

# WIGMORE HALL

Friday 8 March 2024  
1.00pm

Trish Clowes saxophone  
Ross Stanley piano  
Clare Wheeler vocalist  
Liz Swain vocalist  
Tara Minton vocalist

Trish Clowes (b.1984)	Decently Ripped (2017)
Traditional	The Month of January <i>arranged by Trish Clowes</i>
Trish Clowes	Wake Up (2023)
Lili Boulanger (1893-1918)	Pie Jesu (1918) <i>arranged by Trish Clowes</i>
Geri Allen (1957-2017)	Skin (1989) <i>arranged by Trish Clowes</i>
Trish Clowes	Do You Play? <i>based on Maurice Duruflé (2023)</i>
Nikki Iles (b.1963)	Awakening (2018) <i>arranged by Trish Clowes</i>

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This concert celebrates my new duo album *Journey to Where* with pianist Ross Stanley, and International Women's Day. As well as performing music from the album, I have arranged several other pieces of music by some of my favourite female composers. Much of my ever-evolving duo repertoire with Ross draws on an array of vocal music traditions, and so it seems only appropriate to augment our sound with a trio of vocalists for this concert – Clare Wheeler, Liz Swain and Tara Minton.

The concert opens with two pieces from *Journey to Where*: my own *Decently Ripped* and the folksong *The Month of January* - the opening piece performed as saxophone and piano duo, and the second with the vocal quartet, who then remain on stage with us for the rest of the concert. *Decently Ripped* is a contrafact, inspired by the improvisations of Wayne Shorter on the jazz standard *Just in Time*, a song written by Jule Styne (music), and Betty Comden and Adolph Green (lyrics). I discovered this particular performance from a bootleg recording of a gig he played at the Village Vanguard in New York in 1965. The title is, according to a reliable source, one of Shorter's nicknames, owing to his calm demeanour at after-show events back in the day. As for *The Month of January*, I was drawn to this folksong after discovering a recording of the exquisite June Tabor performing it solo. Having the vocal quartet with Ross and me on this concert means the lyrics of the song can be heard, which, given the celebration of International Women's Day, seem amusingly appropriate (once you've read or heard them).

*Wake Up* is one of my most recent compositions, and it is a celebration of vocalist Clare Wheeler's dedication to her motherhood, using syllables taken from a recording of her young son, Isaac, 'scatting'. The title is a quote from one of Isaac's favourite TV shows, which he often plays on repeat (I discovered this during a visit last summer).

*Pie Jesu* and *Skin* were each discovered through recommendation by Nikki Iles, the iconic British pianist-composer, who is also a treasured friend (more on Nikki and her piece *Awakening* shortly). *Pie Jesu* was written by Lili Boulanger towards the end of her life - she tragically died at the age of 24. My favourite recording of this piece is the very first one, supervised by her sister Nadia Boulanger, with Igor

Markevitch conducting the Lamoureux Orchestra. The melodies and harmonies are utterly transfixing and, for me, are still as fresh and contemporary as they were when originally penned. Turning to Geri Allen's *Skin*, this piece is originally from Allen's 1989 album *Twilight*. Allen is a visionary pianist-composer who grew up in Detroit, and I first came across her playing through her work with Wayne Shorter, in particular on his album *Joy Ryder*. A couple of personal favourites from her incredible body of work are her solo album *Homegrown*, and the live album with her group Timeline featuring tap dancer Maurice Chestnut. Allen is a hero to so many musicians everywhere, including Nikki Iles, Craig Taborn, Kris Davis - the list goes on... I find her sense of melody, harmony and groove utterly infectious and unique, and I just keep learning more and more from her work the deeper I dive into it.

*Do You Play?* is another very new piece of mine. It is written in response to Marcel Duruflé's use of harmony in his *Requiem*, which Ross Stanley recommended to me very recently. I also wrote some lyrics - I hereby invite the reader-listener to reflect on what they might refer to...

To finish our concert, we will play *Awakening* by Nikki Iles. I commissioned this piece from Nikki in 2018 for a small contemporary music festival I have run in the past, *Emulsion* (2012-2018). Nikki repurposed it for big band, and has since released it on her new album *Face to Face* with the NDR Big Band (Germany), with whom she has been Composer-in-Residence in recent times. Nikki kindly gave her blessing for me to re-arrange it again, especially for this concert. I hope you enjoy the results.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank everyone involved with the new album *Journey to Where*, which was also recorded at Wigmore Hall. This album, and its release, has been a long time coming. So, thank you to John Gilhooly and his team; to my husband Chris Kelly, who recorded, mixed and mastered the audio; to Sam Slater at Stoney Lane Records for putting out the album, and his graphic designer Keith Dodds; and to violist and artist Triona Milne, who created the artwork featured on the album cover.

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**Trish Clowes** (b.1984)

**Decently Ripped** (2017)

## Traditional

**The Month of January**

arranged by Trish Clowes

*Traditional*

It was in the month of January, the hills all clad with snow  
It was over hills and valley my true love he did go  
It was then I met a pretty young girl with a salt tear in her  
eye  
She had a baby in her arms and bitter she did cry

Oh cruel was my father that he barred the door to me  
And cruel was my mother that dreadful crime to see  
Cruel was my own true love that he changed his mind for  
gold  
And cruel was that winter's night that pierced my heart  
with cold

For the taller that the palm tree grows the sweeter is the  
bark  
And the fairer that a young man speaks, the falser is his  
heart  
For he'll kiss you and embrace you till he thinks he has you  
won  
Then he'll go away and leave you all for some other one

So come all you pretty fair maidens and a warning take by  
me  
Never try and build your nest at the top of a high tree  
For the green leaves they will wither and the branches all  
decay  
And the beauty of a young man it soon will fade away...

## Trish Clowes

**Wake Up** (2023)

**Lili Boulanger** (1893-1918)

**Pie Jesu** (1918)

arranged by Trish Clowes

*Liturgical text*

Pie Jesu Domine, Dona eis requiem.	Merciful Jesus, give them rest.
Pie Jesu Domine, Dona eis requiem sempiternam.	Merciful Jesus, give them everlasting rest.
Amen.	Amen.

**Geri Allen** (1957-2017)

**Skin** (1989)

arranged by Trish Clowes

## Trish Clowes

**Do You Play?** (2023)

based on Maurice Duruflé

*Trish Clowes*

Do you play  
In any way  
That makes me stay,  
Rather than stray?

Sing a wordless song to everyone.  
See what takes, see what catches on,  
To tell your tales, your stories.

Do you play?  
Can you say?

Humming lines for evermore.

Do you play  
In any way  
That makes me stay,  
Rather than stray?

Sing a wordless song to everyone.

Tell your tales,  
Tell your stories,  
For everyone.

Do you play?

**Nikki Iles** (b.1963)

**Awakening** (2018)

arranged by Trish Clowes