Les chansons instrumentales

The chamber music of Poulenc and Hahn

James Baillieu piano

Part 1
Wed 15 May 2013, 7.30pm

Part 2
Fri 17 May 2013, 7.30pm

Part 3
Sat 18 May 2013, 7.30pm

All Saints Church, Hove

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Part 1

Ailish Tynan *soprano*
James Baillieu *piano*

**Poulenc**  
Airs chantés  
Air romantique  
Air champêtre  
Air grave  
Air vif

**Hahn**  
Venezia  
Sopra l’acqua indormenzada  
La barcheta  
L’avvertimento  
La biondina in gondoleta  
Che pecâ!

**Poulenc**  
Trois poèmes de Louise de Vilmorin  
Le garçon de Liège  
Au-delà  
Aux Officiers de la Garde Blanche

INTERVAL
Poulenc

La courte paille
Le sommeil
Quelle aventure!
La Reine de Coeur
Ba, be, bi, ba, bu
Les anges musiciens
Le carafon
Lune d’avril

Fiançailles pour rire
La dame d’André
Dans l’herbe
Il vole
Mon cadavre est doux comme un gant
Violon
Fleurs

Hahn

À Chloris
En sourdine
Fêtes galantes
After World War I, the ethos of French art across the board lay in the direction of clarity and simplicity. Cocteau further cried for ‘an end to clouds, waves, aquariums, water nymphs, an end to fogs’, and Erik Satie, the cultural godfather of the new French music, warned that fogs had been the death of as many composers as sailors. Another target was the ‘music one listens to head in hands’ — Wagner most notably, but also Schumann. For Poulenc then, in quest of song texts, the 19th century was largely to be avoided; only one of his texts, Théodore de Banville’s *Pierrot*, was published during it, while Jean Moréas’s four poems forming the *Airs chantés* were printed in the first decade of the 20th century. Otherwise Poulenc sought either distancing through pre-Romantic poetry or immediacy through poetry of his own time.

It is not always wise to take composers wholly at their word. Poulenc was not alone in occasionally liking to tease his readers, so his claim that he loathed the poetry of Jean Moréas (Yannis Papadiamantopoulos, 1856–1910) and chose these poems as being suitable for mutilation should probably be taken with a pinch of salt; as should his condemnation of ‘Air grave’ as ‘certainly my worst song’, though it may be true that he was more successful elsewhere in imitating ‘ancient’ textures. Here, as with his outright rejection of many of his piano pieces, we should bear in mind Poulenc’s perennial sensitivity to his place in 20th-century music: one gets the impression that often his masochistic barbs may simply have been a way of getting in before the critics.

Poulenc professed to be annoyed by the success of the second and last songs of the *Airs chantés*. It is hard to see why. For a start, he dedicated them to two of his favourite singers, Suzanne Peignot and Jane Bathori, which must have meant something. Then, they both flow with an easy charm. In ‘Air champêtre’ Poulenc barely moves out of the key of G major, but within that restriction invents melodic lines of considerable beauty, mirroring that of the apostrophized goddess, before signing off with a quotation from a Chopin étude. ‘Air vif’ is a portrait of the wind racing over the countryside, ‘Presto — très gai’. The only song to escape censure was the opening ‘Air romantique’, where Poulenc again concentrates the music round the tonic, this time E minor, in parallel with the unvarying tempo.
**Air romantique**

J’allais dans la campagne avec le vent d’orage,
Sous le pâle matin, sous les nuages bas;
Un corbeau ténébreux escortait mon voyage,
Et dans les flaques d’eau retentissaient mes pas.

La foudre à l’horizon faisait courir sa flamme
Et l’Aquilon doublait ses longs gémissements;
Mais la tempête était trop faible pour mon âme,
Qui couvrait le tonnerre avec ses battements.

De la dépouille d’or du frêne et de l’érable
L’Automne composait son éclatant butin,
Et le corbeau toujours, d’un vol inexorable,
M’accompagnait sans rien changer à mon destin.

**Romantic air**

I wandered through the countryside with the wind
of a storm,
In the pale morning, under low clouds;
A gloomy raven escorted me on my journey,
And my steps echoed in the puddles.

The lightning on the horizon ran its flame
And Boreas redoubled his persistent howling;
Yet the tempest was too weak for my soul,
Whose pounding sounded above the thunder.

From the golden garment of the ash and maple
Autumn gathered its glistening harvest,
And the raven all the while, with its inexorable
flight,
Followed me without changing my destiny.

**Air champêtre**

Belle source, belle source,
Je veux me rappeler sans cesse,
Qu’un jour, guidé par l’amitié,
Ravi, j’ai contemplé ton visage, ô déesse,
Perdu sous la mou, sous la mousse à moitié.

Que n’est-il demeuré, cet ami que je pleure,
O nymph, à ton culte attaché,
Pour se mêler encore au souffle qui t’effleure,
Et répondre à ton flot caché?

**Pastoral air**

Beautiful spring, beautiful spring,
I wish to remember forever
That one day, guided by affection,
Enchanted, I looked at your face, o Goddess,
Half concealed beneath the moss.

Has he but remained, this friend for whom I mourn,
O nymph, adhering to your cult,
To mingle still with the breeze that touches you,
And to respond to your hidden waters?
Air grave
Ah! fuyez à présent,
Malheureuses pensées!
O! colère, o! remords!
Souvenirs qui m’avez
Les deux tempes pressées
De l’étreinte des morts.
Sentiers de mousse pleins,
Vaporeuses fontaines,
Grottes profondes, voix
Des oiseaux et du vent
Lumières incertaines
Des sauvages sous-bois,
Insectes, animaux,
Beauté future,
Ne me repousses pas,
Ô divine nature,
Je suis ton supplicant.
Ah! fuyez à présent,
Malheureuses pensées!
O! colère, o! remords!

Lively air
The treasure of the orchard and the festive garden,
The flowers of the fields, the woodlands, burst with pleasure,
Alas! alas! And above them the wind raises his voice.
But you noble ocean that the assault of storms
Could not rage
Certainly with more dignity, once you lament,
You lose yourself in dreams.
Reynaldo Hahn (1875–1947)

Venezia

Sopra l’acqua indormenzada
La barcheta
L’avvertimento
La biondina in gondola
Che pecâ!

Reynaldo Hahn, born in Venezuela in 1875, was taken to Paris as a small boy and made France his home for the rest of his life. Despite his astonishing precocity (he wrote perhaps his most famous song, ‘Si mes vers avaient des ailes’ when he was 13), by the 1890s he had made two serious errors. The first, to be a Jewish foreigner, was hardly his fault. The second, to become the darling of the salons, certainly was. The social reasons behind his success are obvious: Parisian salons were run by women, and in such a milieu an unattached, talented young man was likely to do well, the more so when he was known to be homosexual. Admiration and flirtation became safe. But in the eyes of ‘serious’ musicians, Hahn was only a ‘salon singer’. They were missing a great deal thereby.

In 1900, with his lover Marcel Proust, Hahn visited Venice. He spoke Venetian dialect perfectly and while he was there he wrote the group of six songs called Venezia (of which we hear the first five this evening). He was not only a sensitive pianist but a seductive singer, even with what a friend called ‘a slim thread of a voice’, which he slimmed down further by singing with a cigarette dangling from his mouth (to prove that ugly jaw-work was not necessary for clear enunciation). ‘I was alone’, he later wrote, ‘with the piano and two rowers in an illuminated barge. I was surrounded by gondolas; we took up our positions at a point where three canals met, under three elegant bridges. The Venetian songs produced the effect of cartridges exploding. “Ancora! Ancora!” they shouted from above.’

Through all the songs the piano accompaniment, often in 6/8 metre, echoes the rocking waters of the lagoon. The vocal lines are manifestly in the tradition of Hahn’s teacher Massenet, with a few light Fauréan harmonies added here and there.
**Sopra l’acqua indormenzada**

Coi pensieri malinconici
No te star a tormentar:
Vien con mi, montemo in gondola,
Andaremo fora in mar.
Passaremo i porti e l’isole
Che circonda la città,
El sol more senza nuvole
E la luna spuntarà.

Oh! che festa, oh! che spetacolo,
Che presenta sta laguna,
Quando tuto xe silenzio,
Quando sluse in ciel la luna;
E spandendo i cavel morbidi
Sopra l’acqua indormenzada,
La se specia, la se coccola,
Come dona inamorada.

Tira zo quel velo e scòndite,
Che la vedo comparir!
Se l’arriva a descoverzarte,
La se pol ingelosir!
Sta baveta, che te zogola
Fra i caveli imbovolai,
No xe turbia de la polvere
De le rode e dei cavai.

Se in conchigli ai Grevi Venere
Se sognava un altro di,
Forse visto i aveva in gondola
Una zogia come ti.
Ti xe bela, ti xe zovene,
Ti xe fresca come un fior;
Vien per tuti le so lagrime;
Ridiadesso e fa l’amor!

**Asleep on the water**

Let not melancholy thoughts
Distress you:
Come with me, let us climb into our gondola,
And make for the open sea.
We will go past harbours and islands
Which surround the city,
And the sun will sink in a cloudless sky
And the moon will rise.

Oh! what fun, oh! what a sight,
Is the lagoon,
When all is silent,
When the moon climbs in the sky;
And spreading its soft hair
Over the tranquil waters,
It admires its own reflection
Like a woman in love.

Draw your veil about you and hide,
For I see the moon appearing!
And if it catches a glimpse of you,
It will grow jealous!
This light breeze, playing
Gently with your ruffled tresses,
Bears no trace of the dust raised
By cartwheels and horses.

If in other days Venus
Seemed to the Greeks to have risen from a shell,
Perhaps it was because they had seen
A beauty like you in a gondola.
You are lovely, you are young,
You are fresh as a flower;
Tears will come soon enough;
So now is the time for laughter and for love!
La barcheta
La note è bela.
Fa presto, o Nineta,
Andemo in barcheta
I freschi a ciapar!
A Toni g’ho dito
Ch’el felze el ne cava
Per goder sta bava
Che supia dal mar.
Ah!

