

## PROGRAM NOTES

by William Marsh, Chairman  
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**Franz Schubert** (1797-1828)

**Polonaise in D Major, D. 824**

**Allegro moderato and Andante, D. 968**

**Marche Militaire, D. 733**



Franz Schubert made two sets of Polish dances for piano 4 hands. The first set was intended to be used as educational pieces for the daughters of Count Johann Karl Esterházy, whom he was teaching at the Count's summer home in Zseliz, Hungary. The six Polonaises, D. 824, however, were intended to be published and to make him some very badly needed income. He succeeded handsomely; the pieces were published immediately and were quite successful.

This Polonaise is written in A B A form, the B section a contrasting trio. The trio section has been called the "best part" of his Polonaises, where Schubert might have felt that he could allow himself a bit more personal expression in contrast to the plainer, more rigid Polonaise rhythms.

His Allegro moderato and Andante were written around the same time, most likely while Schubert was teaching in Zseliz but were not published, like so many of his compositions, until long after his death, this time in the 1880's as a Sonatine.

Schubert wrote three Marches Militaires, this one being the most famous, and indeed one of Schubert's best-known works. He wrote these pieces also while he was staying in Zseliz and had intended them as teaching pieces. This Marche Militaire has gone beyond Schubert's wildest dreams for the piece and has been played perhaps more often than any other of his piano four-hands pieces, and it has been much quoted by others -- in Igor Stravinsky's "Circus Polka" and even in Walt Disney's short cartoon, "Santa's Workshop" for example.

**Frederick Delius** (1862-1934)

**On Hearing the First Cuckoo in Spring**

**A Song Before Sunrise**

(Arranged by Philip Heseltine)



By 1907, Frederick Delius's fame was well established. In the early years of the 20th century he wrote several of his most popular shorter works. Probably Delius's most famous piece is "On Hearing the First Cuckoo in Spring" (1911-12), which Heseltine arranged in 1913/14. It was published much later, in 1931. A critic once wrote, "These exquisite idylls, for all their composer's German descent and French domicile, spell 'England' for most listeners." The piece virtually defines Delius' idiom, but it is based on a Norwegian folk tune set as a piano work by Delius's friend Edvard Grieg. Delius dedicated "Cuckoo" to Balfour Gardiner, a wealthy composer and one of the "Frankfurt Gang."



"A Song Before Sunrise" (1918) was dedicated to Heseltine, whose piano duet arrangement dates from 1921. Robert Threlfall notes the similarity to a cock-crow in the closing measures.

Philip Heseltine was born in London in the Savoy Hotel and attended Eton College as a schoolboy. He became a Delius devotee after studying some orchestral scores. After hearing Sir Arthur Beecham conduct Delius in 1911, Heseltine wrote to Delius at Grez-sur-Loing, France, and became a lifetime friend and trusted colleague. "A Song Before Sunrise" (1918) was dedicated to Heseltine, whose piano duet arrangement dates from 1921.



C. W. Orr (1893-1976)

**A Cotswold Hill-Tune**

(Arranged by John Mitchell)



Charles Wilfred Orr was primarily a composer of songs, and his settings of poems by A. E. Housman especially are regarded by many as the finest of their kind. His works in other forms are very few, being the “Midsummer Dance” for cello and piano, and “Cotswold Hill-Tune.” This was originally written for string orchestra.

The conductor Eugene Goossens had visited C. W. Orr at his home in Painswick, Gloucestershire, in the summer of 1937; initially he had wanted the composer to orchestrate some of his songs, but Orr was unwilling to do this, and in fact never did. However, the idea for an orchestral piece probably stemmed from this visit, because in a letter to Orr dated 25th April 1938 Goossens wrote from Cincinnati acknowledging with pleasure receipt of the “Cotswold Hill-Tune” and saying he hoped to include it in the next season’s program. (There is no confirmation that he actually did so.)

In its original form the “Cotswold Hill-Tune” is a beautiful and effective piece for string orchestra, but had been sadly and unjustly neglected. Perhaps the recently renewed interest in Orr’s music will do something to remedy this, and this piano-duet arrangement could also help to enable a wider audience to explore the piece further. It was made by John Mitchell between 1971 and 1974 with the composer’s approval. Its first performance in this version was given by John Mitchell and Derek Foster on 30th April 1981 at Trent Park Music Centre, Enfield, at a concert promoted by “Compass.”

Although the title might suggest the piece is based on a folk-song, there is no evidence to indicate the melody is anything other than the composer’s own invention. What it does evoke is an atmosphere of that part of the English countryside where Orr spent the greater part of his life. His admiration for the music of Delius and Warlock, both of whom he knew well, can also be discerned.  
(These notes by Frank Bayford)

J. S. Bach (1685-1750)

**Sanctify Us By Thy Goodness**

(Arranged by Harriet Cohen)



Harriet Cohen was a much-admired pianist during the first half of the 20th century. Although she had small hands which couldn’t reach the interval of a tenth, she managed numerous solo pieces and concertos. Ralph Vaughan Williams dedicated his Piano Concerto to her, which she showed to Leopold Stokowski at a Philadelphia Orchestra rehearsal in the Academy of Music in 1931. The

Maestro wanted to do it a couple of seasons hence, but he was gone by then and a performance never occurred.



Miss Cohen was noted for her Bach transcriptions of various chorales, and “Sanctify Us By Thy Goodness” was arranged for the popular duo piano team of Ethel Bartlett and Rae Robinson. Around 1931 twelve English composers arranged Bach organ chorales as a tribute to Harriet in “A Bach Book for Harriet Cohen.”

In 1938 Harriet Cohen was made a Dame Commander of the Order of the British Empire. She wrote two books: "Music's Handmaids" (1936) -- a series of piano lessons -- and "A Bundle of Time," published posthumously in 1969. The former book was dedicated to composer Arnold Bax, whose mistress she was.

