

*Ilkley Concert Club*



[www.ilkeleyconcertclub.org.uk](http://www.ilkeleyconcertclub.org.uk)

**AILISH TYNAN** soprano  
**JAMES BAILLIEU** piano



**Wednesday 12th March 2025**  
**King's Hall**

THE TICKET OFFICE

## function offer

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# PROGRAMME

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## **Fauré**

Cinq Mélodies 'De Venise' op 58

## **Hahn**

Venezia 'Chansons en dialecte Vénitien'

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INTERVAL

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## **Herbert**

Six Children's Songs

more songs

by Herbert, together with Bridge, Barber and  
Herbert Hughes and traditional folk songs

# PROGRAMME NOTES

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**GABRIEL FAURE**  
(1845-1924)

**Cinq Mélodies 'De Venise' op 58**

Mandoline  
En sourdine  
Green  
À Clymène  
C'est l'extase

Fauré composed the first song of this cycle, *Mandoline*, in Venice in 1891 whilst staying with Winnaretta Singer, heiress of the sewing machine fortune who later became the Princess de Polignac. The complete work, settings of Paul Verlaine, was dedicated to the princess and first performed in Paris in 1892 by tenor Maurice Bagès with Fauré at the piano. Throughout all five songs Fauré employs a unifying musical motif which undergoes many subtle variations. His intention was to create 'a sort of Suite, a story'. Fast songs alternate with slow along with different piano textures; smooth arpeggios in songs 2 and 4, and staccato in 1, 3 and 5. The overall mood of the cycle is reflective and intimate; Fauré once advised a singer, 'above all, sing it as if to yourself. I have no desire to intrude my personal accents into other people's reveries.'

*First performance at ICC*

Duration: approx. 15 minutes

**REYNALDO HAHN**  
(1874-1947)

**Venezia 'Chansons en dialecte  
Vénitien'**

Sopra l'acqua indormenzada  
La barcheta  
L'avvertimento  
La biondina in gondoleta  
Che pecà!

Reynaldo Hahn de Echenagucia was born in Caracas into a German Jewish family which had emigrated to Venezuela in the 1840s. The family later moved to Paris where Hahn studied at the Conservatoire

under Jules Massenet, who became his mentor. He became a French citizen in 1907. In the 1890s, Hahn met Marcel Proust with whom he had a brief but intense affair: many of the musical references in Proust's great novel sequence, *À la recherche du temps perdu* are attributable to Hahn. He died in Paris and is buried close to Proust in the Père Lachaise Cemetery.

Hahn composed chamber and orchestral works and operas but he is best known today for his songs (*Mélodies*) of which he wrote over a hundred. His music has been described as being 'never truly of the twentieth century' and of 'evoking the spirit of fin de siècle Paris.' An excellent linguist, Hahn was fascinated by Venetian dialect and wrote this set of songs (in the dialect and in French) in 1901. Each song is dedicated to a friend with who he had spent time in Venice and the score is prefaced with a short guide to pronunciation.

*First performance at ICC*

Duration: approx. 14 minutes

## INTERVAL

*(Coffee, tea, and bar facilities available in the Winter Garden)*

**MURIEL HERBERT**  
**(1897-1948)**

**Six Children's Songs**

Merry-go-round

The Gypsies

The Tadpole

Jack Spratt

Acorn and Willow

The Bunny

Born in Sheffield, Muriel Herbert grew up in Liverpool. She was a pupil of Stanford at the Royal College of Music and a protégé of Roger Quilter. In 1925, she married French academic, Emile Delavenay and visited Paris where she met James Joyce who encouraged her to set his poetry to music (when he heard the results,

Joyce told her that, ‘the music is much too good for the words!’) Herbert’s songs have been unjustly neglected but in recent years, thanks to Ailish Tynan, tenor James Gilchrist, pianist David Owen Norris and Herbert’s daughter, the biographer Claire Tomalin, many have been performed, republished and recorded. Herbert’s style is gentle, humorous and infused with what Tomalin describes as ‘a passionate melancholy’. *Six Children’s Songs* dates from 1938 and sets words by Ada Harrison (1900-1958), a South African author who settled in London.

*First performance at ICC*

Duration: approx. 12 minutes

## MORE SONGS BY HERBERT AND OTHERS

Herbert’s **In the Days of November** sets words by Ada Harrison (see *Children’s Songs* above). **Lake Isle of Innisfree** is one of Herbert’s best known works, a lovely setting of the celebrated poem by W.B. Yeats (1865-1939).

