
you die an early death;

Yet you rise in  
your old splendour,  
the glory of the dark world,  
when you wake in the  
morning  
as a proud and  
conquering hero!

Ah, why should I complain,  
why should I see you, my  
heart, so depressed,  
if the sun itself must  
despair,  
if the sun itself must set?

If only death gives birth to  
life,  
if only agony brings bliss:  
oh how I give thanks to  
Nature  
for giving me such agony!

## Richard Strauss (1864-1949)

### Morgen Op. 27 No. 4

(1894)

*John Henry Mackay*

Und morgen wird die Sonne  
wieder scheinen  
Und auf dem Wege, den ich  
gehen werde,  
Wird uns, die Glücklichen, sie  
wieder einen,  
Inmitten dieser  
sonnenatmenden Erde ...

Und zu dem Strand, dem  
weiten, wogenblauen,  
Werden wir still und langsam  
niedersteigen,  
Stumm werden wir uns in die  
Augen schauen,

Und auf uns sinkt des  
Glückes stummes  
Schweigen ...

### Tomorrow!

And tomorrow the sun  
will shine again  
and on the path that I  
shall take,  
it will unite us, happy  
ones, again,  
amid this same sun-  
breathing earth ...

And to the shore, broad,  
blue-waved,  
we shall quietly and  
slowly descend,  
speechless we shall gaze  
into each other's eyes,

and the speechless  
silence of bliss shall fall  
on us ...

*Please do not turn the page until the song and its accompaniment have ended.*

## Gustav Mahler (1860-1911)

### From *Rückert Lieder* (1901-2)

Friedrich Rückert

#### Blicke mir nicht in die Lieder

Blicke mir nicht in die Lieder!  
Meine Augen schlag' ich nieder,  
Wie ertappt auf böser Tat;  
Selber darf ich nicht getrauen,  
Ihrem Wachsen zuzuschauen:  
Deine Neugier ist Verrat!

Bienen, wenn sie Zellen bauen,  
Lassen auch nicht zu sich schauen,  
Schauen selbst auch nicht zu.  
Wenn die reichen Honigwaben  
Sie zu Tag befördert haben,  
Dann vor allen nasche du!

#### Ich atmet' einen linden Duft

Ich atmet' einen linden Duft.  
Im Zimmer stand Ein Zweig der Linde,  
Ein Angebinde Von lieber Hand;  
Wie lieblich war der Lindenduft!

Wie lieblich ist der Lindenduft!  
Das Lindenreis Brachst du gelinde;  
Ich atme leis Im Duft der Linde  
Der Liebe linden Duft.

#### Do not look into my songs!

Do not look into my songs!  
I lower my gaze, as if caught in the act;  
I cannot even dare to watch them growing:  
your curiosity is treason!

Bees, when they build cells,  
let no one watch either,  
and do not even watch themselves.  
When the rich honeycombs  
have been brought to daylight,  
you shall be the first to taste!

#### I breathed a gentle fragrance

I breathed a gentle fragrance.  
In the room stood a spray of lime,  
a gift from a dear hand;  
how lovely the fragrance of lime was!

How lovely the fragrance of lime is!  
The spray of lime was gently plucked by you;  
softly I breathe in the fragrance of lime  
the gentle fragrance of love.

## Um Mitternacht

Um Mitternacht hab' ich gewacht  
Und aufgeblickt zum Himmel;  
Kein Stern vom Sternengewimmel  
Hat mir gelacht um Mitternacht.

Um Mitternacht hab' ich gedacht  
Hinaus in dunkle Schranken  
Es hat kein Lichtgedanken  
Mir Trost gebracht um Mitternacht.

Um Mitternacht nahm ich in acht  
Die Schläge meines Herzens  
Ein einz'ger Puls des Schmerzens  
War angefacht um Mitternacht.

Um Mitternacht kämpft' ich die Schlacht,  
O Menschheit, deiner Leiden;  
Nicht konnt' ich sie entscheiden  
Mit meiner Macht um Mitternacht.

Um Mitternacht hab' ich die Macht  
In deine Hand gegeben:  
Herr über Tod und Leben,  
Du hältst die Wacht um Mitternacht.

## At midnight

At midnight I kept watch  
and looked up to heaven;  
not a star in the galaxy  
smiled on me at midnight.

At midnight my thoughts went out  
to the dark reaches of space;  
no shining thought brought me comfort at midnight.

At midnight I paid heed  
to the beating of my heart;  
a single pulse of pain was set alight at midnight.

At midnight I fought the fight,  
O Mankind, of your afflictions;  
I could not gain victory  
by my own strength at midnight.

At midnight I gave my strength  
into Thy hands:  
Lord over life and death,  
thou keepest watch at midnight.

## Liebst du um Schönheit

Liebst du um Schönheit,  
O nicht mich liebe!  
Liebe die Sonne,  
Sie trägt ein goldnes Haar.

Liebst du um Jugend,  
O nicht mich liebe!  
Liebe den Frühling,  
Der jung ist jedes Jahr.

Liebst du um Schätze,  
O nicht mich liebe!  
Liebe die Meerfrau,  
Sie hat viel Perlen  
klar.

Liebst du um Liebe,  
O ja mich liebe!  
Liebe mich immer,  
Dich lieb' ich immerdar.

## Ich bin der Welt abhanden gekommen

Ich bin der Welt abhanden  
gekommen,  
Mit der ich sonst viele Zeit  
verdorben.  
Sie hat so lange nichts von  
mir vernommen,  
Sie mag wohl glauben, ich sei  
gestorben.

