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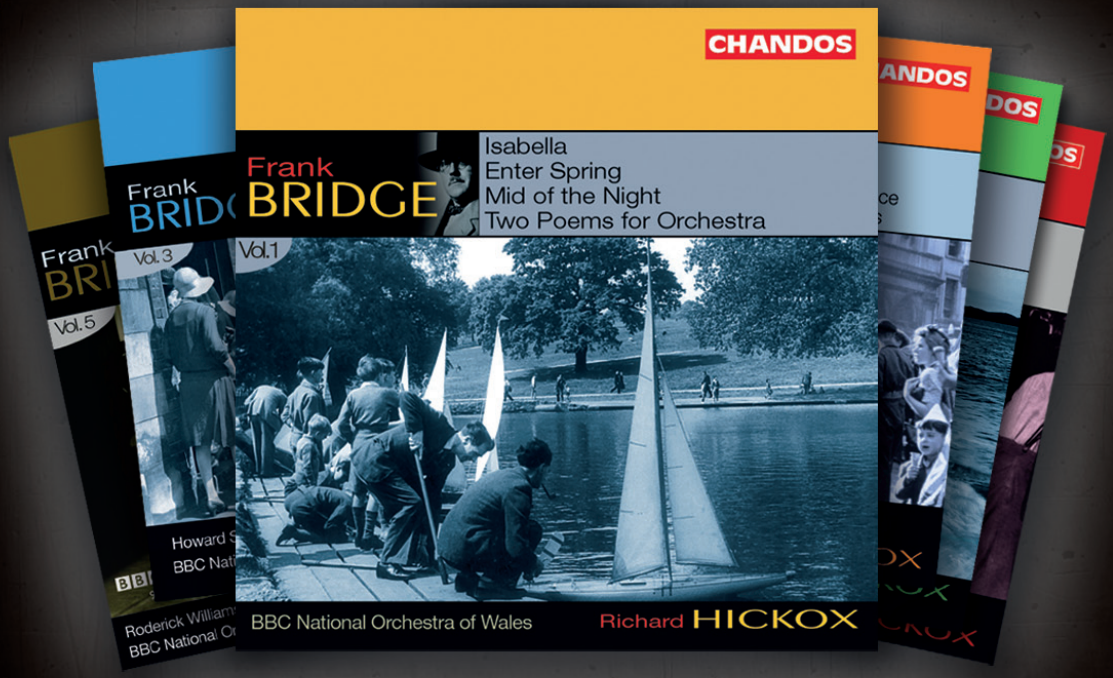
BRIDGE

ORCHESTRAL WORKS

The Collector's Edition



Sarah Connolly mezzo-soprano
Philip Langridge tenor
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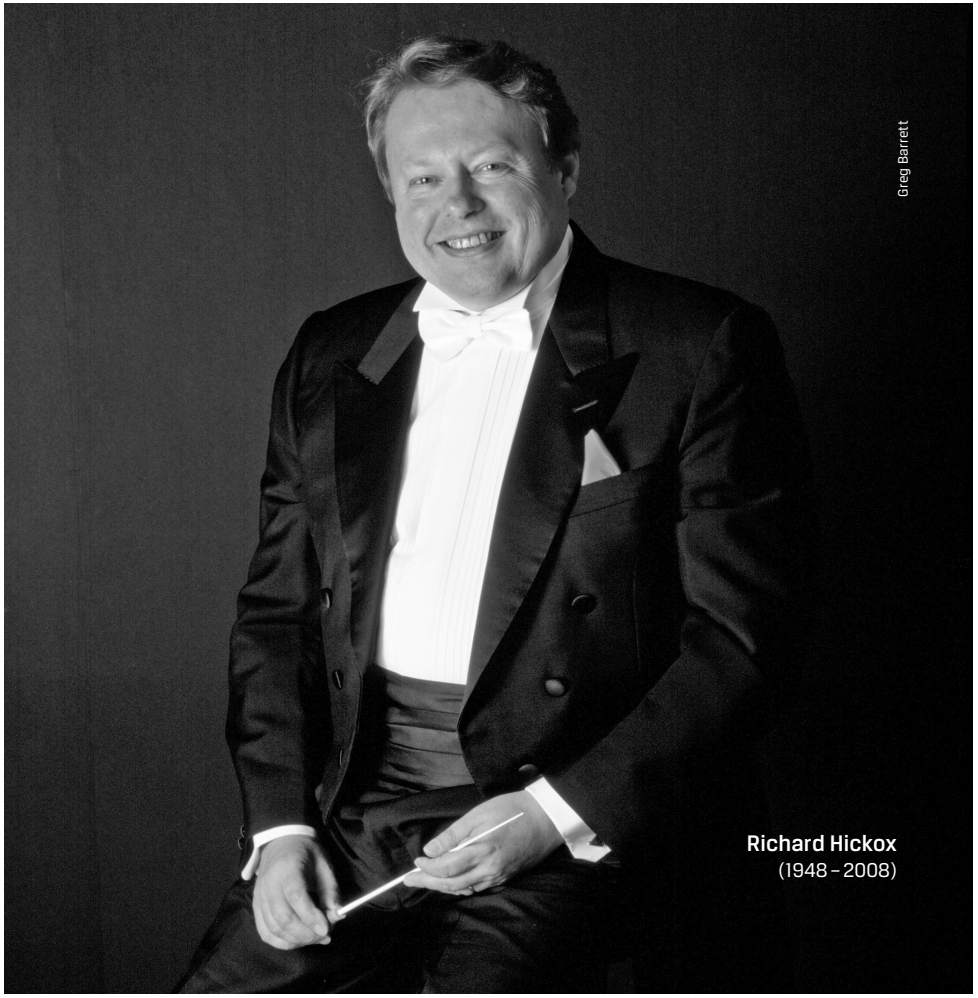
Alban Gerhardt cello

Howard Shelley piano
BBC National Chorus of Wales
BBC National Orchestra of Wales
Richard Hickox

THE HICKOX LEGACY


Greg Barrett
Richard Hickox
(1948 – 2008)

Frank Bridge (1879 – 1941)

COMPACT DISC ONE

1		**Enter Spring, H 174** (1926 – 27) Rhapsody Allegro moderato – Tempo giusto – Andante tranquillo – Tempo I – Energico – Andante molto tranquillo	**18:36**
2		**Isabella, H 78** (1907) Symphonic Poem after Keats Adagio ma non troppo – Allegretto moderato – L'istesso tempo – Allegro vivo – Adagio ma non troppo – Più adagio	**18:00**
		Two Poems for Orchestra, H 118 (1915) after Richard Jefferies	**12:58**
3	I	Andante moderato e semplice	8:35
4	II	Allegro con brio	4:18
		premiere recording	
5		**Mid of the Night, H 30** (1903) Symphonic Poem for Orchestra Andante – Allegro moderato – Poco più vivo – Andante moderato – Allegro moderato – Andante moderato – Più lento	**26:05**
			TT 75:47