Che gusto contarsela
Soleti in laguna,
E al chiaro de luna
Sentirse a vogar!
Ti pol de la ventola
Far senza, o mia cara,
Chè zefiri a gara
Te vol sventolar.
Ah!

Se gh’è tra de lori
Chi troppo indiscreto
Volesse da péto
El velo strapar,
No bada a ste frotole,
Soleti za semo
E Toni el so’ remo
Lè a tento a menar.
Ah!

The little boat
The night is beautiful.
Make haste, Nineta,
Let us take to our boat
And enjoy the evening breeze!
I have asked Toni
To remove the canopy
So that we can feel the zephyr
Blowing in from the sea.
Ah!

What bliss it is to exchange
Sweet nothings,
Alone on the lagoon
And by moonlight!
Borne along in our boat
You can lay aside your fan, my dear,
For the breezes will vie with each other
To refresh you.
Ah!

If among them
There should be one so indiscreet
As to try to lift the veil
Shielding your breast,
Pay no heed to its nonsense,
For we are all alone
And Toni is much too intent
On plying his oar.
Ah!
L’avvertimento
No corè, puti,
smarìosi tanto
Drio quel incanto
Che Nana g’ha.
Xe tuto amabile
Ve acordo, in ela;
La xe una stela
Cascada qua, Ma… ma… La Nana cocola
G’ha el cuor tigrà.

L’ocio xe vivo
Color del cielo,
Oro el cavelo
Balsamo el fià;
Ghe sponta in viso
Do’ rose intate.
Invidia al late
Quel sen ghe fa,
Ma… ma… La Nana cocola
G’ha el cuor tigrà.

Ogni ochiadina
Che la ve daga,
Da qualche piaga
Voda no va!
Col so’ granelo
De furbaria
La cortesia
Missiar la sa…
Ma… ma… La Nana cocola
G’ha el cuor tigrà.

The warning
Do not rush, lads,
So eagerly,
After the charms
Of the lovely Nana.
All is enchantment
In her, I grant you;
She is like a star
Fallen to earth,
But… but… That lovely Nana
Has the heart of a tiger.

Her eye is lively
And heavenly blue,
Her hair is spun gold
And her breath a balm;
Roses glow
In her cheeks.
Her breasts are whiter
Than milk,
But… but… That lovely Nana
Has the heart of a tiger.

Every glance
She darts at you,
Carries its own
Sweet poison!
Nor is guile
Ever absent
From her
Gentle manner…
But… but… That lovely Nana
Has the heart of a tiger.
La biondina in gondoleta
La biondina in gondoleta
L'altra sera g'ho menà:
Dal piacer la povereta,
La dormiva su sto brazzo,
Mi ogni tanto la svegiava,
Ma la barca che ninava
La tornava a indormenzar.

Gerà in cielo mezza sconta
Fra le nuvole la luna,
Gerà in calma la laguna,
Gerà il vento bonazzà.
Una sola bavesela
Sventola va i so' caveli,
E faceva che da veli
Scontò el ento fusse più.

Contemplando fisso fisso
Le fatezze del mio ben,
Quel viseto cussi slisso,
Quela boca e quel bel sen;
Me sentiva drento in peto
Una smania, un missiamento,
Una spezie de contento
Che no so come spiegar!

M'ho stufà po', finalmente,
De sto tanto so' dormir,
E g’ho fato da insolente,
No m’ho avuto da pentir;
Perchè, oh Dio, che bele cosse
Che g'ho dito, e che g’ho fatto!
No, mai più tanto beato
Ai mii zorni no son stà.

The blonde girl in the gondola
The other night I took
My blonde out in the gondola:
Her pleasure was such
That she instantly fell asleep.
She slept in my arms,
And I woke her from time to time,
But the rocking of the boat
Soon lulled her to sleep again.

The moon peeped out
From behind the clouds,
The lagoon lay becalmed,
The wind was drowsy.
Just the suspicion of a breeze
Gently played with her hair,
And lifted the veils
Which shrouded her breast.

As I gazed intently
At my love's features,
Her little face so smooth,
That mouth, and that lovely breast;
I felt in my heart
A longing, a desire,
A kind of bliss
Which I cannot describe!

But at last I had enough
Of her long slumbers,
And so I acted cheekily,
Nor did I have to repent it;
For, God what wonderful things
I said, what lovely things I did!
Never again was I to be so happy
In all my life.
Che pecà!
Te recordistu, Nina, quei ani
Che ti geri el mio solo pensier?
Che tormento, che rabie, che afani!
Mai un’ora de vero piacer!
Per fortuna quel tempo xe andà.
Che pecà!

Ne vedeva che per i ta’ oci,
No g’aveva altro ben che el ta’ ben…
Che schempiezzi! che gusti batoci;
Oh, ma adesso so tor quel che vien;
No me scaldo po’tanto el figà.
Che pecà!

Ti xe bela, ma pur ti xe dona,
Qualche neo lo conosso anca in ti;
Co ti ridi co un’altra persona,
Me diverto co un’altra anca mi.
Benedeta la so’ libertà.
Che pecà!

Te voi ben, ma no filo caligo,
Me ne indormo de tanta virtù.
Magno e bevo, so star co’ l’amigo
E me ingrassé ogni zorno de più.
Son un omo che sa quel che’l fa…
Che pecà!

Care gondole de la laguna
Voghé pur, che ve lasso vogar!
Quando in cielo vien fora la luna,
Vago in leto e me meto a ronfar,
Senza gnanca pensarghe al passà!
Che pecà!

What a shame!
Do you remember those years, Nina,
When you were my one and only thought?
What torment, what rage, what anguish!
Never an hour of untroubled joy!
Luckily that time is gone.
But what a shame!

I saw only through your eyes,
I knew no happiness but in you…
What foolishness! what silly behaviour;
Oh, but now I take all as it comes;
I no longer get agitated.
But what a shame!

You are lovely, and yet you are woman,
No longer perfection incarnate;
When your smile is bestowed on another,
I too can find solace elsewhere.
Blessed be one’s own freedom.
But what a shame!

I still love you, but without all that torment,
And am weary of all that virtue.
I eat, drink, and enjoy my friends
And grow fatter with every day.
I am a man who knows what he’s about…
But what a shame!

Lovely gondolas on the lagoon
Row past, I’ll hold you back!
When the moon appears in the sky,
I’ll take to my bed and snore,
Without a thought for the past!
But what a shame!
Happily, the reservations Poulenc had for the *Airs chantés* did not extend to the other songs of his included in this evening’s recital. Apart from the single song ‘Mazurka,’ written in 1949, his other 12 settings of poems by Louise de Vilmorin (1902–69) all date from the years 1937–43. Poulenc had met her in 1934, but it was two years later that he came across a poem, ‘Officiers de la Garde Blanche’, that she had written as a Christmas present for a friend. He promptly asked her for two more poems to go with it and, as she said, she complied, but with great misgivings: Poulenc was a name to conjure with; she was an unknown.

Poulenc composed the *Trois poèmes* at the end of 1937, with the unusual structure of two fast songs followed by a slow one. Indeed, ‘Le garçon de Liège’ is marked ‘vertigineusement vite’, leaving performers and listeners breathless. In ‘Au-delà’, Vilmorin worried about the sexual innuendo in the lines ‘Qui sait me faire rire, D’un doigt deci, delà’ and took them out when the poems were published separately. But, as in the *Chansons gaillardes*, Poulenc’s mastery of innocence saves the day. In setting the Christmas poem ‘Aux Officiers de la Garde Blanche’, addressed to the angels, Poulenc was proud of the spare piano octaves at the start and of having resisted the temptation to bring in harmony at the fourth bar. The repeated notes are a reminder of the guitar Vilmorin used to take with her to parties, while the whole song resounds with the Catholic faith Poulenc had found again the previous year.
Le garçon de Liège
Un garçon de conte de fée
M’a fait un grand salut bourgeois,
En plein vent, au bord d’une allée,
Debout, sous l’arbre de la Loi.

Les oiseaux d’arrière saison
Faisaient des leurs, malgré la pluie,
Et, prise par ma déraison,
J’osai lui dire: je m’ennuie.

Sans dire un doux mot de menteur,
Le soir, dans ma chambre à tristesse,
Il vint consoler ma pâleur;
Son ombre me fit des promesses.

Mais c’était un garçon de Liège
Léger, léger comme le vent,
Qui ne se prend à aucun piège
Et court les plaines du beau temps.

Et dans ma chemise de nuit,
Depuis lors, quand je voudrais rire,
Ahl beau jeune homme, je m’ennuie,
Ahl dans ma chemise, à mourir.

Au-delà
Eau-de-vie! Au-delà !
A l’heure du plaisir,
Choisir n’est pas trahir,
Je choisis celui-là.

Je choisis celui-là
Qui sait me faire rire,
D’un doigt déc, délà,
Comme on fait pour écrire.

Comme on fait pour écrire,
Il va parci, parlà,
Sans que j’ose lui dire:
J’aime bien ce jeu-là.

The boy from Liège
A boy out of a fairy tale
Made me a deep, polite bow,
Out in the open, by the side of a path,
Standing upright, under the tree of the Law.

The late autumn birds
Were about their business, despite the rain,
And, in a mad moment,
I dared to say to him: I’m bored.

Without saying a single deceitful word,
That evening, in my cheerless room,
He came to console my pallor;
His shadowy form made me promises.

But he was a boy from Liège
Light, light as the wind,
Who cannot be caught in any trap
And roams across the plains in the fine weather.

And in my nightdress,
Ever since, when I wanted to laugh,
Ah! handsome young man, I am bored,
Ah! in my nightdress, bored to death.

