

WIGMORE HALL

Saturday 28 October 2023
1.00pm

Errollyn Wallen piano, voice

Errollyn Wallen What Shall I Sing?
My Hitler
Jesus on a Train
What's up Doc?
Greenwich Variations
North
Daedalus
Meet Me at Harold Moores
Louis' Loops
Peace on Earth
The Lighthouse
Hurricane of Love

After the concert, Errollyn Wallen will be signing copies of her forthcoming book *Becoming a Composer* (published by Faber).



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MY SONGS

The songs I am singing for you today came unbidden and were written from my heart in a state of grace. Sometimes the words chase the music or sometimes it's the other way round but it always feels like an adventure.

When I started to write my songs I had no idea that I would eventually be singing them myself at the piano, here at Wigmore Hall.

GREENWICH VARIATIONS

I wrote this piano piece in 2000 for myself to play. I was inspired by the river Thames which flows outside my window in Greenwich, by a Ray Charles song and by the theme of Bach's *Goldberg Variations*. The work was commissioned by Leicester New Walk Museum in 1999.

This piece is dedicated to the memory of the great jazz pianist, Michel Petrucciani.

LOUIS' LOOPS

Louis' Loops was written to be performed on a Schoenhut toy piano. I have since performed it many times myself on the 'big' piano and have always thought that it would also sound well on the harpsichord. In fact, when I was composing *Louis' Loops* I decided to revisit one of my neglected loves - the French Clavecin School - and, in this particular instance, Louis Couperin (1626-61). Absorbed into *Louis' Loops* are snippets of three dance movements by Couperin - *Courante*, *Sarabande en Canon* and *Canaries*.

Louis' Loops was commissioned by Charles Amirkhanian and Other Minds Festival, San Francisco and premièred by Margaret Leng Tan in 1999. It is dedicated to my cousin and godson, Louis Wallen, hence the nursery rhyme fragments appearing every so often in the piece.

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Errollyn Wallen

What Shall I Sing?

Errollyn Wallen

Sing, sing, what shall I sing?
This heart has turned into a pudding string.
Cry, cry, no more to be done
Though the sea has been emptied and a journey begun.

Sing, sing, yes, that's what they say
Though the sea has been emptied
And I've been carried away.
Cry, cry, no more to be done.
Though pain has undone me,
Pain has undone me.

In the arms of a man.

Sing, sing, what shall I sing?
This heart has turned into a pudding string.
Cry, cry, no more to be done
Though the sea has been emptied and a journey begun.

Sing, sing, yes, that's what they say
Though the sea has been emptied
And I've been carried away.
Laugh, yes.

As soon as I can.

My Hitler

Errollyn Wallen

Butter wouldn't melt in your mouth

Sunshine only...

When I look at you

They say love is blind.

But now I see.

First I couldn't sleep

Then I couldn't eat at all

Thought the world was ours alone

People said, 'Pull yourself together —
you know this foolishness can't surely last.'

Not me.

I feel so fine.

Jesus on a Train

Errollyn Wallen

Rolling hills go past this place I'm in,
Rolling land reminds me that I can
Fall from grace.

Half this world will eat their sandwiches —
So confident that life was and shall remain
So sure,
So sure.

The middle of the night finds him crying
And the stone is covered with blood,
Children huddle from bullets raining down
And so hungry.
And while you talk I see pain buried deep in your lips
And on your hand gold tells me
Nothing about love.

Still we're sure,
So sure.

Rolling hills go past this place I'm in,
Rolling land reminds me that I can
Fall from grace.

Rolling hills, rolling hills,
Rolling hills,

Yet we're still so sure.

Rolling hills.

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

What's up Doc?

Errollyn Wallen

Sometimes I get so lonely that
I eat the television
Sometimes I get so lazy that
I eat the television

What's up Doc?
What's up Doc?
Is it the words you say
Or the way you say it?

Sometimes I get so cold that I,
I hug the television
Sometimes I get so crazy that
I hug the television

What's up Doc?
What's up Doc?
Is it the words you say
Or the way you say it?

The tears fall in my soup
And dance around the room
To the tune that's in the news
Everyone sings
Everyone is smiling
The colours on the screen
Confound my misery

Sometimes I get so weary that
I drink the television
Sometimes I get so churlish that
I drink the television

What's up Doc?
What's up Doc?
Now is it the words you say
Or the way you say it?

The tears fall in my soup
And dance around the room
To the tune that's in the news
Everyone sings
And everyone is smiling
The colours on the screen
Confound my misery

What's up Doc?
What's up Doc?
Mmm...is it the words you say
Or the way you say it?