COMPACT DISC TWO

premiere recording in this version

1		**Dance Rhapsody, H 84** (1908) for orchestra Allegro energico – Moderato – Allegretto moderato – Tempo di valse – Vivo – Allegro energico	**19:16**
		Five Entr'actes, H 95 (1910) from the play *The Two Hunchbacks* by Émile Cammaerts (1878 – 1953) for orchestra	**12:05**
2	I	Prelude to Act I. Allegretto moderato – Lento	3:20
3	II	Intermezzo from Act II. Andantino	1:36
4	III	Intermezzo from Act III. Allegretto (marziale)	1:19
5	IV	Prelude to Act III. Lento	2:36
6	V	Entr'acte between Acts II and III. Moderato	3:04
7		**Dance Poem, H 111** (1913) for orchestra Tempo di valse – Lento e languido – Tempo di valse – Largamente – Grazioso – Tempo di valse – A tempo, poco lento – Vivo – Presto	**13:48**

8		**Norse Legend, H 60** (1905 / 1938) for small orchestra Andante con moto	**4:48**
		The Sea, H 100 (1910 – 11) Suite for Orchestra	**22:08**
9	1	Seascape. Allegro ben moderato	7:14
10	2	Sea-Foam. Allegro vivo	2:23
11	3	Moonlight. Adagio ma non troppo	5:50
12	4	Storm. Allegro energico – Allegro moderato e largamente	6:33
			TT 72:34

COMPACT DISC THREE

premiere recording

1		**Coronation March, H 97** (1911) Tempo di marcia, maestoso – L'istesso tempo ma poco largamente – Allargando – Tempo I	**6:49**
2		**Summer, H 116** (1914 – 15) Tone Poem for Orchestra Andante ben moderato – A tempo ben moderato e tranquillo – Animato – Tempo I ma poco tranquillo	**10:42**

3		**Phantasm, H 182** (1931)* Rhapsody for Piano and Orchestra Allegro moderato – Allegretto molto moderato – Lento e tranquillo – Allegro moderato – Andante molto moderato – Allegro moderato – A tempo energico e ritmico – Ben marcato – A tempo giusto – Andante – Allegro	**24:21**
4		**There Is a Willow Grows aslant a Brook, H 173** (1927) Impression for Small Orchestra Adagio e tranquillo – Poco allegretto – A tempo I – Animato appassionato e rubato – Tempo I ma poco più largamente e sostenuto – Lamentoso – Più tranquillo	**11:19**
		Vignettes de danse, H 166 (1938) for Small Orchestra	**11:21**
5	I	Nicolette. Andante moderato – Allegretto moderato – Andante – Allegretto – A tempo poco animato – Moderato – Lento	3:13
6	II	Zoraida. Allegretto molto moderato	3:40
7	III	Carmelita. Con brio – Grazioso – A tempo con brio	4:19

premiere recording in this version

8 **Sir Roger de Coverley (A Christmas Dance), H 155** (1922) **4:41**
for Large Orchestra

Allegro con spirito – Tempo risoluto e più animato

TT 69:51

COMPACT DISC FOUR

premiere recording on CD

1 **Rebus, H 191** (1940) **10:44**
Overture for Orchestra

Allegro deciso – Poco moderato – Tempo giusto – Ben ritmico –
Tempo I – Moderato – Largamente – Moderato – Poco moderato –
Allegro vivo

2 **Oration (Concerto elegiaco), H 180** (1929–30)† **29:17**
for Solo Cello and Orchestra

Poco lento – Lento e ritmico – Allegro – Ben moderato (poco lento) –
Poco lento – Allegro giusto – Tranquillo – Ben moderato, mesto e tranquillo –
Cadenza – Allegro – Lento – Epilogue. Andante tranquillo

3 **Allegro moderato, H 192** (1940–41) **13:24**
Fragment of a symphony for string orchestra
Edited by Anthony Pople

Allegro moderato – Animato e deciso – Moderato – Poco largamente –
Tranquillo – [Animato e deciso] – Allegro deciso – Meno mosso

4		**Lament, H 117** (1915) for String Orchestra Catherine, aged 9, 'Lusitania' 1915 Adagio, con molto espressione – Poco più adagio	**5:19**
5		**A Prayer, H 140** (1916 – 18)‡ for Chorus and Orchestra Andante moderato – Allegro moderato – Poco allargando – Più lento e largamente – A tempo moderato – Poco animato – Tempo I – Tranquillo – A tempo I – Tempo I ma tranquillo	**17:55**
			TT 77:01

COMPACT DISC FIVE

		Suite for Strings, H 93 (1909 – 10)	**21:03**
1	I	Prelude. Moderato – Un pochettino maestoso – Allegro ma non troppo – Tempo I, tranquillo – Meno mosso e tranquillo	7:33
2	II	Intermezzo. Allegretto grazioso	3:27
3	III	Nocturne. Adagio molto – Un pochettino animato – Tempo I	6:09
4	IV	Finale. Allegro vivo – Poco meno mosso – Tempo I	3:45

premiere recording

5 **The Hag, H 14** (1902)§ **2:25**
Song for Baritone and Orchestra
Allegro molto

premiere recording

Two Songs of Robert Bridges, H 65 (1905 – 06)§ **6:32**
for Baritone and Orchestra

6 1 I praise the tender flower, H 65a. Andante moderato – Pochettino più mosso – Tempo I 3:13

7 2 Thou didst delight my eyes, H 65b. Allegro appassionato – Moderato 3:16

Two Intermezzi from 'Threads', H 151 (1921 / 1938) **8:33**

8 I Andante molto moderato e tranquillo 3:53

9 II Tempo di valse – Animato 4:38

Two Old English Songs, H 119 (1916) **7:30**
Arranged for String Orchestra

10 Sally in Our Alley. Andante con moto – Poco tranquillo – Tempo I 4:19

11 Cherry Ripe. Allegretto con moto 3:11

Two Entr'actes (1906, 1926) **6:38**

12 I Rosemary, H 68b. Andante espressivo e molto rubato – Allegro – Tempo I ma poco più tranquillo 3:54

13 II Canzonetta, H 169. Allegretto molto moderato e rubato – Allegro con moto – Tempo I 2:42

14 **Valse Intermezzo à cordes, H 17** (1902) **6:49**
No. 2 from Four Pieces for String Orchestra
assembled and arranged by Paul Hindmarsh
Moderato – Valse lente – Coda

premiere recording

15 **Todessehnsucht, H 181** (1932 / 1936) **3:53**
Arrangement for string orchestra of *Komm, süßer Tod*,
BWV 478, from Schemelli's *Musicalisches Gesang-Buch*,
by Johann Sebastian Bach (1685 – 1750)
Lento e sostenuto – Poco più andante ma sostenuto – Largamente

16 **Sir Roger de Coverley (A Christmas Dance), H 155** (1922 / 1939) **4:24**
for Strings
Allegro con spirito – Tempo risoluto