Over there
Eau-de-vie! Au-delà! [Brandy! Over there!]
In the hour of pleasure,
To choose is not to betray,
I choose that one.

I choose that one
Who knows how to make me laugh,
With a finger, here, there,
As one does when writing.

As one does when writing,
He goes here, there,
Without my daring to tell him:
I really like that game.
J’aime bien ce jeu-là,
Qu’un souffle fait finir,
Jusqu’au dernier soupir
Je choisis ce jeu-là.

Eau-de-vie! Audelà!
A l’heure du plaisir,
Choisir n’est pas trahir,
Je choisis ce jeu-là.

Aux Officiers de la Garde Blanche
Officiers de la Garde Blanche,
Gardez-moi de certaines pensées, la nuit,
Gardez-moi des corps à corps, et de l’appui
D’une main sur ma hanche.

Gardez-moi surtout de lui
Qui par la manche m’entraîne
Vers le hasard des mains pleines
Et les ailleurs d’eau qui luit.

Epargnez-moi les tourments en tourmente
De l’aimer un jour plus qu’aujourd’hui,
Et la froide moiteur des attentes
Qui presseront aux vitres et aux portes
Mon profil de dame déjà morte.

To the Officers of the White Guard
Officers of the White Guard,
Guard me from certain thoughts in the night,
Guard me from love’s embrace and the weight
Of a hand on my hip.

Guard me especially from him
Who leads me by the sleeve
Towards the danger of full hands
And the foreign stretches of shining water.

Spare me the agonizing torment
Of loving him one day beyond today,
And the cold dampness of the waiting
That will impress upon windows and doors
My profile of a woman already dead.

Officers of the White Guard,
I do not want to weep for him on earth,
I want to weep as rain, on his land,
On his star carved out of boxwood,
When later I shall float, transparent,
Above the pacing steps of boredom.

Officers of clean consciences,
You who bring beauty to faces,
Entrust to the flight of birds, in space,
A message for those who seek ways forward,
And forge for us chains without rings.

Louise de Vilmorin

Translation by Roger Nichols
Francis Poulenc

La courte paille
Le sommeil
Quelle aventure!
La Reine de Coeur
Ba, be, bi, bo, bu
Les anges musiciens
Le carafon
Lune d’avril

One of the crosses successful song composers have to bear is that parcels arrive regularly on the mat from poets requesting the enclosed words be set to music. Over the last ten years of his life, Poulenc had been in receipt of such parcels from an exact contemporary of his, the Belgian poet Maurice Carême, but until 1960 had done nothing with them. Then, in the summer of that year, after he had finished orchestrating the Gloria for its premiere in Boston the following January, he had the idea of writing a short song cycle for Denise Duval.

Duval, together with Pierre Bernac, had already been a major source of inspiration for Poulenc. He had ‘discovered’ her as a singer at the Folies Bergère in 1947 when he was hunting high and low for a soprano to sing the role of Thérèse in his opera Les mamelles de Tirésias, and he was immediately conquered by her beauty, her chic, her ‘golden voice’ and her acting ability: ‘the whole of Touraine talks of nothing but our impending marriage’. She later played Sister Blanche in Dialogues des Carmélites, Elle in La voix humaine and the name role in La dame de Monte-Carlo. She also went on recital tours with Poulenc after Bernac retired in 1959. In April 1960 she remarried and Poulenc, in dedicating the song cycle to her and her new husband, hoped that she would sing it not only in public but in private to her six-year-old son. Unfortunately she did not like the music, and it says much for their friendship that the tours continued without animosity. In the last letter Poulenc wrote, to Duval a few days before his death, he calls her ‘ma dernière joie’.

Poulenc described these songs as ‘very poetic and very whimsical’ and as being ‘made to measure for the Diva’, since they lie mainly between the bottom F and the top G on the treble staff. Any detailed analysis of these delightful ditties would indeed be to take a marteau to a noisette. Enough to note that the opening of the fifth song plants Mozart in our ears before the poem does.
**Le sommeil**

Le sommeil est en voyage.
Mon Dieu! où est-il parti?
J’ai beau bercer mon petit,
Il pleure dans son lit-cage,
Il pleure depuis midi.

Où le sommeil a-t-il mis
Son sable et ses rêves sages?
J’ai beau bercer mon petit,
Il se tourne tout en nage,
Il sanglote dans son lit.

Ah! reviens, reviens, sommeil,
Sur ton beau cheval de course!
Dans le ciel noir, la Grande Ourse
A enterré le soleil
Et rallumé ses abeilles.

Si l’enfant ne dort pas bien,
Il ne dira pas bonjour,
Il ne dira rien demain
À ses doigts, au lait, au pain
Qui l’accueillent dans le jour.

**Quelle aventure!**

Une puce, dans sa voiture,
Tirait un petit éléphant
En regardant les devantures
Où scintillaient les diamants.

Mon Dieu! mon Dieu! quelle aventure!
Qui va me croire, s’il m’entend?

L’éléphanteau, d’un air absent,
Suçait un pot de confiture.
Mais la puce n’en avait cure,
Elle tirait en souriant.

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**Sleep**

Sleep has gone on his travels.
Good gracious! Where to?
In vain I’ve rocked my little man,
He’s crying in his folding cot,
He’s been crying since midday.

Where’s the sandman put
His sand and gentle dreams?
In vain I’ve rocked my little man,
Drenched in sweat he kicks and turns,
He’s sobbing in his bed.

Ah! Sleep, come back, come back,
Astride your handsome race-horse!
The Great Bear in the black sky
Has buried the sun
And lit again his bees.

If the child doesn’t sleep well,
He’ll never say ‘good day’,
And have nothing to say tomorrow
To his fingers, his milk and bread
That greet him in the morning.

**What goings-on!**

A flea, aboard its carriage,
Was drawing an elephant calf along,
Gazing at shop windows
Where diamonds sparkled.

‘My goodness, my goodness, what goings-on!
Who’ll ever believe me, if I tell?’

The elephant calf, distractedly,
Was licking a pot of jam.
But the flea took no notice
And smiling drew him along.
Mon Dieu! mon Dieu! que cela dure
Et je vais me croire dément!

Soudain, le long d’une clôture,
La puçe fondit dans le vent
Et je vis ie jeune éléphant
Se sauver en fendant les murs.

— Mon Dieu! mon Dieu! la chose est sûre
Mais comment le dire à maman?

La Reine de Coeur
Mollement accoudée
À ses vitres de lune,
La reine vous salue
D’une fleur d’amandier.

C’est la Reine de Coeur,
Elle peut, s’il lui plaît,
Vous mener en secret
Vers d’étranges demeures,
Où il nest plus de portes,
De salles ni de tours,
Et où les jeunes mortes
Viennent parler d’amour.

La reine vous salue,
Hâtez-vous de la suivre
Dans son château de givre
Aux doux vitraux de lune.

‘My goodness, my goodness! if this goes on,
I think I’ll go insane!’

Suddenly, as they passed a fence,
The flea was blown away by the wind
And I saw the elephant calf make off,
Crashing away through walls.

‘My goodness! My goodness! It’s perfectly true,
But how shall I tell Mummy?’

The Queen of Hearts
With elbows lightly leaning
At her window-panes of moon,
The queen waves to you
With an almond bloom.

She’s the Queen of Hearts
And can, if she desires,
Lead you secretly
To strange places,
Where there are no more doors,
Or rooms or towers,
And where girls who have died
Come to speak of love.

The queen waves to you,
Make haste and follow
Into her hoar-frost castle
With her lovely leaded panes of moon.
Ba, be, bi, bo, bu
Ba, be, bi, bo, bu, bé!
Le chat a mis ses bottes,
Il va de porte en porte
Jouer, danser, chanter.

Pou, chou, genou, hibou.
‘Tu dois apprendre à lire,
A compter, à écrire’,
Lui crie-ton de partout.

Mais rikketikketau,
Le chat de s’esclaffer,
En rentrant au château:
Il est le Chat botté!

Les anges musiciens
Sur les fils de la pluie
Les anges du jeudi
Jouent longtemps de la harpe.

Et sous leurs doigts, Mozart
Tinte délicieux,
En gouttes de joie bleue.

Car c’est toujours Mozart
Que reprennent sans fin
Les anges musiciens;

Qui, au long du jeudi,
Font chanter sur la harpe
La douceur de la pluie.

Ba, be, bi, bo, bu
Ba, be, bi, bo, bu, boo!
The cat’s put on his boots,
He goes from door to door
Playing, dancing, singing.

Pou, chou, genou, hibou.
‘You must learn to read,
To count, to write’,
They scream at him from every side.

But rikketikketau,
The cat explodes with laughter,
As he returns to the castle:
His name is Puss-in-Boots!

The angel musicians
On the threads of the rain
The Thursday angels
Play their harps for hours on end.

And beneath their fingers, Mozart
Tinkles deliciously
In drops of blue joy.

For it’s always Mozart
That’s perpetually played
By the angel musicians;

All Thursday long
They sing on their harps
The sweetness of the rain.
Le carafon

‘Pourquoi’, se plaignait la carafe,
‘N’aurais-je pas un carafon?
Au zoo, madame la Girafe
N’a-t-elle pas un girafon?’
Un sorcier qui passait par là,
À cheval sur un phonographe,
Enregistra la belle voix
De soprano de la carafe,
Et la fit entendre à Merlin.
‘Fort bien’, dit celui-ci, ‘fort bien!’
Il frappa trois fois dans les mains,
Et la dame de la maison
Se demande encore pourquoi
Elle trouva, ce matin-là,
Un joli petit carafon
Blotti tout contre la carafe,
Ainsi qu’au zoo, le girafon
Pose son con fragile et long
Sur le flanc clair de la girafe.

