



Saturday 28th June, 2025

Music for a Summer's Evening

This programme centres around Mendelssohn's (1809-47) Incidental music to *A Midsummer Night's Dream* which features in our second half. Add to that other Mendelssohn pieces and songs by his beloved sister Fanny. Now bring in Alice Mary Smith (1839-84) whose works are being rediscovered in the current appetite for the work of women composers. Tonight we feature our principal clarinettist, Anne James in Smith's *Andante*.

Elgar (1857-1934) and Sullivan (1842-1900) were contemporaries although most often writing in very different styles. Here we have examples of Elgar's choral and orchestral music, in the late romantic style, contrasting with Sullivan at his most lighthearted.

Jim Cooke brings us up to date. As an alumnus of Liverpool Hope University and well known local composer, he too gives us both orchestral and choral examples of his work tonight. We will be giving a performance of his *Mass* next season.

We hope you enjoy the variety of music we are offering and will support us in future events.

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Felix Mendelssohn:- *Calm Sea and Prosperous Voyage*

This is an early concert overture by Mendelssohn which was inspired by two poems by Goethe: *Meeresstille* (Calm Sea) and *Glückliche Fahrt* (Prosperous Voyage). The first poem reads:

Deep stillness rules the water
Without motion lies the sea,
And worried the sailor observes
Smooth surfaces all around.
No air from any side!
Deathly, terrible stillness!
In the immense distances
not a single wave stirs. (1795)

Mendelssohn depicts the torpor in a slow introduction with occasional, listless dynamic swells. A solo flute provides a breath of wind and the change of mood and activity in the

second poem is under way. Instrumental activity abounds and a hymn of thanksgiving is heard before brass fanfares and timpani and a final sigh of relief announce the homecoming of the vessel:

The fog is torn,
The sky is bright,
And Aeolus releases
The fearful bindings.
The winds whisper,
The sailor begins to move.
Swiftly! Swiftly!
The waves divide,
The distance nears;
Already I see land!

Fanny Mendelssohn:- *Morning Greeting, Evening in the Forest*

Fanny Mendelssohn-Hensel (1805-47)



wrote these two 4-part songs after she had married and become Fanny Hensel. The words of the first are by Hensel and you can imagine them in romantic, musical, domestic bliss exchanging ideas. The second is a setting of a poem by Joseph von Eichendorff.

Morgengrüss/Morning Greeting Opus 3 No 4

<p>Now vanish the shadows of night And fair are the meadows and bright Now vanish the shadows and fair are the meadows The treetops are waving their praises The treetops are waving their praises Its head each meek floweret, each floweret upraises Its head each meek floweret adorning To greet thee, O glorious morning. To greet thee, to greet thee, O glorious morning To greet thee, to greet thee, O glorious morning</p>	<p>Yet morn seems to lack something still Come, darling, my vision fulfil, Come, darling, my vision, my vision fulfil Come hark to my loud joyful singing Come hark to my loud joyful singing The flowers would their sister Their sister, their sister be bringing For thee, blessed tears will be thronging The tears of my love and my longing The tears of my love, of my love and my longing The tears of my love, of my love and my longing.</p>
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Evening in the Forest Opus 3 No 5

<p>Abendlich schon rauscht der Wald aus den tiefen Gründen, droben wird der Herr nun bald an die Sterne zünden. Wie so stille in den Shlünden Wie so stille in den Shlünden Abendlich nur rauscht der Wald aus den tiefen Gründen, Alles geht zu seiner Ruh, wie die Welt verbrause schauernd hört der Wanderer zu, sehnt sich tief nach Hause. schauernd hört der Wanderer zu, sehnt sich tief nach Hause. Hier in Waldes grüner Klause, Herz geh endlich auch zur Ruh.</p>	<p>In the evening, the forest rustles from the deep valleys; Up above, the Lord will soon light the stars. How quiet it is in the valleys How quiet it is in the valleys Only in the evening does the forest rustle from the deep valleys. Every creature goes to its rest, as the colour of the world fade away The wanderer shudders as he listens, longing deeply for his home. The wanderer shudders as he listens, longing deeply for his home. Here in the forest's green hermitage, The heart may finally rest.</p>
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Next we turn to Fanny's younger brother Felix and his interpretation of these same themes.

The *Morgenlied* Op86, No2, was originally a solo song, performed tonight in an arrangement for SATB choir by Hermann Bönicke, a contemporary of Mendelssohn. It reflects the poem's celebration of the God-given miracles of nature, and of life itself.

Abendlied (from c1837) is essentially a duet for ladies' voices and has been described as being 'dreamy and idealist in nature'.