TT 68:17

COMPACT DISC SIX

premiere recording

1 **Blow out, you bugles, H 132** (1918)# **5:37**
for tenor and orchestra

Allegro moderato e risoluto – Lento – Andante moderato –
Andante ben moderato – Andante moderato – Recit[ando] –
Andante ben moderato – Allegro, ma non troppo – Largamente – Maestoso

premiere recording

2 **Adoration, H 57** (1905 / 1918)# **2:55**
for tenor and orchestra

Molto adagio – Adagio ma non troppo – Poco a poco animato –
A tempo, largamente

premiere recording

3 **Where she lies asleep, H 113** (1914)# **3:01**
for tenor and orchestra

Andante ben moderato

premiere recording

4 **Love went a-riding, H 114** (1914)# **1:40**
for tenor and orchestra

Allegro

premiere recording

5 **Thy hand in mine, H 124** (1917 / 1923)[#] **2:10**
for tenor and orchestra
Andante moderato

premiere recording

6 **Berceuse, H 9** (1901)[¶] **5:06**
for soprano and orchestra
Andante con moto – Poco più mosso – Tempo I

premiere recording

7 **Mantle of blue, H 131** (1918 / 1934)[¶] **2:47**
for high voice and orchestra
Andante ben moderato – Tranquillo – A tempo

8 **Day after day, H 164i** (1922)[¶] **4:55**
for mezzo-soprano and orchestra
Lento ma non troppo – Andante moderato – Poco animato –
A tempo moderato – A tempo con moto ma tranquillo – Poco animato –
A tempo moderato – Molto sostenuto

9 **Speak to me, my love!, H 164ii** (1924)[¶] **5:56**
for mezzo-soprano and orchestra
Andante moderato – Poco a poco animato – Tempo I, ma calmato –
Allegro con moto – Tempo I, ma tranquillo – Poco a poco con anima –
Allegro animato – Moderato – A tempo tranquillo

10		**Berceuse, H 8** (1901 / 1902 / 1928) Andante con moto – Poco più mosso – Tempo I	**3:23**
		premiere recording	
11		**Chant d'espérance, H 18ii** (1902) No. 2 from *Trois Morceaux d'orchestre* Allegro moderato – Presto	**3:40**
12		**Serenade, H 23** (1903) Allegro grazioso – Meno mosso – Più animato – Meno mosso – Tempo I – Presto	**2:51**
		premiere recording	
		The Pageant of London, H 98 (1911) Suite for wind orchestra	**15:08**
13	I	Solemn March 'Richard III leaving London'. Tempo di marcia ma maestoso	4:41
	II	First Discoveries	
14		1. Introduction. Moderato	2:01
15		2. Pavane. Moderato	1:49
16		3. La Romanesca [a Galliard]. Allegretto	1:04
17	III	March 'Henry VIII entering London'. Allegro marziale	5:33

premiere recording

18 **A Royal Night of Variety, H 184** (1934) **1:27**
Epilogue for orchestra
Allegro moderato – Tranquillo – Moderato

TT 61:14

Sarah Connolly mezzo-soprano¶
Philip Langridge tenor#
Roderick Williams baritone§
Alban Gerhardt cello†
Howard Shelley piano*

BBC National Chorus of Wales‡
Adrian Partington chorus master

BBC National Orchestra of Wales
Nicholas Whiting (CD 1) · **Janice Graham** (CD 2, CD 3) · **Lucy Gould** (CD 4)
James Clark (CD 5) · **Lesley Hatfield** (CD 6) leaders

Richard Hickox

Bridge:
Complete Orchestral Works

Volume 1

Frank Bridge (1879 – 1941) made his name in Edwardian England as a chamber musician and composer. He was admired for his songs and piano miniatures, and for his tuneful chamber music which was described by his pupil Benjamin Britten as being 'easy on the ear and grateful to play'. Bridge was one of the leading viola players of his generation, the driving force behind the English String Quartet for over fifteen years. However, he was also an orchestral musician of considerable pedigree, whose skills as an orchestral player, composer, and eventually conductor were championed by no less a figure than Sir Henry Wood.

29 May 1904 marked the first milestone in his professional career, when he conducted the first performance at London's St James's Hall of a symphonic poem he had finished the previous October. **Mid of the Night**, which is receiving only its second performance here, is an ambitious work of Lisztian proportions; the twenty-four-year-old Bridge clearly wanted to demonstrate all that he could do as a composer and orchestrator. The score is prefaced with these lines:

> Comes the mid of the night, ends for a while
> the brooding,
> Up from the depths of the soul memories well
> into life.
> Emblazened [sic] against the night more and
> more real they are growing;
> Comes the approach of dawn and they die in
> the bleak grey light.

No longer under Stanford's watchful eye, Bridge looked further afield than Brahms and Dvořák for his models. He loved the music of Tchaikovsky, for example, and some of this composer's dark orchestral colouring finds its way into the brooding introduction. The music unfolds with freedom and confidence although within a sonata-form framework. The balletic first subject and the lilting, almost Elgarian second episode are both fast and flowing, culminating in a brilliant fanfare. In place of the development there is an extended lyrical episode, begun with haunting cor anglais and violin solos and brought to an impassioned climax. The recapitulation is compressed, driving the music on until it dies away with the 'approach of dawn'.

Romantic images of the night, of dreams and ghostly happenings, re-emerge in his

second Symphonic Poem, **Isabella**, which he completed in January 1907. Henry Wood conducted the first performance at a Queen's Hall Promenade Concert on 3 October 1907. No orchestral work by Bridge follows so detailed a narrative as *Isabella*. It is based on Keats's poetic version of the gruesome Florentine tale by Boccaccio. Isabella is in love with the handsome Lorenzo. When her two merchant brothers discover this they lure him into a forest and murder him. In a dream at the 'dull of midnight' Isabella is visited by Lorenzo's ghost and, taking her nurse with her, she rides into the dark of the forest, digs up her lover's body and places its decapitated head in a pot of basil. Later the brothers steal the 'horrid thing' and Isabella, heartbroken, 'dies forlorn, imploring for her basil to the last'. Taking the Lisztian model once again, Bridge's treatment is more richly scored and tightly constructed than *Mid of the Night*. Particularly impressive is the way in which Bridge unfolds and combines the two themes associated with the lovers – Lorenzo's heroic horn call and Isabella's tender oboe melody – into a radiant climax. Their transformation into a spine-chilling midnight ride, the moment of the murder of Lorenzo, and his ghostly appearance at Isabella's bed-side could hardly be more vividly portrayed. The final transformation of Isabella's theme into a haunting minor-key lament reveals just how much Bridge had learned from Tchaikovsky's *Romeo and Juliet*. In the final apotheosis tragedy gives way to tender resolution as the lovers are reunited in death.

Unlike his major chamber works all the orchestral music by Bridge has a poetic or emotional subtext. During the First World War he retreated from the horrors of the conflict into a musical landscape of peace, calm, and sunshine. That is not to say that he indulged himself in a rhapsodic Delian idyll; far from it. Rather, he began to explore a more complex and personal harmonic world – gleaned from his experience of composers such as Scriabin and Debussy – and extend his palette of orchestral colour.