Lune d’avril

Lune,
Belle lune, lune d’Avril,
Faites-moi voir en mon dormant
Le pêcher au cœur de safran,
Le poisson qui rit du grésil,
L’oiseau qui, lointain comme un cor
Doucement réveille les morts,
Et surtout, surtout le pays
Où il fait joie, où il fait clair,
Où soleilleux de primevères,
On a brisé tous les fusils.
Belle lune, lune d’Avril,
Lune.

Maurice Carême

The baby carafe

‘Why’, complained the carafe,
‘Can’t I have a baby carafe?
At the zoo, hasn’t Mrs Giraffe
Got a baby giraffe?’
A wizard who was passing by,
Riding on a phonograph,
Recorded the lovely voice
Of the soprano carafe,
And played it for Merlin to hear.
‘Most fine’, said he, ‘most fine!’
Thrice he clapped his hands,
And the lady of the house
Still wonders why
She found, that very morning,
A pretty baby carafe
Snuggling close to the carafe,
Just as at the zoo the baby giraffe
Lays his long and fragile neck
Against the pale flank of the giraffe.

April moon

Moon,
Beautiful moon, April moon,
Let me see through my windowframe
The peach tree with the saffron heart,
The fish who laughs at the sleet,
The bird that, distant as a hunting horn,
Gently wakens the dead,
And above all, above all, the land
Where there is joy, where there is light,
Where sunlit with primroses,
All the guns have been destroyed.
Beautiful moon, April moon,
Moon.

Translations by Richard Stokes
Francis Poulenc

Fiançailles pour rire
La dame d’André
Dans l’herbe
Il vole
Mon cadavre est doux comme un gant
Violon
Fleurs

Curiously, the six poems Poulenc took in the autumn of 1939 from Vilmorin’s volume Fiançailles pour rire of the same year contain little to laugh about, dealing as they do with the hazards of love. They were given their premiere in Paris by Geneviève Touraine and the composer in May 1942, in the darkest days of the German Occupation — which no doubt emphasized what Poulenc called the cycle’s atmosphere ‘of nervousness, of sensuality, of disappointment and of melancholy’.

Poulenc also relished the fact that Vilmorin’s poems contained nothing that could not be decently sung by a woman, even if not a contented one. Will André’s lover prove faithful or will she end up simply as a memory? (Georges Auric complained about the last chord, but Poulenc said it was necessary to carry the listener on to the next song.) In ‘Dans l’herbe’ the lover is powerless; in ‘Il vole’ he flies away, stealing her heart (a pun on ‘vole’). Negative words abound in ‘Mon cadavre est doux comme un gant’: ‘effacées’, ‘silence’, ‘poids mort’, ‘égarés’, ‘arrêté’… All of this Poulenc treats with the simplest of means. Indeed all Vilmorin’s poems led him to a renewed consonance after his more dissonant settings of the Surrealists, Eluard in particular.

‘Violon’ recalls a violinist in a café where Poulenc had met Vilmorin and her Hungarian husband (hence the gypsy swoops); and after the final A minor gesture, the D flat major of ‘Fleurs’ comes, as Poulenc said, ‘from far away’. It was one of his favourite keys of sensuality, the five black notes comfortably accommodating his large fingers. In this song the combination of tenderness and heartbreak is almost unbearable.
La dame d’André

André ne connaît pas la dame
Qu’il prend aujourd’hui par la main.
At-telle un coeur à lendemains
Et pour le soir at-telle une âme?

Au retour d’un bal campagnard
S’en alla-t-elle en robe vague
Chercher dans les meules la bague
Des fiançailles du hasard?

At-telle eu peur, la nuit venue,
Guettée par les ombres d’hier,
Dans son jardin lorsque l’hiver
Entrait par la grande avenue?

Il l’a aimée pour sa couleur,
Pour sa bonne humeur de Dimanche.
Pâlira-t-elle aux feuilles blanches
De son album des temps meilleurs?

Dans l’herbe

Je ne peux plus rien dire
Ni rien faire pour lui.
Il est mort de sa belle
Il est mort de sa mort belle
Dehors
Sous l’arbre de la Loi
En plein silence
En plein paysage
Dans l’herbe.

Il est mort inaperçu
En criant son passage
En appelant, en m’appelant
Mais comme j’étais loin de lui
Et que sa voix ne portait plus
Il est mort seul dans les bois
Sous son arbre d’enfance
Et je ne peux plus rien dire
Ni rien faire pour lui.

André’s ladyfriend

André does not know the woman
Whose hand he takes today.
Has she a heart for the future
And for evening has she a soul?

Returning from a country dance
Did she in her loose-fitting gown
Go and seek in the hay stacks
The ring of random betrothal?

Was she afraid, when night fell,
Watched by the ghosts of the past,
In her garden, when winter
Entered by the wide avenue?

He loved her for her complexion,
For her Sunday good humour.
Will she fade on the blank pages
Of his album of better days?

In the grass

I can say nothing more
Do nothing more for him.
He died for his fair one
He died a fair death
Outside
Beneath the tree of Justice
In utter silence
In open country
In the grass.

He died unnoticed
Crying out as he passed away
Calling, calling me
But since I was far from him
And since his voice no longer carried
He died alone in the woods
Beneath his childhood tree
And I can say nothing
Do nothing more for him.
Il vole
En allant se coucher le soleil
Se reflète au vernis de ma table:
C’est le fromage rond de la table
Au bec de mes ciseaux de vermeil.
— Mais où est le corbeau? — Il vole.

Je voudrais coudre mais un aimant
Attire à lui toutes mes aiguilles.
Sur la place les joueurs de quilles
De belle en belle passent le temps.
— Mais où est mon amant? — Il vole.

C’est un voleur que j’ai pour amant,
Le corbeau vole et mon amant vole,
Voleur de cœur manque à sa parole
Et voleur de fromage est absent.
— Mais où est le bonheur? — Il vole.

Je pleure sous le saule pleureur
Je mêle mes larmes à ses feuilles
Je pleure car je veux qu’on me veuille
Et je ne plais pas à mon voleur.
— Mais où donc est l’amour? — Il vole.

Trouvez la rime à ma déraison
Et par les routes du paysage
Ramenez-moi mon amant volage
Qui prend les cœurs et perd ma raison.
Je veux que mon voleur me vole.

— But where’s the crow? — Stealing away on its wing.

Stealing away
The sun as it sets
Is reflected in my polished table:
It is the round cheese of the fable
In the beak of my silver scissors.
— But where’s my lover? — Stealing away on his wing.

I’d like to sew but a magnet
Attracts all my needles.
In the square the skittle-players
Pass the time playing game after game.
— But where’s my lover? — Stealing away on his wing.

I’ve a stealer for lover,
The crow steals away and my lover steals,
The stealer of my heart breaks his word
And the stealer of cheese is absent.
— But where is happiness? — Stealing away on its wing.

I weep under the weeping willow
I mingle my tears with its leaves
I weep because I want to be wanted
And because my stealer does not care for me.
— But where can love be? — Stealing away on its wing.

Find the sense in my nonsense
And along the country ways
Bring me back my wayward lover
Who steals hearts and robs me of my senses.
I want my stealer to steal me.
Mon cadavre est doux comme un gant
Mon cadavre est doux comme un gant
Doux comme un gant de peau glacée
Et mes prunelles effacées
Font de mes yeux des cailloux blancs.

Deux cailloux blancs dans mon visage,
Dans le silence deux muets
Ombrés encore d’un secret
Et lourds du poids mort des images.

Mes doigts tant de fois égarés
Sont joints en attitude sainte
Appuyés au creux de mes plaintes
Au noeud de mon coeur arrêté.

Et mes deux pieds sont les montagnes,
Les deux derniers monts que j’ai vus
À la minute où j’ai perdu
La course que les années gagnent.

Mon souvenir est ressemblant.
Enfants emportez-le bien vite,
Allez, allez, ma vie est dite.
Mon cadavre est doux comme un gant.

My corpse is as soft as a glove
My corpse is as soft as a glove
Soft as a glove of glacé kid
And my hidden pupils
Make two white pebbles of my eyes.

Two white pebbles in my face,
Two mutes in the silence
Still darkened by a secret
Laden with the dead weight of that they have seen.

My fingers that roved so often
Are joined in a saintly pose
Resting on the hollow of my sorrows
At the centre of my arrested heart.

And my two feet are mountains,
The last two hills I saw
At the very moment I lost the race
That the years always win.

Your memory of me is true.
Children bear it swiftly away,
Go, go, my life is over.
My corpse is as soft as a glove.

Violon
Couple amoureux aux accents méconnus
Le violon et son joueur me plaisent.
Ah! j’aime ces gémissements tendus
Sur la corde des malaises.
Aux accords sur les cordes des pendus
À l’heure où les Lois se taissent
Le cœur, en forme de fraise,
S’offre à l’amour comme un fruit inconnu.

Violin
Loving couple of misapprehended sounds
Violin and player please me.
Ah! I love these long wailings
Stretched on the string of disquiet.
To the sound of strung-up chords
At the hour when Justice is silent
The heart, shaped like a strawberry,
Gives itself to love like an unknown fruit.
**Fleurs**

Fleurs promises, fleurs tenues dans tes bras,
Fleurs sorties des parenthèses d’un pas,
   Qui t’apportait ces fleurs l’hiver
   Saupoudrés du sable des mers?
Sable de tes baisers, fleurs des amours fanées,
Les beaux yeux sont de cendre et dans la cheminée
   Un cœur enrubanné de plaintes
   Brûle avec ses images saintes.

*Louise de Vilmorin*

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**Flowers**

Promised flowers, flowers held in your arms,
Flowers from a step’s parentheses,
   Who brought you these flowers in winter
   Sprinkled with the sea’s sand?
Sand of your kisses, flowers of faded loves,
Your lovely eyes are ashes and in the hearth
   A moan-beribboned heart
   Burns with its sacred images.

