

Lunchtime Concert: Betts-Dean and Havlat

9 October 2020



Bequest of Morton D. May

Ernst Schoen's Sonic World: Modernist Songs of Art and Resistance

This concert explores the sonic world of the anti-fascist radio producer and composer Ernst Schoen.

Schoen's work is being performed by Lotte Betts-Dean, with Joseph Havlat accompanying on the piano.

Programme

Part one: music for friends

Paul Hindemith, From 9 English Songs (1942-44)

- No. 2: Echo (90")
- No. 7: Sing on there in the Swap (120")

Edgard Varèse, Un grand sommeil noir (1906) (180")

Ernst Schoen, Sechs Gedichte von Fritz Heinle (1932) (480")

- No. 1: Denying all mercy
- No. 2: When I awake each morning
- No. 3: Over the hill
- No. 4: Believe that you remain
- No. 5: Sweet pain, silent pain
- No. 6: Jubilation was served

Part two: music for children

Karol Szymanowski, Children's Rhymes Op. 49 (1922-23)

- No 1: Przed zaśnięciem (Before bedtime) (60")

Ernst Schoen, Sechs Lieder für Kinder für Singstimme und Klavier (1927) (180")

- No. 1: Introduction
- No. 2: Dialogue
- No. 3: "C'est la Nature!"
- No. 4: Mishaps rarely come alone
- No. 5: Tenderness
- No. 6: A, b, c

Part three: music for dance/the stage

Gian Francesco Malipiero, from Omaggi (1920)

- a un pappagallo (110")

Lord Berners (Sir Gerald Hugh Tyrwhitt-Wilson), 3 petites marches funèbres (1916)

- No 2: pour un canari (165")

Gian Francesco Malipiero, from Omaggi (1920)

- a un elefante (210")

Alfredo Casella, 11 pezzi infantili, op.35 (1920)

- No 10: X-Berceuse (90")

Lord Berners (Sir Gerald Hugh Tyrwhitt-Wilson), 3 petites marches funèbres (1916)

- No 1: pour un homme d'état (180")
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Part four: music for politics

Ernst Schoen, Das Anti-Hitler-Lied (1941) (120")

Ernst Schoen, Das Heimkehrlied (N/K) (120")

Mischa Spoliansky, Das Lila Lied (1920) (150")

Finale

Arnold Schoenberg, from Brettli-Lieder (1901)

- Galathea (180")

Due to unforeseen circumstances Samuel Draper will not be able to perform as previously advertised, and the programme has been slightly altered.

An introduction to the work of Ernst Schoen

Ernst Schoen (1894–1960) settled in London after fleeing Nazi imprisonment and persecution in 1934. This concert begins with work by his two musical mentors: Paul Hindemith (1895–1963) and Edgard Varèse (1883–1965), sung by Lotte Betts-Dean and accompanied by Joseph Havlat.

These precede the first song cycle by Schoen, from 1932, presented here in a UK premiere. The cycle's six songs are dedicated to the memory of his friend, the poet Fritz Heinle, whose words are used in the setting. Heinle and his girlfriend, Rika Seligson, were members of the Youth Movement, critical of Wilhelmine power and militarism. They gassed themselves in August 1914, in protest at the outbreak of war.

From these songs we turn to a lighter note, to Schoen's six songs for children. They are short, snappy and playful, first dedicated to Nina, Schoen's daughter, but no doubt they were also played to Alexander ("Sasha"), his second child, born in 1929, who now lives in London with his wife Leda – both of whom we are delighted to welcome in our virtual audience today.

We then turn to a selection of piano music, compiled by Samuel Draper for this concert. This is music that accompanied the dancer Henri Châtin Hofmann (1900-1961) on a series of dance evenings in Berlin in 1923 and 1924, recently reconstructed in Warsaw. In a geometrically-patterned jumpsuit, with slats of wood strapped to his arms, Henri danced to Schoen's music alongside 21 other composers.

For today's finale, we return to song, with two political anthems by Schoen, the first defiantly against Hitler and the second a musing on returning home, to a Germany on the point of collapsing into ruins. Following this, we hear "The Lavender Song", often considered the queer liberation anthem of the Weimar years, written in 1920 by Mischa Spoliansky (1898-1985), with lyrics by Kurt Schwabach. Time permitting, Lotte and Joseph will sing us out with Arnold Schoenberg (1874-1951), at his most toneful and lush: "Galathea" from the *Brettli-Lieder*, with lyrics by Frank Wedekind, from 1901.

The idea for this concert was kindled by investigations undertaken by Esther Leslie (Birkbeck College, University of London) and Sam Dolbear (ICI-Berlin), with financial support from The Lipman-Miliband Trust. For more on this project and to see the dance from Warsaw, please visit: audio.maydayrooms.org/ernst-schoen-files

Meet our performers

Praised by *The Guardian* for her “irrepressible sense of drama and unmissable, urgent musicality”, Australian mezzo-soprano Lotte Betts-Dean’s wide-ranging repertoire encompasses contemporary music, art song, chamber music, opera and early music. Performance highlights include recitals at Wigmore Hall, Barbican Centre’s Sound Unbound Festival, and appearances with Melbourne Symphony Orchestra, English Chamber Orchestra. Read Lotte’s full bio here: lottebettsdean.com

Joseph Havlat was born in Hobart, Australia, and studied at the Royal Academy of Music in London under Prof. Joanna MacGregor from 2012–18. He is currently a Young Artist at St. John’s Smith Square, and in 2019 was made Young Artist of the Oxford Lieder Festival alongside fellow Australian mezzo-soprano Lotte Betts-Dean, and was the winner of the keyboard section of the ROSL music competition. Read Joseph’s full bio here: josephhavlat.com

Discover the history of our lunchtime concerts



Music brings people together and offers comfort in difficult times, and our lunchtime concerts were first created as a way of raising morale during the Second World War.

Learn more about the history of our lunchtime concerts and the legacy of Dame Myra Hess through our online gallery: bishopsgate.org.uk/news/the-history-of-the-lunchtime-concerts

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