In October 1915 Bridge finished a pair of short tone poems inspired by the evocative writings of the 'nature mystic' Richard Jefferies. The first is a restrained essay in veiled sonority, sensuous chromaticism and ambivalent tonality. The text comes from Jefferies's *The Open Air*:

> Those thoughts and feelings which are not sharply defined, but have a haze of distance and beauty about them, are always the dearest.

The second is an exuberant scherzo, a brilliant orchestral dance, harmonically well defined. The quotation is from *The Story of My Heart*:

> How beautiful a delight to make the world joyous! The song should never be silent, the

> dancer never still, the laugh should sound like water which runs for ever.

Bridge conducted the first performance of his **Two Poems for Orchestra** at Henry Wood's 1917 New Year's Day Concert in the Queen's Hall.

The 1914 – 18 War precipitated a fundamental change of direction in Bridge's career and music. In a letter to his friend and supporter Eduard Speyer, Bridge wrote that the loss of so many friends and colleagues 'only makes the ache worse'. The decision, at the age of forty, to give up professional playing and concentrate solely on composing and conducting was to prove problematic. His diary was rarely full at first, so he was forced to increase his violin teaching and his production of what he described as 'pot-boilers', rather than focus his creative energy on the big orchestral work he longed to write. The opportunity finally came in 1924, following the great success he scored at the 1924 Norfolk and Norwich Triennial Festival with his suite *The Sea* – a performance which so impressed the young Benjamin Britten. Bridge was commissioned to write something new for the 1927 festival. He completed the score of his masterly Rhapsody **Enter Spring** at the end of May 1927. Ernest Newman, the celebrated critic of *The Times*, was thoroughly impressed by the work when Bridge conducted it with the Queen's Hall Orchestra in Norwich on 27 October.

> *Enter Spring* is a highly-wrought piece of orchestral design, producing a quite distinct tone colour of its own by an ingenious interweaving of themes in the traditional measure of pastoral compound time. The traditional pastoral measure, however, is far from producing that leisurely ruminating mood usually associated with it. The music is swift and strenuous with only occasional episodes in a gentler mood.

At the height of his creative powers, Bridge found inspiration in the wild and windy spring of the Sussex Downs surrounding his country cottage; in fact he had toyed with the idea of calling the work 'On Friston Down'. The energy and motivic detail of the fast music contrast vividly with the grandeur found in the sweeping phrases of the central 'pastoral' melody. This melody is contained in an episode which opens with a wonderfully evocative sequence of 'birdsong' over some magical harmonies. At the end of the work the 'pastoral' melody opens out into a resplendent climax, as spring arrives in all its glory.

© Paul Hindmarsh

Volume 2

Frank Bridge, like Sir Edward Elgar, was brought up in Brighton in the household of a 'jobbing'

musician. The tenth of twelve children, Bridge was put to the violin at the age of six by his father, who had given up a printer's trade to teach the violin and to direct the music in Brighton's theatres. There was plenty of chamber music at home and much lighter orchestral fare in the theatre pit on which young Frank and his cello-playing brother William could cut their musical teeth.

After his long sojourn as a student at the Royal College of Music (1896 – 1903), Bridge emerged principally as a chamber musician and composer. He had taken up the viola, founded his own quartet – the English String Quartet – with three college friends, and played in two others. In a professional career spanning more than forty years, Bridge first learned, then further developed his compositional craft through the intimate media of quartets, quintets, trios, sonatas, and smaller instrumental works, playing in many of the early performances himself. Then, from 1923 until his death in 1941, much of his time was spent creating a series of visionary chamber works for his American patron, Elizabeth Sprague Coolidge.

Right from his earliest professional years, however, Bridge harboured the ambition to be a conductor and composer for the orchestra. He made his conducting debut on 20 May 1904 in the first performance of his Symphonic Poem *Mid of the Night*, and the following year rose from the ranks to conduct the New Symphony Orchestra in some of its early repertoire rehearsals. After that he introduced all but three of his own orchestral works to the public. Henry Wood and Adrian Boult conducted the others, including his most celebrated premiere, that of *The Sea*. But by insisting that he conduct his own orchestral performances Bridge undoubtedly restricted the wider dissemination of his works.

The exuberant **Dance Rhapsody** is a case in point. The ink was hardly dry on the score and parts when Bridge introduced it to considerable critical acclaim at the Royal College of Music on 21 July 1908. He also conducted the next three performances: on 25 September 1909 at the Liverpool Festival of British Music, at a Queen's Hall Promenade Concert on 15 October 1914, and at the Royal Albert Hall on 1 December 1918. Twenty years passed before it was heard again – in a BBC broadcast, conducted by Clarence Raybould. It disappeared once more, until 1977, and that is much less exposure than this attractive work deserves. There are three contrasting dances, linked by short transitions and framed by an *Allegro energico*. This contains some of Bridge's most confident orchestral gestures, a vigorous compound-time pulse, and an heroic horn theme. The first of the two waltzes is an *Allegretto moderato*,

an elegant and poised *valse noble*, with a lilting main subject introduced by duetting flutes and a middle section that sounds as though it has come straight out of the ballet *Swan Lake* by Tchaikovsky – Bridge was a life-long admirer of the Russian's heart-on-sleeve romanticism. The second dance is a wistful *valse lente* (*Tempo di valse*), dominated by the strings and recalling Bridge's own earlier *Valse Intermezzo* (1902). At the heart of the work is an echo of the opening horn call – recalled if not in tranquillity then like a distant memory. The final dance is a fleet-footed quickstep (*Vivo*), which here has been recorded complete with its bracing middle section for the first time. The cut of this section is marked on the score in blue pencil, most probably by Bridge himself in preparation for Clarence Raybould's broadcast in 1938.

On 17 November 1910 Bridge conducted the first performance of his **Five Entr'actes** for the production of the play *The Two Hunchbacks* (*Les Deux Bossus*) by the Belgian writer Émile Cammaerts. They formed the second part of a double bill which began with a staging of Handel's oratorio *L'Allegro ed il Penseroso*, and was part of an opera season produced at the Savoy Theatre in London by the mezzo-soprano Marie Brema (the first Angel in Elgar's *The Dream of Gerontius*). Brema was Cammaerts's mother-in-law. A fairytale play set in the Belgian Ardennes, *The Two Hunchbacks* was given in an English version prepared by Cammaerts's wife, Tita Brand. These five characteristic movements reveal Bridge as a master of light genre pieces. He based the music on folk-tunes supplied by the author and used a standard theatre orchestra of the time, requiring double woodwind, a pair of trumpets and horns, plus three trombones and a harp. These last gave him additional tonal resources and no doubt helped make his modest orchestra sound more ample and colourful. In order to provide a strong ending for this concert suite, I have altered the original order of the movements. The suite opens with the gentle, lilting Prelude to Act I. The Intermezzo from Act II is a hymn-like arrangement of innocent simplicity, while the Intermezzo from Act III, which follows, is a bright fade-in / fade-out march that would not be out of place in an operetta by Edward German. In the touching Prelude to Act III, a haunting cor anglais solo reminds us of the Gallic grace that permeates so much of Bridge's early music. The Entr'acte between Acts II and III is the most robust of the five pieces, bringing to mind, as nowhere else in the music of Bridge, his teacher Stanford and the latter's highly effective treatment of folk-tunes, particularly in the Irish Rhapsodies.