_Translations by Richard Stokes_
At a time when Debussy was beginning to make waves in French music, Hahn was unrepentant about his style: ‘When you’ve spent your life from earliest childhood in a particular, rigorous harmonic discipline, you carry the imprint for ever’. On the rhythmic front, however, he could be every bit as forward-looking as Debussy. In ‘À Chloris’, to a poem by the 17th-century poet Théophile de Viau, over the pseudo-Baroque plodding of the bass line and the ornaments in the piano’s right hand, the broken opening phrases of the voice (marked ‘tendrement’) wonderfully suggest the lover’s hesitancy.

Hahn’s settings of Verlaine, in their own way, are every bit as remarkable as those of Debussy and Fauré, displaying a precocity not only in technique but in sensitivity to the words. ‘En sourdine’, from the Chansons grises which he published at the age of 17, captures the calm and silence evoked by the poem, disturbed only momentarily by a change of key as the wind ruffles the water, and by a solitary chromatic inflection for ‘désespoir’. A light-hearted energy infuses ‘Fêtes galantes’, with a nod to Debussy’s earlier setting in the first vocal phrase. The regularity of the piano’s um-cha texture is varied by a ritornello of 7+9 beats and, as Graham Johnson has suggested, the song’s ‘gay superficiality may well have been exactly what the composer intended’.

Programme notes © Roger Nichols
À Chloris
S’il est vrai, Chloris, que tu m’aimes
(Mais j’entends que tu m’aimes bien)
Je ne crois pas que les rois mêmes
Aient un bonheur pareil au mien.
Que la mort serait importune
À venir changer ma fortune
Pour la félicité des cieux!
Tout ce qu’on dit de l’ambroisie
Ne touche point ma fantaisie
Aux prix des grâces de tes veux!

Théophile de Viau

To Chloris
If it is true, Chloris, that you love me
(And I have heard that you love me very much)
I do not believe that even a king
Enjoys a happiness to equal mine.
Even death would be powerless
To alter my fortune
With the promise of heavenly bliss!
Nothing anyone says of ambrosia
Affects my imagination to the same extent
As the favour bestowed by your eyes!
**En sourdine**

Calmes dans le demi jour  
Que les branches hautes font.  
Pénétrons bien notre amour  
De ce silence profonde.

Fondons nos âmes, nos coeurs  
Et nos sens extasiés  
Parmi les vagues langueurs  
Des pins et des arbousiers.

Ferme tes yeux à demi,  
Croise tes bras sur ton sein  
Et de ton coeur endormi  
Chasse à jamais tout dessein.

Laissons-nous persuader  
Au souffle berceur et doux  
Qui vient à tes pieds rider  
Les ondes de gazon roux.

Et, quand, solennel, le soir  
Des chênes noirs tombera,  
Voix de notre désespoir,  
Le rossignol chantera.

*Paul Verlaine*

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**Softly**

Calm in the twilight  
Cast by lofty boughs,  
Let us steep our love  
In this deep quiet.

Let us mingle our souls, our hearts  
And our enraptured senses  
With the hazy languour  
Of pine and arbutus.

Half-close your eyes,  
Fold your arms across your breast  
And from your heart now lulled to rest  
Banish forever all intent.

Let us both succumb  
To the gentle and lulling breeze  
That comes to ruffle at your feet  
The waves of russet grass.

And, when, solemnly, evening  
Falls from the black oaks,  
That voice of our despair,  
The nightingale shall sing.
Fêtes galantes
Les donnateurs de sérénades
Et les belles écouteuses
Echangent des propos fades
Sous les ramures chanteuses.

C’est Tircis et c’est Amintae,
Et c’est l’éternel Clitandre,
Et c’est Demis, qui, pour mainte
Cruelle, fit maint vers tendre.

Leurs courtes vestes de soie,
Leurs longues robes à queues,
Leur élégance, leur joie
Et leurs molles ombres bleues
Tourbillonnent dans l’extase
D’une lune rose et grise,
Et la mandoline jase
Parmi les frissons de brise.

Paul Verlaine

Fêtes galantes
Serenaders
and those beautiful ladies who listen to them
exchange banal assignations
beneath the singing branches.

There they are: Tircis, Amyntas,
Clitander and Damis,
who have composed tender verses
for many a cruel mistress.

Their short silken smocks,
their long trailing cloaks,
their elegance, their joy
and their soft blue shadows
Whirl in the ecstasy
of a pink and grey moon,
and the mandoline twangs
in the shivering breeze.
Part 2

James Baillieu *piano*
Philip Higham *cello*
Adam Walker *flute*
Bartosz Woroch *violin*
Adam Newman *viola*

Poulenc Cello Sonata
Hahn Nocturne for violin and piano
Poulenc Flute Sonata

INTERVAL

Hahn Variations sur un thème de Mozart
Piano Quartet no. 3
Francis Poulenc

Cello Sonata

Allegro (Tempo di marcia)

Cavatine

Ballabile

Finale

Naturally attracted as he was to wind instruments and the human voice, Poulenc found writing for solo strings more of a problem: quite a few works were begun and then abandoned, and in 1947 a complete string quartet ended up in a Paris gutter. Even those string pieces that he finished and published had to survive the attacks he later made on them in his more melancholy moments, and he admitted having changed 17 bars of his Cello Sonata following a critic's remark that he felt was justified — what he called ‘an imperceptible pruning’.

Poulenc began the Cello Sonata in 1940 but then abandoned it until 1948, when ‘the affection I felt for Pierre Fournier prompted me to finish the work’: there was also the impulse of a forthcoming tour for the two friends. Fournier was known as a particularly lyrical cellist (Colette said of him, ‘He sings better than anything else that sings’, and on the manuscript Poulenc refers to him as ‘mon ange celliste’) and this quality is paramount in the music itself, which one critic has praised as being ‘tuneful and sincere’. It seems beyond a doubt that the war had had an effect on Poulenc, deepening his responses: certainly there are passages in this sonata that look forward to his opera Dialogues des Carmélites, which ends with the execution of nuns.

It is Poulenc’s only chamber work in four movements. Although the first is marked ‘Tempo di marcia’, there is nothing marchlike about the music, which sings almost throughout, albeit with lively interludes and a joky sign-off. Poulenc fans will recognize in the serene opening of the ‘Cavatine’ a quotation from the gamelan music that closes the first movement of the Concerto for two pianos; it returns at the end as a ghostly echo. In calling the third movement ‘Ballabile’, was Poulenc thinking of the little piano piece of that title by his beloved Chabrier? The movement similarly tips its hat to popular music — perhaps to one of Poulenc’s other heroes, Maurice Chevalier. The last movement contrasts ceremonial music (thoughts of Louis XIV?) with further explorations of the popular style, even if these are at times underpinned with some fairly acid harmonies, and at others softened by memories of the ‘Cavatine’. Finally, the sonata ends as it began.
Reynaldo Hahn

Nocturne for violin and piano

Although Hahn never studied with Fauré, what he writes about his songs in the book Du chant shows that he had a deep understanding of his elder confrère. The Nocturne in E flat from 1906 stands as further testimony to that understanding: apart from one or two Franckian moments, notably the two opening chords that reappear towards the end, the steady tread of the rhythm and the elegant modulations all speak of Fauré’s influence, as do the scales in both instruments, reaching an unexpected climax in the final bars.
Francis Poulenc

Flute Sonata

Allegro malincolico
Cantilena (Assez lent)
Presto giocoso

The links between composing and trains might make a rewarding subject for a PhD. Ravel thought of the opening tune of his G major Piano Concerto on the train from Oxford to London, after receiving his doctorate; Fauré, when asked where he had the idea for his ravishing Sixth Nocturne, replied ‘In the Simplon Tunnel’; and on 2 September 1952 Poulenc wrote to his friend and interpreter Pierre Bernac that he had ‘momentarily abandoned the Sonata for two pianos for the Flute Sonata, which suddenly took shape at the Gare Austerlitz last Thursday’.

This ‘early’ Flute Sonata was itself interrupted by the composition of the opera Dialogues des Carmélites and the project was revived really only by a commission from the Elizabeth Sprague Coolidge Foundation in America in April 1956. The Foundation, understandably, was happy to have whatever it could get, and Poulenc explained that this medium tempted him far more than anything involving strings. In a revealing letter to Bernac of 8 March 1957, just as he finished the sonata, he wrote:

In working on this Flute Sonata I have the feeling of going back a long way, but with a more settled technique. It’s a sonata of Debussyan dimensions. It’s the French sense of balance [la mesure française]. How right the Turin critic was to write after my Cello Sonata: ‘One is amazed that the composer of Les Biches should borrow his form from d’Indy’s Schola Cantorum’. Finding the form for your language is the most difficult thing. It’s what Webern had in the highest degree (as did Mallarmé) and what Boulez has not found yet.

Jean-Pierre Rampal, who gave the first public performance with Robert Veyron-Lacroix in June 1957, was puzzled by the form of the first movement when he played it through with Poulenc, feeling it lacked coherence. But Poulenc stuck to his guns, saying, ‘This is how I work, but you’ll see, it’ll be very good’. The last 50 years would seem to have proved him right.

Listeners who know Dialogues des Carmélites will find many familiar phrases in the sonata, though usually given new harmonic twists. The ‘melancholy’ aspect
of the first movement is enshrined in the persisting minor key of the opening phrase and in the way even the more cheerful ideas are inflected towards introspection. The melody of the Cantilena is one of Poulenc’s longest and most sensuous — not to mention brave, amid the rampant serialism of the 1950s — and again there is an undertow of melancholy that is not dispersed until the last movement, where the main tune of the first is presented in jollier guise. Here Poulenc returns to his naughty-boy persona of the 1920s; with, as he says, a surer technique but no loss of jaunty vim.

