

Queen Elizabeth Hall
General Manager: John Denison, C.B.E.

The Greater London Council presents
South Bank Summer Music

Thursday 21 August 1969
7.45 pm

Stalls

30/-
Row M Seat 14★

Janet Baker *mezzo-soprano*
Dietrich Fischer-Dieskau *baritone*
Daniel Barenboim *piano*

Duets by Purcell, Schumann, Mendelssohn,
Cornelius, Brahms

GREEN
SIDE

Queen Elizabeth Hall
General Manager: John Denison, C.B.E.
The Greater London Council presents
South Bank Summer Music
Saturday 23 August 1969
7.45 pm

Stalls
30/-

Row L Seat 22

Purcell Room
Thursday August 21 at 5.55 p.m.

Talking Point with Alexander Goehr on The
New Performer

A composer makes new demands on his interpreter.
Particular players inspire composers. In our times,
attitudes towards conventional instruments have
changed. What was considered bad or undesirable to
one generation becomes an ideal for another.
This talk is illustrated by special examples recorded by
Alan Hacker (clarinet) with Stephan Pruslin (piano).

Queen Elizabeth Hall
Friday August 21 at 7.45 p.m.
Friday August 23 at 7.45 p.m.

GREEN
SIDE

Purcell (1659-1695):
Sound the Trumpet, from Ode for the Birthday
of Queen Mary (1694)
Lost is my quiet forever (1691)
My dearest, my fairest, from Incidental Music to
Pausanias (1695)
No, resistance is but vain, from the Incidental
Music to The Maid's Last Prayer (1693)
Shepherd, leave decoying (King Arthur) (1691)

One of Purcell's tasks as court composer was to set
complimentary odes for such occasions as birthdays,
marriages or the king's return from holiday. He wrote
one for each of Queen Mary's birthdays between 1689
and 1694 of which *Come ye Sons of Art*, the last of the
group, is generally considered the best. The most
famous number, often sung on its own, is the duet
Sound the Trumpet, an inspiring, florid piece, which
was originally written for two altos. *Lost is my quiet
forever* is an eloquent expression of a lover's despair.
The voices are treated more or less independently until
they come together at cadences.

Music was very much in demand for the Restoration
theatre, and Purcell wrote incidental pieces for more
than forty plays. Although he must have known that
they would not be listened to very closely, he brought
the same high standards to the job as he did to all his
work. *Pausanias*, a tragedy by Norton, was produced in
the last year of Purcell's life. The music is ascribed
sometimes to Purcell's brother Daniel, although it is
certainly as much in Henry's style as the piece from
Thomas Southerne's comedy *The Maid's Last Prayer*,
written for Drury Lane two years earlier. Both manifest
his interests in the later operatic manner of Monteverdi,
particularly the *Pausanias* duet. *Shepherd, leave
decoying* is a delightful item from the pastoral section
in the second act of Dryden's *King Arthur*. Purcell's
music is elaborate enough for the work to be termed a
semi-opera.

Schumann (1810-1856):
Er und Sie, Op 78 No 2 (Kerner)
Wiegenlied, Op 78 No 4 (Hebbel)
Ich bin dein Baum, Op 101 No 3 (Rückert)
Schön ist das Fest des Lenzes, Op 37 No 7
(Rückert)
Herbstlied, Op 43 No 2 (Mahlmann)
Tanzlied, Op 78 No 1 (Rückert)

Schumann chose his texts for his duets as carefully as
those for his solo songs as the names of the poets
above would indicate. These duets are never very pro-
found utterances, rather light, pleasing pieces to be
sung in the home by courting couples or, perhaps, by
happily married parents. Today, when music-making
in the home has been ousted by the gramophone or
television, they are rarely performed — unless two
artists, such as tonight's, are prepared to spend a little
time learning an unusual repertory.

In *Er und Sie*, the man has the first stanza of adoration,
the woman the second; they then combine, he singing
the third stanza, she the fourth, before they repeat the
earlier verses together. The repetition, almost senti-
mental, of 'auf einen, auf eine' at the end suggests the
'one-ness' of the relationship. Both these songs date
from 1849, as does *Wiegenlied*, a lullaby for a sick
child, which is appropriately muted in expression. The

Janet Baker

parents sing together almost throughout and the whispered refrain returns twice ending with a repeated injunction to 'sleep'.

Ich bin dein Baum comes from *Minnespiel* of 1849. These love songs – some solos, some for more than one voice – are all settings of Rückert's *Liebesfrühling*. There are two duets of which this is the first. The baritone begins with a passionate strophe. When the alto takes up the melody (slightly varied) the baritone matches it with a counter-theme and the two continue in a more complex, chromatic vein than in those duets heard so far.

The next two duets come from the years, 1840–1841, of Schumann's greatest happiness through his marriage to Clara. The first, *Schön ist das Fest des Lenzes*, one of a set of twelve songs and duets, again settings of Rückert's *Liebesfrühling*, celebrates, ecstatically, spring. The second, *Herbstlied*, from a few months earlier, praises autumn. In both the voices are irrevocably entwined. In *Tanzlied*, the singers go their own ways, the voices seldom coming together.

Interval

Mendelssohn (1809–1847):
Abschiedslied der Zugvögel, Op 63 No 2 (von Fallersleben)
Wie kann ich froh und lustig sein, No 1 of Volkslieder
Herbstlied, Op 63 No 4 (Klingemann)
Suleika und Hatem

Mendelssohn's slight but charming duets need little description. They were meant for modest voices – though, no doubt, tonight's singers will find more subtleties in them than the amateurs for whom they were originally designed in the drawing room by the cosy hearth; for the most part, one singer does not venture away from the company of his partner, any more than he or she would on a cold winter night in the middle of the last century – undoubtedly the heyday of this kind of piece. *Suleika und Hatem* is different. In the first place it is apparently not by Felix Mendelssohn but by his sister Fanny, an amateur composer, chiefly noted for her songs and piano pieces. The words, too, are not by Goethe, as you might suppose from the title, but by his young friend Marianne Willemer. In this song, of course, the voices are largely heard uncombined.

Cornelius (1824–1874):
Heimatgedanken, Op 16 No 1 (Becker)
Verratene Liebe (Von Chamisso)
Ich und du (Hebbel)
Come away death, Op 16 No 3 (Shakespeare, translated Schlegel)
Der beste Liebesbrief, Op 6 No 2 (Hebbel)

Cornelius's songs are certainly underrated. It will be interesting to hear if the same applies to his duets, which are almost completely unknown. Like Mendelssohn's they are written, for the most part, in uncomplicated euphony.



Four duets for alto and baritone, Op 28: Brahms (1833–1897)

Die Nonne und der Ritter (Eichendorff)
Vor der Tür (Old German)
Es rauschet das Wasser (Goethe)
Der Jäger und sein Liebchen (Von Fallersleben)

This, the second of Brahms' sets of duets, was composed in the early 1860s. The voices have a good deal of independence from each other. In the first song the two sing alternately nearly throughout. There is a most eloquent phrase for the alto alone to end the piece. The second and fourth songs contain delightfully entwined dialogue; both are lighthearted in mood. The third, *Es rauschet das Wasser*, is a descriptive love song in Brahms' most *gemütlich* vein.

Alan Blyth ©