It was with the Suite for Orchestra **The Sea**, completed on 5 July 1911, that Bridge scored his greatest and most lasting success. Henry Wood,

who conducted the premiere at a Queen's Hall Promenade Concert on 25 September 1912, was a great admirer of the composer and especially of this work. Wood and Bridge conducted it regularly, at the Promenade Concerts and abroad. In the autumn of 1923, for example, Bridge introduced it to the orchestras and audiences of Cleveland, Boston, and Detroit. 'I enjoyed it tremendously', he wrote after the Cleveland performance:

> Two or three thousand in the audience. Most cordial even at the outset and they were so attentive. Listened like mice... It was exciting. The happiest thrill I ever get is when the players are as sympathetic and enthusiastic as the audience. I get something out of that which is almost impossible to put into words.

So what are the ingredients that make *The Sea* perhaps Bridge's most successful orchestral work. Well, for one thing, Bridge exploits to the full the colour and texture of the orchestra. In fact, all his orchestral music is *about* something: there are nature-inspired tone poems, such as *The Sea*, *Enter Spring*, and *Summer*; there are the war-inspired works such as *Oration* and the *Rebus* Overture; and there are those with a more ambiguous or elusive 'emotional' programme, for example *Dance Poem* or *Phantasm*. However, in his four-movement portrait of the sea, imagery, emotion, and colour are underpinned by an equally vivid and satisfying musical argument. We hear clearly the surge of the waves in 'Seascape'. But the first theme, announced on the violas (the viola was Bridge's own instrument), is shaped like a wave – rising slowly and then breaking into a quick decay. The cries of the seabirds at the end of the movement – falling thirds and fourths – are transformed into the playful splash of 'Sea-Foam', and slowed down into the more forceful tune on French horns. Slow the momentum down still further, add shimmering strings and harp and the same ingredients are transformed yet again into the nocturne 'Moonlight' – the music which so impressed the ten-year-old Benjamin Britten when he heard it at the 1924 Norfolk and Norwich Festival. In the finale all the melodies and themes become subsumed in a vivid 'Storm' of rushing seas and huge breakers.

The Sea was the only orchestral work for which Bridge supplied his own detailed programme:

> *Seascape* paints the sea on a summer morning. From high drifts is seen a great expanse of waters lying in the sunlight. Warm breezes play over the surface. *Sea-Foam* froths among the low-lying rocks and pools on the shore, playfully not stormy. *Moonlight* paints a calm sea at night. The first moonbeams are struggling to pierce through dark clouds, which eventually pass

over, leaving the sea shimmering in full moonlight. Finally, a raging *Storm*. Wind, rain and tempestuous seas, with the lulling of the storm an allusion to the first number is heard and which may be regarded as the sea-lover's dedication to the sea.

Bridge composed much of *The Sea* in Eastbourne, and it is perhaps the unpredictable seas of the English Channel around Beachy Head that he had in mind. By sheer coincidence, it was in an Eastbourne hotel that Claude Debussy put the finishing touches to his own symphonic seascape, *La Mer*. The two works have little else in common. The Bridge–Debussy connection is more obvious in his next orchestral work, **Dance Poem**, which Bridge composed during the first half of 1913. Would he have been inspired to try his hand at an abstract ballet without the example of Debussy's *Jeux* and the prospect of interest from Diaghilev's Ballets russes – which, sadly for Bridge, in the end came to nothing? *Dance Poem* was the first work in which Bridge took a step away from the tuneful and colourful idiom which had served him so well for a decade. He was beginning to 'spread his wings'. The bold rhetorical gestures and loose-limbed structures of *Dance Rhapsody* give way to a more concise approach. There is an obsessive quality about the way in which Bridge worries over his themes rather than letting them unfold in the expansive manner of old. The harmonic language is becoming more elusive and ambiguous, with the whole-tone scale assuming an increasingly important role in the tonal structure. *Dance Poem* is a symphonic waltz in six closely argued sections corresponding, in outline, to the episodes in a traditional sonata form movement: *Tempo di valse*, 'The Dancer' (Introduction); *Lento e languido – Tempo di valse*, 'Allurement' (Exposition); *Largamente – Grazioso*, 'Abandon', and *Tempo di valse*, 'Tenderness' (Development); *A tempo, poco lento*, 'Problem' (Recapitulation); *Vivo – Presto*, 'Disillusion' (Coda). The ambitious aim is to convey in music the emotions expressed in a dancer's movements. There is a basic waltz tempo which fluctuates according to the prevailing mood. The music's main ideas – presented in 'The Dancer' – are deliberately shaped with a potential for transformation and contrapuntal association. They become seductive and sensuous in 'Allurement' and 'Tenderness'; they are more robust and forthright in 'Abandon', questioning in 'Problem'; and after a whirlwind climax they dissolve into 'Disillusion'.

Dance Poem was something of an experiment for Bridge. He knew this, and was not entirely surprised that the work confused audience, critics, and players alike at its first performance during a Royal Philharmonic

Society concert at the Queen's Hall on 16 March 1914. However, it angered him that the work was not heard again for almost twenty years. In a letter to Marjorie Fass on 24 July 1933 he wrote:

> Good or bad, original or unoriginal, likeable or dislikeable, there it is... I do think it is damned difficult not to have a cursing fit at the obtusiveness, apathy and priggishness that find me doing this work for the second time in twenty years, when it might – I think – have been in orchestral repertoires long ago. It may be damned again in the October newspapers.

Actually, it was not and several further performances followed. Bridge conducted *Dance Poem* for the last time on 1 September 1939, the night, as he inscribed on the full score, that Hitler invaded Poland.

In the 1930s, Bridge was a regular conductor of BBC studio concerts. He also orchestrated a number of his early salon pieces for a new series of light orchestral music, published in 1939 by Hawkes and Son. Among these was a charming miniature tone poem, **Norse Legend**, originally composed in 1905 for violin and piano and beautifully orchestrated in January 1938.

Volume 3

During the first part of his professional career Frank Bridge was a performer first and a composer second. In a letter of 1916 to Edward Speyer (1839–1934), a friend of Brahms's and Elgar's, he mentioned that he spent about three or four months of the year composing. The rest of the time he was making a living: playing viola in his English String Quartet, playing violin or viola in Sir Henry Wood's Queen's Hall Orchestra, and teaching violin and coaching chamber music at the Royal College of Music, at various private schools, and at the University of Oxford. Incidentally, it was at Oxford that he encountered the young Adrian Boult for the first time, and the two were to cross paths again many years later, when Boult was Chief Conductor of the BBC Symphony Orchestra.