The remainder of Ailish Tynan’s programme mixes Irish songs by Herbert Hughes with a variety of settings of James Joyce (1882-1941). Herbert Hughes (1882-1937) was born in Belfast and was a great admirer of Joyce. Together with Arthur Bliss, he commissioned and published a selection of Joyce settings from *Pomes Penyeach* (1927) as *The Joyce Book* (1931). He was the father of jazz musician and writer, Spike Hughes. He is best known today for his arrangements of Irish traditional music, of which he published at least four volumes. These employ the advanced harmony of 20th century composers such as Debussy and include **The Spanish Lady** and **Tigaree Torum Orum**. **Marry me Now** sets words by James Bernard Fagan (1873-1933), the Irish playwright and theatre manager who first brought the work of Chekhov and O’Casey to the British stage.

Two of the James Joyce settings are love songs from his early collection - *Chamber Music* (1907). The (uncharacteristically) uncomplicated lyric of **Goldenhair** gains a fluent setting from Frank Bridge (1879-1941), the teacher of Benjamin Britten. The other is **Bid Adieu to girlish days** which has a tune also by Joyce, who was

himself a fine amateur tenor and loved to perform. American composer Edmund Pendleton (1899-1987), a resident of Paris for many years and a friend of Joyce, made the arrangement in 1949, after Joyce's death.

Samuel Barber's (1910-1981) **Nuvoletta**, the only freestanding song of his maturity, takes words he selected from three pages from Joyce's *Finnegans Wake* (1939) which the composer freely admitted he did not fully understand; he 'set them instinctively, as abstract music, almost like a vocalise.' James Quillian, in a survey of the composer's songs, wrote, 'No matter that the words are somewhat strange; the music is positively captivating and a joy to perform.'

The saddest of all Barber's Joyce songs is **Solitary Hotel**, the fourth song in *Despite & Still*, op 41. This five-song suite was written during a period of depression following the failure of his opera *Antony and Cleopatra*. Adapted from the 'Ithaca' catechism in *Ulysses* (1922), the song begins with Stephen Daedalus's playful idea for an intriguing setting: a 'love-at-first-sight' encounter – the setting juxtaposes a punctuated melodic line against a passionate tango-like accompaniment.

Finally, a song with no Joyce connection, **Pregnant**, by the American composer Libby Larsen (b 1950), is a slice of all-too-real life which Ailish Tynan has very much made her own. Adapted from an anecdote by the American memoirist and writer, Cheryl Strayed (b 1968), it is part of a twelve-song cycle called *The Birth Project* which was prompted by the realisation that 'there is little, if any, art song literature about the experience itself told from the birthing mother's perspective'. The cycle begins with two songs, including this one, about 'discovering you are pregnant' and ends with '*I did it!*'

*First performances at ICC*

Duration: approx. 25 minutes

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# **AILISH TYNAN** soprano

## **JAMES BAILLIEU** piano

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It is a privilege to welcome Ailish Tynan to our concert venue along with her accompanist James Baillieu, both artists making their first appearance at the Ilkley Concert Club.

**Ailish Tynan** was born in Mullingar, Ireland and studied at Trinity College Dublin and the Royal Irish Academy of Music before continuing her studies at the Guildhall School of Music and Drama in London. In 2003 she won the prestigious Rosenblatt Recital Song Prize at the Cardiff Singer of the World competition and has also won many other prizes including the John McCormack Golden Voice of Athlone award in 2000. Ailish was a member of the Vilar Young Artist Programme at the Royal Ballet and Opera and a BBC New Generation Artist, where she recorded and performed prolifically with the BBC orchestras and in recital. She made her Royal Opera House debut as Papagena in *Die Zauberflöte*, followed by Wood Nymph in *Rusalka*.

In the current season Ailish makes a long awaited return to both English National Opera and Glyndebourne, firstly as Governess in Benjamin Britten's *Turn of the Screw*, a highly regarded performance, 'Ailish Tynan sings the governess with an, at times, ravishing purity' (*The Guardian* October 2024), and ends the season as Berta in Rossini's *Barber of Seville* at Glyndebourne. She also performs Christine in the world premiere of *Festen* by Mark-Anthony Turnage for the Royal Ballet and Opera. Concerts include Handel *Messiah* at the National Concert Hall and Orff *Carmina Burana* at the Royal Festival Hall.

Ailish is a passionate recitalist and works regularly with pianists including Iain Burnside, James Baillieu, Graham Johnson and Simon Lepper and has given recitals at venues and festivals including Wigmore Hall, Edinburgh, City of London, Gregynog, St. Magnus, Brighton and West Cork, the *Vinterfespill*, and for the *Prince of Monaco* at the Irish Embassy in Paris. She performed the world premiere of *Nuits d'Afrique* written for her by Dame Judith Weir at Wigmore Hall.

