

WIGMORE HALL 125

Saturday 8 November 2025
11.00am

Rebecca Clarke Day Lecture-Recital I: An introduction to Rebecca Clarke

Kitty Whately mezzo-soprano
Nicholas Phan tenor
Anna Tilbrook piano
Leah Broad speaker
Christopher Johnson speaker

Rebecca Clarke (1886-1979)

Aufblick (1904)

Ah, for the Red Spring Rose (1904)

Return of Spring (c.1910) *world première*

Eight o'clock (1927)

Shy One (c.1912)

Tiger, Tiger (1929, rev. 1931)

The Donkey (1942)

Excerpt from *Binnorie* (?1941)



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Rebecca Clarke (1886-1979)

Aufblick (1904)

Richard Dehmel

Über unsre Liebe hängt
Eine tiefe Trauerweide.
Nacht und Schatten um uns
beide.
Unsre Stirnen sind gesenkt.

Gazing up

Above our love hangs
a deep weeping willow.
Night and shadow
envelop us.
Our brows are lowered.

Wortlos sitzen wir im
Dunkeln.
Einstmals rauschte hier ein
Strom,
Einstmals sahn wir Sterne
funkeln.

Wordless we sit in the
dark.
Once a river roared
here,
once we saw stars
sparkle.

Ist denn Alles tot und
trübe?
Horch —: ein ferner Mund —
vom Dom —:

Is everything, then, dead
and dismal?
Listen – a distant voice –
from the cathedral –

Glockenchöre... Nacht ... und
Liebe...

Choirs of bells... night...
and love.

Ah for the Red Spring Rose (1904)

Pedro Calderón de la Barca

Ah for the red spring rose,
Down in the garden growing,
Fading as fast as it blows,
Who shall arrest its going?
Peep from thy window and tell,
Fairest of flowers, Isabel.

Wither it would, but the bee
Over the blossom hovers,
And the sweet life ere it flee
With as sweet art recovers,
Sweetest at night in his cell,
Fairest of flowers, Isabel.

Return of Spring (c.1910)

Ssü-K'ung T'u

A lovely maiden, roaming
The wild dark valley through,
Culls from the shining waters
Lilies and lotus blue.
With leaves the peach-trees are laden,
The wind sighs through the haze,
And the willows wave their shadows
Down the oriole-haunted ways.
As, passion-tranced, I follow,
I hear the old refrain
Of Spring's eternal story,
That was old and is young again.

Eight o'clock (1927)

Alfred Edward Housman

He stood, and heard the steeple
Sprinkle the quarters on the morning town.
One, two, three, four, to market-place and people
It tossed them down.

Strapped, noosed, nighing his hour,
He stood and counted them and cursed his luck;
And then the clock collected in the tower
Its strength, and struck.

Shy One (c.1912)

William Butler Yeats

Shy one, shy one,
Shy one of my heart,
She moves in the firelight
Pensively apart.

She carries in the dishes,
And lays them in a row.
To an isle in the water
With her would I go.

She carries in the candles,
And lights the curtained room,
Shy in the doorway
And shy in the gloom;

And shy as a rabbit,
Helpful and shy.
To an isle in the water,
With her I would fly.

Tiger, Tiger (1929, rev. 1931)

William Blake

Tyger Tyger, burning bright,
In the forests of the night;
What immortal hand or eye,
Could frame thy fearful symmetry?

In what distant deeps or skies
Burnt the fire of thine eyes?
On what wings dare he aspire?
What the hand, dare seize the fire?

And what shoulder, & what art,
Could twist the sinews of thy heart?
And when thy heart began to beat,
What dread hand? & what dread feet?

What the hammer? what the chain,
In what furnace was thy brain?
What the anvil? what dread grasp,
Dare its deadly terrors clasp!

When the stars threw down their spears
And water'd heaven with their tears:
Did he smile his work to see?
Did he who made the Lamb make thee?

Tyger Tyger burning bright,
In the forests of the night:
What immortal hand or eye,
Dare frame thy fearful symmetry?

The Donkey (1942)

Gilbert Keith Chesterton

When fishes flew and forests walked
And figs grew upon thorn,
Some moment when the moon was blood
Then surely I was born.

With monstrous head and sickening cry
And ears like errant wings,
The devil's walking parody
On all four-footed things.

The tattered outlaw of the earth,
Of ancient crooked will;
Starve, scourge, deride me: I am dumb,
I keep my secret still.

Fools! For I also had my hour;
One far fierce hour and sweet:
There was a shout about my ears,
And palms before my feet.

Excerpt from *Binnorie* (?1941)

Traditional

There were twa sisters sat in a bower;
Binnorie, O Binnorie!
There came a knight to be their wooer,
By the bonnie milldams o' Binnorie.

He courted the eldest with glove and ring,
But he loved the youngest above all thing.

The eldest she was vexed sair,
And sair envied her sister fair.

Upon a morning fair and clear,
She cried upon her sister dear,

'O sister, sister, take my hand,
And let's go down to the river strand.'

She's ta'en her by the lily hand,
And led her down to the river-strand.'

The youngest stood upon a stone,
The eldest came and pushed her in.

'O sister, sister, reach your hand!
And ye shall be heir o' half my land.

O sister, reach me but your glove!
And sweet William shall be your love.'

Translation of Aufblick by © Richard Stokes.

Kitty Whately and Anna Tilbrook are delighted to announce that in January 2026, they will be working with the charity SWAP'ra to launch **The Rebecca Clarke Song Competition**, a new national competition celebrating Clarke and other British women composers of the past century. Singers and pianists are warmly encouraged to apply, and audiences will be invited to attend the public semi-final and final in central London. Applications close on 28 November. For more information please see swap-ra.org/rebecca-clarke-song-competition

For full information about Rebecca Clarke and her works, please see rebeccaclarkecomposer.com