Bridge's ultimate ambition was to be known as a composer and conductor, but moving up from the ranks proved a tougher proposition for Bridge than it was for his younger contemporary Eugene Goossens, whose rise from the violin and viola ranks of the London String Quartet and the London Symphony Orchestra to the conductor's podium was faster and ultimately more successful. According to those old members of the BBC Symphony Orchestra, such as Bernard Shore and Sidonie Goossens, who remembered him from the 1930s, he was a very hard taskmaster, skilled and highly musical, but impatient and often brusque. The sketches which his great

friend Marjorie Fass made of Bridge 'in action' reveal a conductor of energy and elegance.

Henry Wood gave Bridge some of his earliest opportunities to make a name for himself as an orchestral composer and conductor. Early in 1911, while he was orchestrating *The Sea*, Bridge tried his hand at some orchestral self-promotion by entering a Worshipful Company of Musicians competition for a **Coronation March** to celebrate the new Georgian era. Bridge's score bears the inscription 'animo ed fide' and the number seventy-nine. In the end no prize was awarded, hence his scribble on the envelope, returned to Bridge on 1 May 1911, 'Coronation March (damn!!!)'. A large orchestra is required and the music is full of impressive gestures, from the opening fanfare to the final climax. However, Bridge's penchant for irregular phrase lengths (in the tunes of both march and trio), for modal inflexions, and for harmonic excursions to remote keys is not the stuff of popular marches. But what the work may lack in patriotic rhetoric, it certainly makes up for in lyrical warmth, especially in the sonorous trio section.

As Bridge was a pacifist, military tub-thumping may have gone against the grain. During the First World War, when some of his closest friends in the music profession were killed in action, Bridge was at pains not to dwell upon the distressing emotions he felt, and wrote about in his letters. Instead, in 1915 he escaped to the country, musically speaking, producing a trio of orchestral idylls – the Two Poems for Orchestra and the Tone Poem **Summer**. He conducted the first performance of the latter on 13 March 1916 at a Royal Philharmonic Society concert in the Queen's Hall.

Bridge possessed a fine grasp of naturally evolving forms – *Summer* is far from being a Delian ramble – and, using a simple ternary structure, he fashioned an evocative musical picture of a summer's day in the country. The shimmering string figures which begin the piece are twice interrupted by more ominous sonorities before diffusing into a haze of veiled harmonies that support the haunting sound of the solo oboe. The string figures return – more playfully this time – while fragments of the tune emerge on horns, as if from behind fluffy clouds. Then, as though the summer haze had lifted to reveal a glorious sun-drenched scene, we hear one of Bridge's most ravishing melodies. It may sound like the product of pure inspiration, but the metrical structure of the melody is identical to that which gives the opening pages of the work their particular baring (12 / 8 x 3; 9 / 8 x 2). The perspective changes when the principal theme is reprised, and Bridge alters the aural image yet again in the coda in which the delicate string murmur is transformed into a radiant orchestral tutti.

Writing home after conducting the American premiere in 1923, Bridge noted:

> ...only if there is such a thing as rest in the soul of the listener and in the sweetness of a summer day away in the heart of the country will my piece *Summer* make any impression.

During the summer of 1922 Bridge was struggling over the second movement of his groundbreaking Piano Sonata, which was to emerge two years later as his first 'progressive' work. He also wanted to write an orchestral piece for the Queen's Hall season in the autumn. But there was time only for smaller projects. So instead he set to work expanding the arrangement for string quartet of the traditional tune 'Sir Roger de Coverley', which he had completed on 30 June 1922, into a miniature dance poem for large orchestra. The ink dried just in time for Henry Wood to include the new piece in the programme for the last night of the Promenade season, on 21 October. Bridge and his small band of copyists – actually his wife, Ethel, and their friend Marjorie Fass – completed the last part the afternoon before the concert. The colourful **Sir Roger de Coverley (A Christmas Dance)**, with its free flowing variations and seasonal inclusion of 'Auld Lang Syne', received prolonged applause.

In January 1927 Bridge broke away from the writing of his most expansive nature poem, *Enter Spring*, to work on another short orchestral piece. To be more precise, he excised what he had sketched for the middle portion of *Enter Spring* and transformed it into music as dark and bleak as *Summer* had been light and sunny: the Impression for Small Orchestra **There Is a Willow Grows aslant a Brook**. The title quotes the opening line of Queen Gertrude's famous speech in Act IV of *Hamlet*, in which she describes the drowning of Ophelia. Bridge's haunting music follows Ophelia's final grief-stricken moments in clear musical detail. At the start the undercurrent of shifting, highly chromatic string writing reveals the threat of that 'glassy stream'. The forlorn calls on flute, clarinet, and horn – full of characteristic semitones and minor thirds – are as sad as the cries of Peter Warlock's *Curlew*. Separating the three statements of this ominous refrain, the oboe, with harp and strings, takes on the role of Ophelia, singing her plaintive 'old lauds'. These are modal melodies, the first slow, the second more animated. Ophelia is preparing garlands 'of crowflowers, nettles, daisies and long purples for her lost love'. Then, as she clambers up the willow tree to hang 'on the pendent boughs her coronet weeds' (a more urgent version for strings of the oboe's tune), she falls 'in the weeping brook' (vividly portrayed by a clarinet cadenza). We hear her chanting 'snatches of those old lauds' (oboe and bassoon) until her 'garments, heavy with their

drink, pull'd the poor wretch from her melodious lay, to muddy death'.

Phantasm of 1931 inhabits a spectral world of dreams and ghostly apparitions. It is a piano concerto in all but name. The soloist's part may not be 'showy' in a pianistic way, as it is in the concerto composed the previous year by Bridge's exact contemporary John Ireland, but the piano is still the first among equals. Bridge was inspired to compose *Phantasm* after hearing Hindemith's Concert Music, Op. 49 for piano, two harps, and brass in November 1930 at Elizabeth Sprague Coolidge's Chicago Festival. Bridge was at the festival for the American premiere of his Piano Trio (1929). He was impressed with the pianist Emma Lübbecke-Job's playing of the solo part and conducted a performance of the work for the BBC with her as soloist the following March. As soon as Bridge had returned home, he began work on a concertante work of his own, in the hope that Mrs Coolidge – who had supported him for eight years – would produce it when her globetrotting festival arrived in Paris in the autumn of 1932. In the event the Coolidge Festivals in Europe were confined to chamber music, and *Phantasm* was consigned to his bottom drawer until January 1934, when Kathleen Long premiered it at the BBC British Music Festival in the Queen's Hall with the composer conducting. In a letter to Mrs Coolidge on 14 January 1934 Bridge reported:

> Last Thursday's papers were mostly monotonous in their complete disapproval – euphemistic expression – of the concert on Wednesday. But I have the greatest pleasure in saying that *Phantasm*, with Kathleen Long playing really brilliantly and sympathetically, plus the BBC Orchestra at the top of its form, was one of the very best performances of any work with orchestra that ever I had.