Her numerous recordings include Fauré *Mélodies*, *Nacht und Traume*, and *An Irish Songbook* with pianist Iain Burnside, Handel *Messiah*



with the Academy of Ancient Music and Mahler Symphony 8 for both Lorin Maazel with the Philharmonia Orchestra and Valery Gergiev with the London Symphony Orchestra. For the BBC Ailish has presented several episodes of Saturday Classics and has appeared on Proms Extra as a TV pundit. Additionally, she has been a jury member for the Song Prize at BBC Cardiff Singer of the World.

**James Baillieu** is described by The Daily Telegraph as ‘in a class of his own’ and is one of the leading song and chamber pianists of his generation. He has given solo and chamber recitals throughout the world and collaborates with a wide range of singers and instrumentalists including Benjamin Appl, Jamie Barton, Ian Bostridge, Timothy Ridout, Lise Davidsen and Dame Kiri te Kanawa amongst others. As a soloist, he has appeared with the Ulster Orchestra, English Chamber Orchestra, and the Wiener Kammer-symphonie.

Highlights of his recent season include a recital tour with Lise Davidsen at venues including the Metropolitan Opera House New York, the Palau de les Arts Reina Sofia, the Wigmore Hall, and the Wiener Staatsoper. He performed at Fundacion Juan March and in venues across Japan with Benjamin Appl, at the Festival du Perigord Pourpre and Festival van Vlaanderen with Veronique Gens, at the Concertgebouw with Jess Gillam, and at the Gran Teatre del Liceu and Salzburg Easter Festival with Lise Davidsen and Freddie de Tommaso.

James was a prize winner of the Wigmore Hall Song Competition, Das Lied International Song Competition, Kathleen Ferrier and Richard Tauber Competitions, and was selected for representation by Young Classical Artist Trust (YCAT) in 2010 and in 2012 received a Borletti-Buitoni Trust Fellowship and a Geoffrey Parsons Memorial Trust Award.

An innovative programmer, he has curated many song and chamber music festivals including series for the Brighton Festival, Wigmore Hall, BBC Radio 3, Verbier Festival, Bath International Festival and Perth Concert Hall. James Baillieu is a Senior Professor of Ensemble Piano at the Royal Academy of Music, a coach for the Jette Parker Young Artist Programme at the Royal Opera House, a course leader for the Samling Foundation, and is head of the Song Program at the Atelier Lyrique of the Verbier Festival Academy.

Compiled by Paul Hurst

# CLUB NOTES

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## **Patron's donations**

The committee have been reviewing our subscription pricing structure, and as a consequence, we have concluded there should be a change.

As members are aware we are not fully subscribed and the need for a Patron's donation is now much less easily justified. For the coming season we are proposing the abolition of the Patron's donation. Existing members will still have priority booking, as in previous years, and the current system of priority for seat booking will continue.

Donations will continue to be very helpful to the Club, especially if combined with gift aid, to maintain our value-for-money pricing. There will still be an option for members to make a donation when applying for the 2025/26 subscription.

The new subscription rates will be £115 (2024: £105) for the boxes and balcony, £102 (2024: £95) for rows C-P in the stalls and £90 (2024: £85) for rows Q-T. We believe these prices are excellent value, given the quality of the artists that perform at the Club.

## **Getting to know the Committee**

Members who have joined the Club since the pandemic year have missed out on the opportunity of meeting Committee members at a reception at the beginning of the season, as was the habit for a few years before that.

The Committee have decided to try to rectify this omission by holding two receptions before our last two concerts of the season. If you have recently joined the Club you will receive an invitation with the date of your reception by e-mail.

## **Help Musicians collection**

This will take place at our May concert. If you are able to help by standing near an exit after the show with a donation bucket, please contact Robert Templar.

Chris Skidmore, Chair

# NEXT CONCERT

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**WEDNESDAY 2 APRIL 2025**

**Concert 7:30pm**

## **SAMUELE TELARI** accordion **TABEA DEBUS** recorder



The programme

Shards of Light – tracks the minimal variations of the smallest musical ‘shards’. They can be found in dances from the Renaissance or in a sonata by Bach but are also found in Eastern European folk music and works by contemporary composers.

### **Ticket Sales**

Contact Lindsey Wharmby

Email preferred: [concertclubilkley@gmail.com](mailto:concertclubilkley@gmail.com) OR 07791 083326.

### **Members**

Please let Lindsey know in good time if you can't come.

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