Reynaldo Hahn

Variations sur un thème de Mozart

Like Poulenc and Ravel, Hahn revered Mozart above all other composers. In March of that same year, 1906, he conducted no fewer than ten concerts of Mozart’s works in Salzburg; the soprano Lilli Lehmann was so impressed by the results that she arranged for him to conduct Don Giovanni in the city’s festival that August. The Variations date from the same year and are dedicated to the great French flautist Philippe Gaubert. The seven variations follow a Classical pattern, staying close both to the tune and to the harmony. Only the fourth variation, in the minor, contains any harmonies that would have disturbed the great Wolfgang.
Reynaldo Hahn

Piano Quartet no. 3
Allegretto moderato
Allegro assai
Andante
Allegro assai

In 1945 the 70-year-old Hahn received a double consecration, being made a member of the Institut and also appointed director of both Paris opera houses. The Piano Quartet no. 3 in G major which he wrote the following year demonstrated that, whatever radical ideas were then being promoted by young Turks like Pierre Boulez, Hahn did not feel he had anything to prove. Viewing the antiquities in Rome, he had given his view that “a painting full of “significance” wears much more quickly than one that is just beautifully made”. This Quartet could as easily have been composed, like the Nocturne and the Variations, in 1906 — which is not to say that the tiny, gossamer-light scherzo or the tender Andante are any the less seductive. No parading, no vulgar insistence: a work that is ‘simplement beau par la facture’.

Programme notes © Roger Nichols
Part 3

Jonathan McGovern baritone
James Baillieu piano
Bartosz Woroch violin
Viktor Stenhjem violin
Adam Newman viola
Philip Higham cello
Adam Walker flute
Mark Simpson clarinet

Poulenc
Poulenc
Rapsodie nègre
Clarinet Sonata
Violin Sonata

Hahn
Hahn
Romanesque
INTERVAL

Hahn
Hahn
D’une prison
L’heure exquise

Poulenc
Poulenc
Chanson d’Orkenise
Hôtel
Voyage à Paris

Hahn
Hahn
Piano Quintet
Francis Poulenc

Rapsodie nègre
Prélude
Ronde
Honoloulou
Pastorale
Final

The Rapsodie nègre, written in the spring of 1917, is the earliest Poulenc work to have survived. In writing it for voice and instrumental ensemble, Poulenc was very much a child of his time. Even though Schoenberg’s Pierrot lunaire was not heard in Paris complete until January 1922, its influence was already felt through the mediation of other works it inspired either directly, such as Stravinsky’s Trois poésies de la lyrique japonaise, or indirectly, such as Ravel’s Trois poèmes de Stéphane Mallarmé. But, instrumentation aside, the essential character of Poulenc’s piece owes very little to any of those three works, even if odd corners of melody and harmony suggest he had been listening to Ravel’s Piano Trio.

Overall, the Rapsodie nègre owes more to Picasso’s African enthusiasms and could best be described as ‘neo-brutalist’, beginning with clanging consecutive 5ths and embracing crude noises of all kinds; these include the nonsense words of ‘Honoloulou’ which were provided by an unknown friend of the composer, decently obscured behind the pseudonym Makoko Kangourou. Ostinatos and sudden surprises abound, and Poulenc’s characteristic final, joky signatures are already in evidence. Only in the ‘Final’ does a touch of Romanticism appear briefly in the lingering echo of ‘Honoloulou’. When Poulenc, in search of a teacher, showed the score to the 54-year-old composer Paul Vidal, that worthy gentleman threw him out on his ear.
Towards the end of Poulenc’s life, the cellist Pierre Fournier, an old friend, asked the composer to write a piece for him. Poulenc, who had already written a sonata for Fournier a decade earlier, politely refused, saying, ‘You know wind instruments are more my thing’. In 1957, when he wrote the Flute Sonata, he already had in mind complementary sonatas for bassoon, clarinet and oboe. No bassoon sonata was forthcoming, alas, but he finished sonatas for the other two instruments in the summer of 1962. Both were memorials to friends: the Oboe Sonata for his bridge partner Prokofiev, the Clarinet Sonata for Arthur Honegger, his one-time colleague in the group Les Six.

In the case of the Clarinet Sonata, it was more than just a straight memorial. While they remained friends, for most of their lives Poulenc and Honegger looked somewhat askance at each other’s music, Poulenc thinking Honegger’s too heavy, Honegger thinking Poulenc’s too light. Relations were not made any easier by the fact that Honegger was a workaholic, and even if you met him at a concert he would be off immediately afterwards to work on a few extra bars. Only in the decade up to Honegger’s death in 1955 did the two composers come to a happier mutual appreciation, and the first movement of Poulenc’s Clarinet Sonata, published only in 1963 after his death, perhaps reflects that journey. It was given its premiere in April that year by Benny Goodman and Leonard Bernstein.

Certainly the opening is as discordant and puzzling as anything in Honegger’s music, before Poulenc straightens everything out with a seemingly endless stream of lyrical tunes, over simple but deeply moving harmonies. The central movement, despite its title ‘Romanza’, is more of a heartfelt lament; after he had composed it in the autumn of 1959, Poulenc wrote to his British publisher, ‘if I never finish the work, then this Andante could be published on its own under the title “Andantino tristamente”’. The high spirits of the finale look back to Poulenc’s and Honegger’s days as enfants terribles of the 1920s, the composer appropriately borrowing, for the second theme, ‘Je cherche après Titine’, a tune made popular by Maurice Chevalier and Charlie Chaplin.
Francis Poulenc

Violin Sonata
Allegro con fuoco
Intermezzo
Presto tragico

Poulenc had his dislikes, not least the music of Fauré; he recognized him as a great composer, but never recovered from performances he heard as a child of Fauré’s First Violin Sonata, which he suffered with his hands over his ears. His problems with solo string instruments are encapsulated by the fact that he himself tried to write a violin sonata a number of times between 1918 and 1935 before eventually producing one in 1943 (revised in 1949). As with the Cello Sonata, he nonetheless had harsh things to say about it, but admitted at least that the style was ‘quite different from the melodic-violin-line of French sonatas of the 19th century’.

The Violin Sonata was the result of a commission from the violinist Ginette Neveu, who gave the first performance with the composer on 21 June 1943 in a benefit concert for writers and musicians who were prisoners of war. Since the death in 1936 of Federico García Lorca, shot by Franco’s soldiers, Poulenc had wanted to compose a work in his memory, and now he took as his inspiration the poet’s line ‘La guitare fait pleurer les songes’ (‘The guitar makes dreams weep’), inscribed over the central Intermezzo with which he began. The atmosphere is unmistakably Spanish, even though the opening theme is borrowed from the sonata he abandoned in 1935. To this he then added a ‘Presto tragico’ (this was the movement revised in 1949) and finally an opening ‘Allegro con fuoco’.

As Hervé Lacombe has written in his recent magisterial biography of Poulenc, ‘The logic of the sonata is driven by energy, emotion and poetry, not by structure, development and dialectic’. For performers and audiences, it is one of Poulenc’s most challenging works, and one can empathize with the critic in those dark days of 1943 who claimed that ‘its aesthetic corresponds absolutely with current tendencies’. The lyrical Poulenc is not forgotten, but finds a place among other sounds that speak of fear, danger and disorder. One further word of warning: be careful not to applaud before the end…
Reynaldo Hahn

Romanesque

During the uncertain early years of the Third Republic (1871–1940), the French regularly found solace and support in looking back to more glorious times. Hahn’s suite Le bal de Béatrice d’Este for wind instruments, harps and piano, first performed in a private salon in 1905, made the rounds of such venues, one of which even tempted Marcel Proust, Hahn’s one-time lover, to leave his cork-lined room. Proust said he even preferred ‘Romanesque’, the third of the suite’s seven movements (here in a later arrangement by Poulenc), to his previously favourite bit of Beethoven.

Reynaldo Hahn

D’une prison
L’heure exquise

Both of these poems by Verlaine were also set by Fauré, and comparisons are interesting. Hahn wrote ‘D’une prison’ in 1892, and it has been called his ‘greatest achievement in the field of French song and an astonishing one for a boy of 17’. Whereas Fauré’s setting, written in 1894, the year Hahn’s version was published, is typically chromatic and even declamatory, Hahn’s is much simpler, and one could argue that it gives a truer picture of the solitary poet in his cell and of the physical and spiritual emptiness that engulfs him. As ever, Hahn is alive to the music of the words: ‘tinte’ is given a new chord in a different spacing, and the only chromatic chord is held in reserve as a response to the cry ‘Dis! qu’as-tu fait?’

In their two settings of ‘L’heure exquise’, again from the early 1890s, the contrast between the composers’ techniques is even more marked: where Fauré is already modulating by the third bar, Hahn underlines his marking ‘infiniment doux et calme’ by continual oscillations between just two chords, and in his vocal line there is only one note outside the tonic B major. Also, where Fauré’s song reaches a climax twice in fortissimo, Hahn’s never rises above piano. Contrasts are confined to the delicate upward leaps on the crucial words ‘aimée’, ‘rêvons’ and ‘exquise’.
D’une prison
Le ciel est par-dessus le toit,
Si bleu, si calme.
Un arbre par-dessus le toit,
Berce sa palme.

La cloche dans le ciel qu’on voit,
Doucement tinte.
Un oiseau sur l’arbre qu’on voit,
Chante sa plainte.

Mon Dieu, mon Dieu! La vie est là
Simple et tranquille!
Cette paisible rumeur là
Vient de la ville.

Qu’as-tu fait, ô toi que voilà
Pleurent sans cesse?
Dis! qu’as-tu fait, toi que voilà
De ta jeunesse?

From prison
Above the roof, the sky
Is so blue, so calm.
Above the roof, a tree
Waves its fronds.

A bell tinkles gently in the sky,
Which one can see.
A bird sings its plaint in the tree,
Which one can see.

Heavens! Life is simple
And calm there!
That peaceful murmur
Comes from the town.

What have you done, you over there,
Unceasingly weeping?
Tell me! you over there, what did you do
In your youth?
L’heure exquise
La lune blanche
Luit dans les bois:
De chaque branche
Part une voix
Sous la ramée…

O bien-aimée.