Bridge describes *Phantasm* as a Rhapsody, not because it is loose or rambling in form but because of its unconventional single-movement plan. It has more in common with the phantasies that Bridge had composed in his younger days, and with chamber pieces such as the Rhapsody Trio for two violins and viola of 1928, than with any work in the traditional concerto form. At the outset two related ideas flash by like ghostly apparitions: they are to provide the thematic basis for the whole work. In an extended slow introduction the soloist 'improvises' on them, outlining clearer lyrical shapes. The piano then leads the orchestra into the first *Allegro* episode. A ghostly, modal march theme is supported by a dissonant ostinato. The strange visions gradually come into focus. Then the orchestra begins a macabre, spectral waltz, but as Bridge's

whole-tone chords and tritone-based polychords disperse, melodic shapes become more clearly defined, tonality grows more stable, and a graceful 'waltz' emerges as the second subject. The piano soon snuffs it out, however, and leads the orchestra into a development of the lyrical material of the introduction. The dialogues between the pianist and various orchestral soloists – flute, oboe, violin, and cello – are particularly evocative. Rattling timpani and clarinets announce the reprise of the *Allegro* – the first subject march theme – but splitting this reprise in two and inserting the lyrical 'waltz' in the gap enables Bridge to work up the ostinato passage into a searing, interrupted, climax. The music quickly dissolves, the fleeting images heard at the start disappearing into the gloom whence they had come.

During the early 1930s Bridge regularly conducted live studio concerts with sections of the BBC Orchestra, but in 1936 he suffered a serious heart attack, with respiratory complications, from which he never fully recovered. As is evident from an internal BBC memo dated 6 April 1938, Adrian Boult and his senior staff were all too aware of this:

> I saw Mr. Frank Bridge yesterday... telling him clearly that his programmes had lost their freshness and his conducting likewise... He is anxious to do a more classical programme, but I am not sure that we should let him go too far in this direction as he worries the orchestra a good deal when he does familiar work.

Consequently there were fewer BBC conducting engagements for Bridge, but he was composing again with renewed vigour. During 1938 he was asked to orchestrate a number of his earlier piano pieces for the new Hawkes Concert Edition of light music. The three **Vignettes de danse** were intended for this collection, although they never made it into print. Scored for theatre orchestra, they originated in a suite of four piano pieces sketched in the autumn of 1925. These were light-hearted musical postcards from a motoring holiday of the Alps and the Mediterranean coast with Mrs Coolidge. In the orchestrations of three of what Bridge called his 'Marseilles' vignettes there is plenty of 'local colour'. 'Nicolette' is a mildly exotic dance featuring oboe at the start; 'Zoraida' is much more seductive, with sinuous, modal melodies and dissonant harmonies over a long pedal bass; while 'Carmelita' is the extrovert character, full of Spanish colour, castanets and all.

Volume 4

Writing in *The Sunday Telegraph* on 17 November 1963, Benjamin Britten recalled that a lot of his pacifist feelings, especially about World

War I, came from his first teacher, Frank Bridge, whose pacifism he described as being typically gentle. The response of Bridge to the carnage of the 1914–18 War grew out of the loss of so many of his close friends and colleagues: the violinist Thomas Morris, for example, who led Bridge's English String Quartet, and composers such as Frederick Kelly, and Earnest Farrar to whose memory the tempestuous Piano Sonata (1921–24) is dedicated. Bridge's pacifism was an emotional rather than an intellectual matter, full of complexities and contradictions, particularly in the 1930s when the threat arose of another war with Germany.

In one of his last letters to his American patron, Elizabeth Sprague Coolidge, dated 18 May 1940, Bridge wrote of his determination that the music he was composing should not 'underline or reflect too much upon the distressing emotions with which everyone is assailed'. Bridge held a similar view during the 1914–18 conflict, when he retreated, musically speaking, into a rural idyll with works like *Summer* and the Two Poems for Orchestra.

However, one brief and typically personal war work was performed during those years. Bridge composed a **Lament** for string orchestra on 14 June 1915 in memory of Catherine, a young friend, who with her family was drowned when the *Lusitania* was sunk. It is one of his most effective miniatures, poignant yet restrained in its lyrical beauty, with a compelling directness of expression and simplicity of construction. The main melody is pentatonic, like a Scottish lament. The layers of whole-tone harmony set against a sustained bass pedal provide the emotional intensity. For the restatement of the melody Bridge introduced the most original feature of his string-orchestral technique – a solo string trio (violin, viola, and cello) accompanied by the remaining strings.

Sir Henry Wood conducted the first performance of the *Lament* during the 1915 Queen's Hall Promenade season, in a concert of popular Italian music – not perhaps the most appropriate send-off for this elegiac music, but the piece made a lasting impression on the audience, as the critic Edwin Evans recalled in *The Musical Times*:

> The audience was too spell-bound for a noisy demonstration of favour, but the eloquence of the music had achieved what a more ambitious or studied composition could not have affected.

In the spring of 1916 Bridge drafted a more extended, though equally poignant, war work. This was his plea for peace, a setting of 'A Prayer that the Will of God Be Done' from *The Imitation of Christ* by the fourteenth-century German mystic Thomas à Kempis. **A Prayer** was the only work by Bridge for chorus and orchestra. He cast it in a simple verse form, with choral

writing clearly tailored for the massed ranks of amateur choral societies. He does not extend the voices beyond chordal textures and imitative counterpoints that his teacher Stanford would have approved of. So one might say that the piece lacks ambition, but it is sensitive to the meditative nature of the text and to the mood of the times. Harmonically it is one of Bridge's most straightforward middle period works. This makes the climax, the moment of the greatest dissonance at the words 'love to be despised and not to be known in this world', all the more effective.

Without any prospect of a performance during the war years, Bridge did not complete the orchestration of *A Prayer* until October 1918. By this time the end of the hostilities was in sight. Publication, then a first performance, followed closely upon the signing of the Armistice. Bridge conducted the first performance himself in the vast spaces of the Royal Albert Hall in January 1919, and then again in 1935. By that time he had composed all the radical works upon which his reputation as one of the most adventurous of twentieth-century English composers rests, works such as the Third String Quartet, H 175 (1926), the Piano Trio No. 2, H 178 (1929), the piano concerto *Phantasm* (1931), and what is perhaps his greatest orchestral work, certainly his most personal, **Oration**.

All his convictions and emotions about the First World War were enshrined in this cello concerto, which he completed on 29 June 1930, nearly twelve years after the Armistice. According to Florence Hooton, the cellist in the first performance (17 January 1936), Bridge changed the title from *Concerto elegiaco* to *Oration* because he wanted to make clear that the work was an outcry against the futility of war. Memories of personal loss and of a way of life wiped out had not diminished since the years of the Piano Sonata. However, with the passing of time and the radical transformation of his musical language Bridge was now ready to convey the depths of his feelings with music of appropriate richness and power.