Felix Mendelssohn:- *Morgenlied/Morning Song Opus 86, No 2*

Words by Johann Heinrich Voss

Erwacht in neuer Stärke, begrüß ich, Gott, dein Licht und wend' auf deine werke mein, frohes Angesicht Wie herrlich strahlt die Sonn' empor und weckt des Lebens Lauten Chor!	Awakened in new strength, O God, I greet your light and turn my joyful face towards your works How gloriously the sun shines and awakens life's loud chorus!
Von Jubelliedern schallen schon Feld Gebüsch und Luft, und aus des Waldes Hallen strömt frisch der Morgenduft Das Vöglein schüttelt ab den Tau, Fliegt auf und singt im Hallen Blau.	The fields, the bushes, and the air resound with songs of joy, and from the forest halls flows out the fresh morning scent The little bird shakes off the dew, flies up and sings in the blue hall.
Schon höher schwebt die Sonne in ihren Siegeslauf Was lebt, das atmet Wonne, und was da schlief, wacht auf. O Gott, in deinem Sonnenschein wie herrlich ist's lebendig sein O Gott, in deinem Sonnenschein wie herrlich ist's lebendig sein	The sun already rises higher in its triumphal race What lives breathes bliss, and what was sleeping wakens. O God, how wonderful it is to be alive in your sunshine. O God, how wonderful it is to be alive in your sunshine.

Felix Mendelssohn:- *Abendlied/Evening Song*

Words by Heinrich Heine

Wenn ich auf dem Lager liege In Nacht () gehüllt, So schwebt mir vor ein süßes, Anmutig liebes Bild! ein süßes, Anmutig liebes Bild!	When I lie on my bed Covered by night, A sweet, gracefully lovely image floats before my eyes! A sweet, gracefully lovely picture!
Wenn mir der stille Schlummer geschlossen die Augen kaum, so schleicht das Bild sich leise hinein in meinen Traum, sich leise hinein in meinen Traum.	When silent slumber has barely closed my eyes, so the image steals quietly into my dream, quietly into my dream.
Und mit dem Traum des Morgens Zerrinnt es nimmermehr; Dann trag' ich es im Herzen Den ganzen Tag umher. im Herzen Den ganzen Tag umher.	And with the dream of the morning It never melts away; Then I carry it in my heart All day long. in my heart All day long.

Alice Mary Smith: *Andante for clarinet and small orchestra*

Alice Mary Smith (1839-1884) was an English composer who wrote a large number of orchestral and choral works as well as songs and chamber works. This *Andante* originated as the slow movement to Smith's *Sonata in A for clarinet and piano*, a work which was dedicated to and first performed by Henry Lazarus, the leading British clarinet virtuoso of the 19th century. Lazarus commissioned the orchestration of the middle movement although it is not known if this was intended to be part of a fully orchestrated concerto. According to an obituary in *The Athenaeum* of 13 December 1884, Smith's music "is marked by elegance and grace ... power and energy. Her forms were always clear and her ideas free from eccentricity; her sympathies were evidently with the Classic rather than with the Romantic school."

Soloist: Anne James



Dr. Anne James studied the clarinet at the Royal College of Music with Colin Bradbury in the 1980's. After graduating she undertook a PGCE and devoted her career to clarinet and saxophone performance alongside her passion for music education. She led music and performing arts departments in schools in Cheshire and Liverpool before joining the Education department at Liverpool Hope University in 2009.

As a performer Anne has played concertos with various local orchestras and played with the Chester Philharmonic Orchestra for several years. As an educator, she directed many musical theatre performances, most notably 'Joseph and the Amazing Technicolour Dreamcoat' and 'Cabaret', both performed at Hope. However, it was her passion for Concert Bands that led her to create and direct the Hope University Concert Band which she conducted until she retired from the University in 2022.

Anne is now principal clarinet with the Hope Metropolitan Orchestra as well as leading the Red Rose Concert Band. She has an MA in Educational Leadership and Management and an Educational Doctorate.

In retirement, Anne continues to promote music making but also devotes her time to her young granddaughter alongside her work for the British Red Cross.

--- Interval ---

Felix Mendelssohn:- Incidental music to Shakespeare's *A Midsummer Night's Dream*:

Nocturne and Intermezzo

Mendelssohn wrote his now famous Overture to *A Midsummer Night's Dream* at the age of 17 but it was not for another 16 years that he wrote incidental music to accompany a performance of the entire play for performance in Potsdam in 1843.

The *Nocturne* is designed as an *entr'acte* (music between Acts III and IV) and sets the mood of slumber in the forest. The horn plays one of Mendelssohn's most haunting melodies with the rich accompaniment of two bassoons.

The *Intermezzo* which connects Acts II and III is in two parts. The first represents Hermia's distraught search for her bewitched lover Lysander with rapid figuration passing quickly between instruments. The second part is more relaxed and leads directly into a humorous depiction of the *Melodrama* in which Bottom, Quince and the others meet to rehearse their little play *Pyramus and Thisbe*.