What's up Doc?
What's up Doc?
Now is it the words you say
Or the way you say it?

Sometimes I get so lonely that
I eat the television
Sometimes I get so crazy that
I eat the television

What's up Doc?
What's up Doc?
Is it the words you say
Or the way you say it?

What's up Doc?
What's up Doc?
Is it the words you say
Or the
Way you say it?

Greenwich Variations

North: The Seven Mountains

Errollyn Wallen

When the wind is in the north,
When the mountains sigh.
That is when I'll take my boat
And sail without a cause.

I'll sail by night and think by day,
I'll sail by night and I'll think by day,
I'll sail by night and I'll think all day of
North.

When the stars are beating fast,
When the dark is light,
That is when I'll steal my way
And I'll gird these spirits tight.

I'll sail by night and think by day,
I'll sail by night and I'll think by day,
I'll sail by night and I'll drink all day of
North.

...of North,

When I lighted to this place,
When I smelled the sea,
I knew I'd be here again,
It's where I want to be.

I need to feel cold,
Feel the sea,
I wanna be a part of ice and storm.
I want to hold you,
Your cold, cold heart,
My arms outstretched to greet the dawn.

I'm gonna sail by night and think all day,
I'll sail by night and I'll think all day,
I'll sail by night and I'll drink all day of
North.

North.

Daedalus

Errollyn Wallen

Is this the life you would have hoped for?
Is this the life you would have died for?

But how things change
Yet stay the same

Is the life you would have wished for?
Is this the life you would have killed for?

But how things change
Yet stay the same

Can you still find him?
Can you still find him?

Will you still find him?

He is fallen,
Fallen to the sea

Are these the things you would have talked about?
Are these his wings you would have dreamt about?

But how things change
Yet stay the same

Can you still find him?
Can you still find him?

Will you still find him?
He is fallen.

Fallen to the sea

Fallen

to

the

sea.

Yes, you can find him

Meet Me at Harold Moores

Errollyn Wallen

Just an ordinary day
You meet me at Harold Moores

The place you love to go.
My heart was so insistent that the coffee was too weak
At the Bar Italia.

Ooh and it's getting late

But you say, 'Let's go dancing,
Let's go dancing,
Watch a film then go dancing.'

Now the streets are wet with God's tears
Now the streets are wet with God's tears
And yours and mine.
Too much to ask to be ordinary.

Just an ordinary day
You greet me at Harold Moores
The place you love to go
With books under your arm.

Let's go dancing
When the evening is laid out against the sky
Let's go dancing
Wipe God's tears from your eyes.

Then we'll walk home
Then we'll run right home.

Walk me home
From Harold Moores.

Louis' Loops

Peace on Earth

Errollyn Wallen

And snow falls down on me.
Peace on earth.
The night is dark and soft.
Peace on earth.
The lights that sparkle in the square,
The smoke that lingers in the air.
Peace on earth.

And grace falls down on me.
Peace on earth.
The dark will turn aside.
Peace on earth.
The fires that burn in every hearth
Do sing our praise of Christmas past.
Peace on earth.

Hear them singing.

Peace on earth.

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

The Lighthouse

Errollyn Wallen

The sun is shining on the water
And people come and go
The sky is bluer than it's been for years and years
And people come and go

This isn't everything from you.

We were learning Bach for two pianos
And what about that meal I'd promised you?
You were such a gentle man
And the days grow short in this July.

This isn't everything from you.

For every time I think of you
And every time we speak your name
The sun will be shining on the water
And the sky will be bluer than it's been for years and
years
And Ron, you're not forgotten here.

This isn't everything from you.

Hurricane of Love

Errollyn Wallen

I know the place where lovers go,
I know the songs they sing.
I know that life is not for me,
That bells don't ring.
And call me foolish,
Call me proud
But there's more to love than more than mortal love.

*There's rain in my heart
But there's blood in my veins
There's a hole in my pocket
But there's wind in my sails.
Anger at injustice but I'll always be free.
'Cos I'm a hurricane of love.*

I know the place where lovers go,
I know the songs they sing.
I know those promises,
Those little diamond rings.
And call me foolish,
Call me proud
But there's more to love than more than mortal love.

*There's rain in my heart
But there's blood in my veins
There's a hole in my pocket
But there's wind in my sails.
Anger at injustice but I'll always be free.
'Cos I'm a hurricane of love.*

Wherever you go there's someone who knows your
name.

Don't go and give it all away,
Just to one.

*There's rain in my heart
But there's blood in my veins
There's a hole in my pocket
But there's wind in my sails.
Anger at injustice but I'll always be free.
'Cos I'm a hurricane of love.*