L’étang reflète,
Profond miroir,
La silhouette
Du saule noir
Où le vent pleure…

Rêvons! C’est l’heure.

Un vaste et tendre
Apaïsement
Semble descendre
Du firmament,
Que l’astre irise…

C’est l’heure exquise.

Paul Verlaine

The exquisite hour
The white moon
Shines in the woods:
From every branch
There comes a voice
Under the arbour…

O well-beloved.

The lagoon,
A deep mirror,
Reflects the silhouette
Of the black willow
Where the wind moans…

Let us dream! It is the time for it.

A vast and gentle
Calm
Seems to be descending
From the heavens,
Iridescent with stars…

It is the exquisite hour.
Francis Poulenc

Chanson d’Orkenise
Hôtel
Voyage à Paris

The title Banalités, given by Poulenc to his 1940 cycle of five Apollinaire poems, was taken from a collection of that name that Apollinaire published in 1914 and that contained ‘Hôtel’ and ‘Voyage à Paris’. Poulenc found the three remaining poems of the cycle in other collections. In ‘Chanson d’Orkenise’, Poulenc has in mind Autun, one of his favourite cities (Orkenise is the road leading to the Roman gate). But this is not the city beautiful: the ‘va-nu-pieds’ is cousin to the beggar in the Chansons villageoises written two years later, and the gates of the city close against him. Both songs testify to Poulenc’s much admired ability to get on with all sorts and conditions of people.

In ‘Hôtel’, probably the laziest song in the whole French repertory, the poet is in a room in Montparnasse, and at the end we seem to see him, through Poulenc’s little four-chord envoi, stretching out luxuriously on his hotel bed beneath a cloud of smoke. ‘To anyone who knows me’, Poulenc wrote, ‘it will seem quite natural that I should open my mouth like a carp to snap up the deliciously stupid lines of “Voyage à Paris”. Anything that concerns Paris I approach with tears in my eyes and a head full of music.’ Poulenc and his singing partner Pierre Bernac liked to perform this song at the end of their exhausting concert tours, with home in sight.
**Chanson d’Orkenise**
Par les portes d’Orkenise
Veut entrer un charretier.
Par les portes d’Orkenise
Veut sortir un vanu-pieds.

Et les gardes de la ville
Courant sus au vanu-pieds:
‘Qu’emportes-tu de la ville?’
‘J’y laisse mon coeur entier.’

Et les gardes de la ville
Courant sus au vanu-pieds:
‘Qu’apporistes-tu dans la ville?’
‘Mon coeur pour me marier.’

Que de coeurs dans Orkenise!
Les gardes riaient, riaient:
Vanu-pieds, la route est grise,
L’amour grise, ô charretier.

Les beaux gardes de la ville
Tricotaient superbement;
Puis les portes de la ville
Se fermèrent lentement.

**Song of Orkenise**
Through the gates of Orkenise
A waggoner wants to enter.
Through the gates of Orkenise
A vagabond wants to leave.

And the sentries guarding the town
Rush up to the vagabond:
‘What are you taking from the town?’
‘I’m leaving my whole heart behind.’

And the sentries guarding the town
Rush up to the waggoner:
‘What are you carrying into the town?’
‘My heart in order to marry.’

So many hearts in Orkenise!
The sentries laughed and laughed:
Vagabond, the road’s not merry,
Love makes you merry, O waggoner.

The handsome sentries guarding the town
Knitted vaingloriously;
The gates of the town
Then slowly closed.

**Hôtel**
Ma chambre a la forme d’une cage
Le soleil passe son bras par la fenêtre
Mais moi qui veux fumer pour faire des mirages
J’allume au feu du jour ma cigarette
Je ne veux pas travailler — je veux fumer

**Hotel**
My room is shaped like a cage
The sun slips its arm through the window
But I who want to smoke to make mirages
I light my cigarette on daylight’s fire
I do not want to work — I want to smoke
Voyage à Paris
Ah! la charmante chose
Quitter un pays morose
Pour Paris
Paris joli
Qu’un jour
Dut créer l’Amour
Ah! la charmante chose
Quitter un pays morose
Pour Paris

Guillaume Apollinaire

Trip to Paris
Oh! how delightful
To leave a dismal
Place for Paris
Charming Paris
That one day
Love must have made
Oh! how delightful
To leave a dismal
Place for Paris

Translations by Richard Stokes
Reynaldo Hahn

Piano Quintet
*Molto agitato e con fuoco*
*Andante, non troppo lento*
*Allegretto grazioso*

Hahn wrote his only Piano Quintet, in F sharp minor, between 1918 and 1922, and the keyboard part in the first performance that year was taken by his favourite pianist, Magda Tagliaferro. One might have expected from her talents as a no-nonsense player with a formidable technique (the Conservatoire jury, awarding her a Premier Prix in 1907 when she was 14, remarked on the strength and agility of her left hand) that the piano would take pride of place. In fact the instrument asserts itself only slowly, being content initially with accompanying chords and arpeggios. The short–long–short rhythm of the opening theme might suggest César Franck, and elsewhere Hahn matches Fauré in his elusive harmonic sideslips. Schumann is in there too (an often overlooked influence on French composers of the time), not least in the dotted rhythms.

The Andante reminds us of Hahn’s prowess as a song writer — and still the piano is to some extent held in reserve, Hahn seeming to feel that melodies are more effectively played by strings. The finale, ‘Allegretto grazioso’, at once lightens the atmosphere, but as Francis Pott has justly noted, it ‘plays a time-honoured “is-it-a-scherzo/intermezzo-or-a-finale?” game’. Although the shortest of the three movements, it turns out to be more than an intermezzo, since themes appear from the previous two movements, albeit without any Franckian spotlighting. Now the piano is given its head and the music heads towards a grand, but never grandiose coda, providing eloquent testimony to Hahn’s structural control. Who, after this splendid piece, could possibly write him off as ‘just a salon composer’?

Programme notes © Roger Nichols

Roger Nichols was made a Chevalier de la Légion d’honneur in 2006 for services to French culture; he has written many books, including a biography of Ravel published in 2011 by Yale University Press, and his Francis Poulenc, Articles and Interviews: Notes from the Heart will be published by Ashgate later this year.
Biographies

James Baillieu  piano
Born in South Africa, James Baillieu studied at the University of Cape Town and with Michael Dussek, Malcolm Martineau and Kathryn Stott at the Royal Academy of Music, where he currently teaches piano accompaniment. He won prizes in the Wigmore Hall Song Competition and the 2009 and 2011 Das Lied International Song Competitions, and has given solo and chamber recitals throughout Europe, collaborating with a wide range of artists, including the Elias and Heath String Quartets, Mark Padmore, Thomas Allen, Katherine Broderick, Allan Clayton, Eri Nakamura, Catherine Wyn Rogers and Jacques Imbrailo. He has appeared at the Wigmore Hall; Bridgewater Hall, Manchester; the Berlin Konzerthaus; the Vienna Musikverein; the National Concert Hall, Dublin; and the Bergen International, Cheltenham, City of London, Spitalfields, Aldeburgh, St Magnus, Belfast, Aix-en-Provence, Derry and Norfolk & Norwich Festivals. He made his debut as a soloist in the Nottingham and Leeds International Concert Series and has subsequently appeared with the Ulster Orchestra. An experienced coach, he worked with Mirella Freni and Leo Nucci at the Georg Solti Accademia di Bel Canto (Italy) and was a professor at the Encuentro de Musica y Academia de Santander (Spain); he currently coaches on the Royal Opera’s Jette Parker Young Artists Programme.

Philip Higham  cello
Philip Higham was born in Edinburgh, where he studied with Ruth Beauchamp at St Mary’s Music School; he subsequently studied with Emma Ferrand and Ralph Kirshbaum at the Royal Northern College of Music. He won the 2008 Bach Leipzig Competition and the 2009 Lutosławski Competition, and won Second Prize in the 2010 Grand Prix Emanuel Feuermann cello competition, Berlin. His concert engagements include Finzi’s Cello Concerto at St John’s Smith Square; appearances as soloist with the Academy of St Martin in the Fields, the Vienna Chamber Orchestra, the Aizensky Chamber Orchestra, the Edinburgh Youth Orchestra, Sinfonia Cymru, the Warsaw Philharmonic Orchestra, Kammerakademie Potsdam and the Mendelssohn Kammerorchester, Leipzig; and performances at the Vienna Konzerthaus; the Wigmore Hall and Cadogan Hall, London; Colston Hall, Bristol; Bridgewater Hall, Manchester; Ulster Hall, Edinburgh; and the Mecklenburg-Vorpommern, Münsterland, Graichen, Presteigne, Lichtfield and Cheltenham Festivals. He performed the complete Bach Cello Suites at the Lammermuir and Perth Festivals and has appeared in recital at Lake Maggiore; the Bachwoche, Ansbach; the Leipzig BachFest; the Victoria Arts Festival, Malta; the Manchester International Cello Festival; City Halls, Glasgow; and the Spitalfields, Brighton and Lake District Summer Music Festivals. His engagements this season include Elgar’s Cello Concerto with the Bournemouth Symphony and Philharmonia Orchestras.