Edward Elgar:- *Salut d'Amour*

Elgar wrote this piece in September 1888, just before his engagement to Alice Roberts, and it is dedicated to her. It was originally written for piano solo but the composer soon arranged it for violin and piano as well as for orchestra. It was to be one of the most popular short works Elgar wrote.

Jim Cooke:- *And Songs were Sweet*

And Songs Were Sweet

The sketch for this musical vignette dates from the nineties after frequent visits to local art galleries and was realised during August 2020. Pre-Raphaelite artist John Melhuish Strudwick (1849-1937) gave many of his paintings long poetic titles, and the piece takes its name (though not a musical illustration of it) from a work which hangs in Manchester City Art Gallery: *When Apples Were Golden and Songs Were Sweet but Summer Had Passed Away*.

Jim Cooke:-- *It was a Lover and his Lass, Fair Daffodils*

Fair Daffodils and *It was a Lover and his Lass* date from 1974, before composition was part of the school curriculum though I was enthusiastically encouraged by a music teacher and former D'Oyly Carte baritone who himself was fond of setting poetry to music. The most onerous task of producing a choral score by hand was spacing the text correctly. These early pieces were inputted into Sibelius software when it became

widely available in 1999 to ascertain what could be achieved. Though there was some tweaking to *Fair Daffodils* to fill out the harmonies, only the last line of verse and the chorus of the original *It was a Lover and his Lass* was retained. It has previously been performed by Ormskirk Music Society, Liverpool College with a two piano accompaniment, and the Royal Liverpool Philharmonic Choir in 2013.

Programme notes – Jim Cooke

Edward Elgar:- *As Torrents in Summer*

From Elgar's 1896 cantata, *Scenes from the Saga of King Olaf*, the text is an adaptation of a poem by Henry Wadsworth Longfellow which tells the story of Olaf Tryggvason, the medieval king of Norway, who brought Christianity to the Scandinavian country.

In the poem, the sustaining force of a far-off summer rainstorm, which refreshes dry riverbeds, becomes a metaphor for the unseen hand of God.

As torrents in summer
half dried in their channels,
Suddenly rise,
tho' the Sky is still cloudless.
for rain has been falling
far off at their fountains,
So hearts that are fainting
grow full to o'erflowing,
And they that behold it Marvel,
and know not,
That God at their fountains
far off, has been raining!

Edward Elgar *Spanish Serenade*

Spanish Serenade, Op. 23 was composed in 1891 as a choral work with piano and the orchestral accompaniment was added the following year. The text is taken from *The Spanish Student*, a verse-drama also by Longfellow who was Elgar's mother's favourite poet. The scene is a street in Madrid, where, in the play, the serenade is sung to an accompaniment of bagpipe, guitars and other instruments.

Stars of the summer night
Far in yon azure deeps
Hide, hide your golden light
She sleeps. My lady sleeps

Moon of the summer night
Far down yon western steep

Sink, sink in silver light
She sleeps, My lady sleeps.

Wind of the summer night
Where yonder woodbine creeps
Fold, fold thy pinions light
She sleeps, My lady sleeps.

Dreams of the summer nights
Tell her her lover keeps
Watch while in slumbers light
She sleeps, My lady sleeps.

W.S. Gilbert & Arthur Sullivan:

- 'Cachucha', from Gilbert and Sullivan *The Gondoliers*

A *cachucha* is a lively, Andalucian dance in triple time often performed with castanet accompaniment. This song and dance occurs in Act II of *The Gondoliers* when the two gondolier brothers and their friends who are now in Spain seeking their fortune are reunited with their women folk.

Dance a cachucha, fandango, bolero,
Xeres we'll drink — Manzanilla, Montero —
Wine, when it runs in abundance, enhances
The reckless delight of that wildest of dances!
To the pretty pitter, pitter, patter,
And the clitter, clitter, clitter, clatter,
We'll dance.

We hope you enjoy your evening with us. We are now off on our summer break but will be back in October.

Dates for your diary

- **18th October Amazing Grace**

Hope Metropolitan Singers sing American music in support of Black History month at the Capstone on the Creative Campus at Hope. Our ***Mark Julius memorial concert*** for 2025

- **8th November Beethoven the Master**

Hope Metropolitan Orchestra at the Cornerstone Building. The wonderful Lauryna Sableviciute plays Beethoven's ***Piano Concerto no. 5 in Eb, opus 73*** . Following this, in the second half, the Orchestra plays ***Symphony no. 7 in A, opus 92***.

- **6th December** Join us for Christmas Celebrations in our first visit to Holy Trinity Church, Wavertree where our choir and orchestra will be joined by local children's choirs.

For details about these and other concerts, go to our website at hmconcerts.uk or stay in touch through Facebook. <https://www.facebook.com/HopeMetropolitanConcerts>. Like us on Facebook to join our mailing list or contact us through the website if you are interested in joining the Society. As a member you could sing or play or help us with organisation and administration.