Es ist mir auch gar nichts  
daran gelegen,  
Ob sie mich für gestorben  
hält.  
Ich kann auch gar nichts  
sagen dagegen,  
Denn wirklich bin ich  
gestorben der Welt.

Ich bin gestorben dem  
Weltgetümmel,  
Und ruh' in einem stillen  
Gebiet.  
Ich leb' allein in meinem  
Himmel,  
In meinem Lieben, in  
meinem Lied.

## If you love for beauty

If you love for beauty,  
O love not me!  
Love the sun,  
she has golden hair.

If you love for youth,  
O love not me!  
Love the spring  
which is young each year.

If you love for riches,  
O love not me!  
Love the mermaid  
who has many shining  
pearls.

If you love for love,  
ah yes, love me!  
Love me always,  
I shall love you ever more.

## I am lost to the world

I am lost to the  
world  
with which I used to  
waste much time;  
it has for so long heard  
nothing of me,  
it may well believe that I  
am dead.

Nor am I at all  
concerned  
if it should think me  
dead.  
Nor can I  
deny it,  
for truly I am dead to the  
world.

I am dead to the world's  
tumult  
and rest in a quiet  
realm.  
I live alone in my  
heaven,  
in my loving, in  
my song.

## Stephanus Le Roux Marais (1896-1979)

**Heimwee** (pub. 1930)  
*Jan Reinder Leonard van  
Bruggen*

My hart verlang na die  
stilte  
Van die wye wuiwende veld,  
Ver van die stadsgeluide  
En die klinkende klank van  
geld.

Ek is moeg vir die rus'lose  
lewe  
Van mense wat kom en gaan,  
'K Wil terug na die vrye  
ruimtes,  
Waar 'n siel in woon wat  
verstaan.

O, 'k sien weer die son op die  
velde  
En die ewige blou  
lug bo,  
En my hart skiet vol van  
heimwee,  
Wat drome bring in  
my oë.

O, ek sien weer die ylblou  
berge,  
Dààr vèr aan die westerkim,  
En 'k wonder nie meer  
waarom weemoed  
So seer uit my liedere  
klim;

Klim na die grys lug bo my,  
Waar die son in die miste  
kwyn,  
Want o, ek verlang na die  
velde,  
Na die ewige sonneskyn.

## Homesick

My heart longs for the  
silence  
of the wide waving field,  
far from the city noises  
and the ringing sound of  
money.

I am tired of the restless  
life  
of people who come and  
go,  
I want to go back to the  
free spaces,  
where a soul lives that  
understands.

Oh, I see the sun on the  
fields again  
and the eternal blue sky  
above,  
and my heart is full of  
homesickness,  
which brings dreams to  
my eyes.

Oh, I see the rare blue  
mountains again,  
over there to the west,  
and I no longer wonder  
why melancholy  
so hurt, climbs out of my  
songs;

Climb to the gray sky  
above me,  
where the sun fades into  
the mists,  
why oh, I long for the  
fields,  
for the eternal sunshine.

*Please do not turn the page until the song and its accompaniment  
have ended.*

## Trad/South African

### Lala ho nna

*Traditional*

Lala ho nna Shoalane  
e oele  
Merithi ya boshego  
ke Uena  
Ba neng ba nthusa, ba  
tsamaile  
Uena Morena, tlo lala  
ho nna

*Henry Francis Lyte*

### May Brahe (1884-1956)

#### Bless This House (1927)

*Helen Taylor*

Bless this house, O Lord we pray,  
Make it safe by night and day;  
Bless these walls, so firm and stout,  
Keeping want and trouble out;  
Bless the roof and chimneys tall,  
Let Thy peace lie over all;  
Bless this door, that it may prove  
Ever open to joy and love.

Bless these windows shining bright,  
Letting in God's heav'nly light;  
Bless the hearth a-blazing there,  
With smoke ascending like a prayer.  
Bless the folk who dwell within;  
Keep them pure and free from sin.  
Bless us all that we may be  
Fit, O Lord, to dwell with Thee.

Bless us all that one day we  
May dwell, O Lord, with thee.

### Alma Bazel Androzzo (1912-2001)

#### If I can help somebody (1946)

*Alma Bazel Androzzo*

If I can help somebody, as I pass along,  
If I can cheer somebody, with a word or song,  
If I can show somebody, that he's travelling wrong,  
Then my living shall not be in vain.

### Abide with me

Abide with me, fast falls  
the eventide,  
the darkness deepens  
Lord, with me abide.  
When other helpers fail  
and comforts flee,  
help of the helpless, oh,  
abide with me.

If I can do my duty, as a good man ought,  
If I can bring back beauty, to a world up wrought,  
If I can spread love's message, as the Master taught,  
Then my living shall not be in vain.

## Traditional

### Amazing Grace

*John Newton*

Amazing grace!  
How sweet the sound,  
That saved a wretch like me.  
I once was lost, but now am found,  
Was blind, but now I see.

'Twas grace that taught  
My heart to fear,  
And grace my fears relieved.  
How precious did that grace appear  
The hour I first believed.

The Lord has promised good to me  
His word my hope secures;  
He will my shield and portion be  
As long as life endures.

### Richard Rodgers (1902-1979)

#### The Sound of Music (1959)

*Oscar Hammerstein II*

#### Climb Ev'ry Mountain (1959)

Climb ev'ry mountain,  
Search high and low...

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