Jonathan McGovern  baritone
Jonathan McGovern trained at the Royal Academy of Music, where he took Second Prize in the Kathleen Ferrier Awards. He also won the Gold Medal and First Prize in the 2010 Royal Overseas League Annual Music Competition. His opera engagements include Jake in the world premiere of Nico Muhly’s Two Boys and Yamadori (Madam Butterfly) for ENO; Sid (Albert Herring) at the Aldeburgh Festival; Don Parmenione in Rossini’s L’occasione fa il ladro, Delta in Cavalli’s Il Giasone, Wu Tianshi and Pokayne in the world premiere of Peter Maxwell Davies’s Kommilitonen!, and Sid for Royal Academy Opera; Shane in the world premiere of Brian Irvine’s Postcards from Dumbworld at the Belfast Festival; and the title role in the UK premiere of Telemann’s Orpheus at the London Handel Festival. His concert engagements include The Yeomen of the Guard at last year’s BBC Proms; Mahler’s Lieder eines fahrenden Gesellen at St James’s, Piccadilly; Maximilian (Candide) with the Cambridge Philharmonic Orchestra; Fauré’s Requiem at Southwark Cathedral; and Boatswain (HMS Pinafore) at the Barbican and in Edinburgh, Glasgow, Manchester and Birmingham. He has given recitals with Julius Drake, Simon Lepper, Timothy End, James Baillieu and James Cheung, and has performed at the Wigmore Hall, the Opéra de Lille (with Simon Lepper) and the Machynlleth Festival.
Adam Newman viola
Born in 1984, Adam Newman studied with Louise Lansdown at the Junior School of the Royal Northern College of Music; with Philip Dukes and Gyorgy Pauk at the Royal Academy of Music, where he received a Sir John Barbirolli Foundation Award and the Duchess of Cornwall Award; and with Tatjana Masurenko at the Hochschule für Musik, Leipzig. He was a finalist in the 2008 Windsor International String Competition, where he was awarded the Bishops Instruments & Bows Prize. Much in demand as a chamber musician, he performs at the Verbier Festival, the International Musicians Seminar, Prussia Cove, and the Thy Chamber Music Festival, Denmark. He works with the London Steve Reich Ensemble (with which he has recorded for the CPO label in Zurich), the English Chamber Orchestra, the Razumovsky Ensemble, the London Conchord Ensemble and the Aronowitz Ensemble.

Mark Simpson clarinet
Mark Simpson was born in Liverpool in 1988 and studied composition with Julian Anderson at the Guildhall School of Music and Drama and the clarinet with Nicholas Cox at the Junior School of the Royal Northern College of Music; he currently studies with Mark van der Wiel. In 2006 he won the BBC Young Musician of the Year and BBC Proms/Guardian Young Composer of the Year competitions. He has appeared as soloist with the Royal Liverpool Philharmonic Orchestra (RIPO) under Petrenko, Northern Sinfonia under Tortelier, the BBC Philharmonic Orchestra under Noseda, City of London Sinfonia and the BBC Concert Orchestra, among others, and has given recitals at the Mecklenburg-Vorpommern Festival and BeethovenFest (Bonn) and on tour in the Middle East. His compositions include sparks, commissioned to open the 2012 Last Night of the Proms; Threads, written for the National Youth Orchestra; Nur Musik for oboe and ensemble, commissioned by Ensemble 10/10; and the tone-poem A mirror-fragment..., commissioned by the RIPO. He has also written for the pianist Richard Uttley and the Mercury Quartet, and in 2010 he won the Royal Philharmonic Society’s Composition Award. This season he gives recitals at the Wigmore Hall, the Royal Festival Hall and the Purcell Room, performing premieres of works by Simon Holt and Jonathan Harvey.

Viktor Stenhjem violin
Born in Norway in 1989, Viktor Stenhjem studied at the Trondheim Municipal School of Music and the Guildhall School of Music and Drama, where he is currently studying for his master’s degree with David Takeno. Last year he was a finalist in the Princess Astrid Competition for young Nordic musicians. He has performed as soloist with the Trondheim Symphony Orchestra, the Studenter samfundets Symfoniorkester and the Trondheim Junior Soloists; he has given recitals for the Norwegian royal family and at the 2010 Røros Winter Festival, at which he also played in chamber ensembles with Marianne Thorsen and Philippe Graffin. He has appeared throughout Europe and in Argentina, China, Israel, Tanzania and Mozambique. He is a member of the London Symphony Orchestra String Scheme and second violinist of the Idomeneo String Quartet.

Ailish Tynan soprano
Ailish Tynan trained at Trinity College and the Royal Irish Academy of Music, Dublin, and the Guildhall School of Music and Drama. She was a Vilar Young Artist at the Royal Opera House and a BBC New Generation Artist. In 2003 she won the Rosenblatt Recital Prize at the BBC Cardiff Singer of the World competition. Her recent opera engagements include Gretel (Hänsel und Gretel) for the Royal Opera and Scottish Opera; Madame Cortese (Il viaggio a Reims) for the Royal Opera; Tigrane (Radamisto) for ENO; Papagena (Die Zauberflöte) at La Scala, Milan; and Héro (Béatrice et Bénédict) in Houston and Luxembourg and at the Opéra-Comique, Paris. Last season she sang Mahler’s Symphony no. 8 with the Philharmonia Orchestra under Lorin Maazel and the Accademia Nazionale di Santa Cecilia under Antonio Pappano. Other highlights include Glèria’s Concerto for Coloratura Soprano with the Bournemouth Symphony Orchestra at the BBC Proms; Haydn’s The Creation with the City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra; and Haydn’s The Seasons in Madrid with Harry Christophers. She has given recitals at the Wigmore Hall and the Edinburgh International, City of London, Cheltenham and West Cork Music Festivals. Her discography includes songs by Parry and Mahler’s Symphony no. 8 with the London Symphony Orchestra under Valery Gergiev.
Adam Walker flue
Born in 1987, Adam Walker studied at Chetham’s School of Music and with Michael Cox at the Royal Academy of Music. He was a concerto finalist in the 2004 BBC Young Musician of the Year competition; in 2009 he was appointed Principal Flute of the London Symphony Orchestra and was named Outstanding Young Artist at the MIDEM Classique Awards. As a soloist he has appeared with the Vienna Chamber Orchestra at the Vienna Konzerthaus; with the Solistes Européens at the Luxembourg Philharmonie; with the Academy of St Martin in the Fields at the Barbican; with the Hallé Orchestra at Bridgewater Hall; with the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra at Cadogan Hall; and with Northern Sinfonia and the Bournemouth and City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestras. In 2011 he gave the world premiere of Brett Dean’s The Siduri Dances with the BBC National Orchestra of Wales. His concert engagements also include appearances at LSO St Luke’s, the City of London and Mecklenberg-Vorpommern Festivals, and in Varese, Italy. His recent appearances at the Wigmore Hall include collaborations with Brett Dean, Angela Hewitt, James Baillieu, Bernarda Fink and Karina Gauvin. His plans include the world premiere of Huw Watkins’s Flute Concerto with the London Symphony Orchestra and Daniel Harding.

Bartosz Woroch violin
Bartosz Woroch was born in 1984 in Poznań, where he trained at the Paderewski Academy of Music; he also studied with Monika Urbaniak-Lisik at the Hochschule der Kunste, Berne, and with Louise Hopkins at the Guildhall School of Music and Drama, where he now teaches. He was Concertmaster of the Poznań Philharmonic Orchestra (2002–08). As a concerto soloist he has appeared with the Czestochowa, Poznań, Silesian and Auckland Philharmonic Orchestras, and the Berne Symphony and Polish Radio Orchestras. He has given recitals at Bridgewater Hall, the Barbican, the Purcell Room and the Brighton Festival, and has performed Stravinsky’s The Soldier’s Tale with Martyn Brabbins and Berg’s Chamber Concerto with Michael Tilson Thomas. In 2011 he undertook a residency in Barrief, working with Henk Guitart, and last year participated in masterclasses with Menahem Pressler at the Britten–Pears School. As a chamber musician and member of the Cappa Ensemble, he has toured New Zealand, Australia and Singapore and given recitals at the Wigmore Hall, the Barbican, the Palais des Beaux-Arts (Brussels), the Radio France Festival (Montpellier), the Edinburgh Festival Fringe, and the Verbier and West Cork Chamber Music Festivals. This autumn he performs Elgar’s Cello Concerto in the Donatella Flick Conducting Competition.

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Technicians Jamie Barker, Sam Burgess, Bartosz Dylewski, Scott McQuaide, Jem Noble, Adam Vincent, Seth Wagstaff, Csaba Mach, Mike Bignell, Al Robinson, John Saxby, Jon Anrep, Chris Tibbles, Dan Goddard, Nick Goodwin, Nick Hill, Philip Oliver, Peter Steinbacher, Christos Takas, Youssef El-Kirate, Daniel Harvey, Marc Beatty, Rebecca Perkins, Owen Ridley, Graham Rees, Eliot Hughes, Matt Jones, James Christie, Robert Bullock

Conference and Event Sales
Business Development Manager Donna Miller
Conference and Event Sales Manager Delphine Cassara
Marketing Assistant Helen Rouncivell

Maintenance
Maintenance Manager John Rogers
Maintenance Supervisor Chris Parsons
Maintenance Plumber Colin Burt
Maintenance Apprentice Matthew Ashby

Visitor Services
Head of Visitor Services Zoe Curtis
Visitor Services Manager Sarah Wilkinson
Event Managers Morgan Robinson, Tim Ebbs, Simon Cowan, Josh Williams
Duty Event Managers Jamie Smith, Adam Self
Visitor Services Officer Emily Cross
Senior Visitor Services Assistant Kara Boustead-Hinks
Visitor Services Assistants Peter Bann, Graham Cameron, Melissa Cox, Anja Gibbs, Valerie Furnham, David Earl, Andrea Hoban-Todd, Tony Lee, Jules Pearce, Joe Pryer, Alex Pummell, Josh Rowley, Thomas Sloan, Adam Self, Claire Swift, Carly West, Nicky Conlan, Matt Freeland, Matthew Mulcahy, Richard Thorp, Emily Cross
Visitor Services Volunteer Coordinator Lizzy Leach

Front of House
Front of House Manager Ralph Corke
Front of House Supervisors Bernard Brown, Kara Boustead-Hinks, Bill Clements, Gabi Hergert, John Morfett, Jeff Pearce, Betty Raggett, Michael Raynor, Adam Self

Stewards and Security