### **Delius-Heseltine In a Summer Garden**

Delius's orchestral rhapsody, "In a Summer Garden," which was completed and first performed in 1908, was fairly extensively revised by the composer before publication in 1911. It was Delius's own suggestion that Philip Heseltine should arrange it, and the present version for 4 hands on one piano was made in 1911-12. "It goes very well for piano duet; nothing whatever is omitted and it is still quite easy to play" wrote Heseltine to Colin Taylor on 7 April 1913. In sending the manuscript to Delius, he mentioned his possible omission of some phrasing slurs, etc. (due to his not then having the score to hand), also to his efforts to render the notation more consistent at times by enharmonic changes.

Delius duly sent the arrangement on to his publisher, F. E. C. Leuckart of Leipzig. The latter, who had originally suggested an arrangement for 2 hands, was unwilling to proceed in view of the likely small demand, even though Heseltine was prepared to forego a fee for his work. No more was heard of this project, but in 1922 Heseltine was endeavoring to have his more recent arrangement of the work for 2 hands published by Universal Edition. This also remained unpublished until it ultimately appeared from Thams Publishing in 1982. Delius dedicated this work to his wife Jelka Rosen.

The MS of the 4-hand version was evidently returned to Heseltine, who lent it to Dr. T. P. Conwell-Evans, in whose possession it remained after Heseltine's death. In 1966 Dr. Conwell-Evans handed it to [me]; by this time the outer bifolium

had been lost, so the missing first page of the secondo and the last page of the primo parts were reconstructed by comparing the surviving corresponding pages with the full score.

In reviewing the manuscript for the present first issue, some of the slurs, etc., omitted by Heseltine, as mentioned above, have been restored; also various accidentals overlooked here (as elsewhere), either as a result of Heseltine's enharmonic renotation or because of the changed layout of the arrangement, have now been supplied as appropriate. (These notes by Robert Threlfall)

**Cyril Scott** (1879-1970)

**Danse Nègre (Arranged by Esther Fisher)**

**Mazurka (Arranged by Richard Lange)**



Cyril Scott was born in Oxtou, Cheshire; his mother was an amateur pianist. At a very young age he showed a talent for music and at the age of 12 was sent to the Hoch Conservatorium in Frankfurt, where he eventually became one of "The Frankfurt Gang" along with Balfour Gardiner, Roger Quilter, Norman O'Neill and Percy Grainger. Early on Scott was called "The English Debussy," but as time went on his music became more complex and his reputation faded considerably, partly due to a view by the English musical establishment as to what sort of music a modern composer ought to be writing. He continued to compose up until the last three weeks of his life.

Scott was also a poet, philosopher, mystic, and authority on alternative medicine. In recent years Scott's works have had a major revival on recordings.



**Norman O'Neill (1879-1970)**

**All Fours**



Norman O'Neill was another of the "Frankfurt Gang" along with Balfour Gardiner, Cyril Scott, Percy Grainger and Roger Quilter -- all students at the Hoch Conservatorium in Frankfurt in the 1890's. His oeuvre is vast: orchestral works, many songs, chamber music, piano pieces (many for children), and incidental music for many plays. He was Music Director at the Haymarket Theatre.

Norman married Adine Rückert, a piano pupil of Clara Schumann, whom he met in Frankfurt. Their daughter, Yvonne, was Delius' godchild for whom he wrote a few piano pieces, albeit too difficult for a young girl. "All Fours" was written as a piece for children to play and dates from 1930. It is dedicated to the German composer Herman (sic) Finck.

**Edward German (1862-1936)**

**Four Dances from "Merrie England"**



Born Edward German Jones -- he later dropped the surname to avoid confusion with a fellow student name Edward Jones -- he was of Welsh descent and is probably best remembered for his incidental music for theatre and as a successor to Sir Arthur Sullivan as a composer of light opera.

He studied at the Royal Academy of Music as a violinist, organist and composer. In 1884 the Academy appointed him a sub-professor

of the violin, and he was well regarded both as a teacher and performer, winning several medals and prizes such as the Tubbs Bow. In 1885 he won the Charles Lucas Medal for his *Te Deum* for soloists, choir and organ, which encouraged him to concentrate on composing. He wrote a light opera, "The Two Poets," for four soloists and piano, which was produced at the Academy and then performed at St. George's Hall. In 1887 his first symphony, in E Minor, was also performed at the Academy. In 1890 he conducted a revised version of the symphony at the Crystal Palace, and "The Two Poets" toured with great success in England.

Though German had little experience with large-scale opera and choral music, Richard D'Oyly Carte commissioned him to complete Sir Arthur Sullivan's last opera, "The Emerald Isle," in 1900. The success of this project -- the opera was performed for a quarter of a century -- led to his own comic operas, including his "Merrie England" in 1902 and "Tom Jones" in 1907, among the most popular of his creations. Among German's symphonic works the Symphony No. 2 ("The Norwich") stands out. It has been noted that "Merrie England" has probably been performed more frequently than any other 20th-century British opera or operetta.

Edward German began conducting at the Globe Theatre in 1888 and continued to conduct there until 1928. His last opera, "Fallen Fairies," which he collaborated on with W. S. Gilbert, was not a success. The principal female singer was weak, and Gilbert had insisted on cutting out one of the songs. The producer of the opera, C. H. Workman, asked that the song be restored to the opera, Gilbert threatened to sue, and German, adverse to legal battles, declined to side with Gilbert. Musical taste had changed and the Savoy tradition of comic opera was less and less fashionable, so German decided to stop composing and from then on concentrated on conducting. He was obliged to stop conducting in 1928 due to an eye condition which left him blind in one eye. He was knighted that year.