As soon as the work was completed he wrote to Mrs Coolidge, hoping that she would be able to stage the premiere in Chicago with his old friend Felix Salmond as the soloist. That event did not materialise, and left to his own devices at home Bridge experienced great difficulty in persuading an orchestra to promote a performance, or another cellist to learn the demanding solo part. Eventually the BBC agreed to a broadcast, but problems with soloists delayed matters further. In the end Bridge found an interested soloist in Florence Hooton, a young cellist not long out of College, who two years previously had impressed him with her performance of the cello part of the Second Piano Trio.

For the first time since Felix Salmond's premiere of the Cello Sonata in 1917, all the press notices were favourable. One of the most considered came from Ernest Newman (*The Sunday Times*, 19 January 1936):

> Frank Bridge's new concerto... is not the kind of work we can expect to grasp in anything like its totality at first hearing; it may even be that, lacking an inside knowledge of the 'mental images', we shall never be able to see it exactly as the composer saw it, for its abrupt, sometimes spasmodic changes of mood cannot be accounted for on the lines of so-called 'pure music'.
>
> But even at a first hearing it is evident that the work comes from a fine mind, that its departures from the current obvious are not mere pose or eccentricity, but the natural expression of a personal way of thinking.

The musical landscape of *Oration* is haunted by 'mental images' of the War. Bridge cast the concerto in a broad single movement, adopting a variant of the 'phantasy' form which he had exploited with conspicuous success in his youthful Cobbett prize 'Phantasies' and then made very much his own in some of his later chamber works. The soloist (the orator) establishes the thematic content and the elegiac mood in the opening orchestrally accompanied recitative. In his short score sketch Bridge describes the slow processional that follows as 'like a funeral march'. The cellist's response to this vivid orchestral evocation is two-fold: first an impassioned outburst, angular in contour and full of anger in expression, the anger then giving way to grief – a simple but haunting lyrical episode. At the heart of the work is a second march, this time a grotesque parody of a funeral cortège. One might imagine here the relentless advance of wave upon wave of young soldiers, ordered out of the trenches on the battlefield only to be mown down by enemy guns. A version of 'The Last Post' – with the main fanfare interval distorted from a perfect fifth to a tritone – sounds at the climax.

Bridge then reviews the material of the first half of the work, but after the searing return of the parody march the music is reprised in a different order and works towards a resolution. A few bars of the lyrical lament give way to the Cadenza. Then, in a moment of sheer genius, Bridge the master merges the angular impassioned music with a further reprise of the lyrical lament: his vision has embraced the horror, the futility, and the grief or war. After a final reappearance of the funeral march Bridge offers a brief, slow Epilogue: a kind of pavan in which the angular succession of chromatic intervals becomes modal, the bleak harmonic language – centred on C and E – finding resolution in the peace of D major. Perhaps this

is Bridge's evocation of, or expression of hope for, a world without the horrors of war.

However, any hope for peace that Bridge may have articulated in the closing pages of *Oration* was soon dispelled as Europe moved inexorably towards a second conflict. For some time before the outbreak of the 1939 – 45 War Bridge had been contemplating the composition of an overture entitled *Rumour*, but by the time his thoughts began to take more definite musical shape, the fighting was well established and the word 'rumour' had taken on sinister implications. As Bridge wrote to Elizabeth Coolidge on 18 May 1940,

> I have been toying with the idea of an orchestral work entitled *Rumour*, but as it is nowadays associated with treachery and brutality – amongst other loathsome and horrifying things – that intention has gone overboard.

So Bridge renamed the work **Rebus**. In his last letter to Benjamin Britten, who was by then in the United States, he explained some of the background for his newly completed score:

> Only by dint of some hard work, I just finished a Concert Overture for the next Proms (September 28). That was August 2nd, and I shall write you a ream or two in due course. It hath the awe-inspiring title of *Rebus*. As usual, the next work of my working is, in the end, ever something different to what it might have been...

In the event, the blitz caused the curtailment of the 1940 Promenade season, including the *Rebus* premiere. Bridge did not live long enough to hear the work. Sir Henry Wood was instrumental in arranging the first performance, given 'In Memoriam' on 23 February 1941 at one of Sir Thomas Beecham's Sunday Concerts, just three days before what would have been Bridge's sixty-second birthday.

According to its dictionary definition, a rebus is a sort of graphic riddle, an enigmatic representation of words, or their sound, by pictures. The decision to use *Rebus* in place of *Rumour* may therefore have increased the mystery surrounding the work's 'meaning', but according to Edwin Evans it did not change Bridge's expressive aim. It merely removed any direct association with the war. The way Bridge manipulated his themes would support Evans's contention. *Rebus*, it seems, was indeed meant to convey, in musical terms, how ideas, thoughts, images can become progressively distorted and their meaning transformed from innocent to macabre. There are two themes in *Rebus*: a 'simple', light-hearted main subject laid out in octaves at the outset, and a broad, sweeping second subject in C major. The idiom is extrovert and direct, in contrast to the uncompromising style of his music from the 1920s and '30s.

Late in 1940 Bridge told the family friend Marjorie Fass that he felt he was composing his

most significant work. In the early 1920s it had been his greatest wish to receive a commission for a symphony, an ambition that was never fulfilled. In the event, chamber music dominated his thoughts in the 1920s, and he had little appetite for composing at all in the mid-1930s when he struggled to get his new concertos performed. However, in 1937, after recovering from serious illness, he began to compose again. This 'Indian summer' bore fruit in works that turned in new and more optimistic directions. The clean, almost classical orientation of style perceptible in *Rebus* was further explored in a symphony. Adopting his favourite instrumental forces, the string ensemble, as medium, Bridge worked on this symphony right up to his sudden death on 10 January 1941, leaving a fragment headed **Allegro moderato** that offers a powerful foretaste of what might have been.

He sketched 379 bars of music which evolves slowly, but after a powerful climax dies away quickly, ending on the same chord with which it began. The movement is structured in an elaborate sonata form, but as it does not have the internal range or contrast that his single-movement 'Phantasies' possess, this *Allegro moderato* is likely to be the first movement of an intended multi-movement work rather than a self-contained symphony in one movement.

Marjorie Fass recalled the events of Bridge's last day in a letter to Benjamin Britten:

> Friston Field, 23.1.41
>
> Benji darling,
> What a sad, sad grief our telegram must have been to you. I am so deeply sorry for what you have lost in our lovely old Franco, with all his sweetness, his greatness and his gentleness. Thank heaven he was spared suffering – for his heart just stopped in his sleep. He had been out in the snow and bitter wind for a day or so and must have caught a chill on his tummy… By the time… [the] doctor came it was too late… His arteries were hardened and his heart too weak to stand the vomiting… Lovely that during this war he could turn his mind with his beautiful world of sound, and write the Overture Rebus… and he was making a fair copy of a string symphony he liked very much – and told Eth. that we should like. Alas the score isn't finished – and how we long for our Benji to look over the sketches and see what he meant to do. Perhaps you will some day…

In fact, Britten never did and the last twenty-one bars of the fragment were orchestrated by Dr Anthony Pople in the 1970s.

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Volume 5

In the 1930s, after the death of his parents, Benjamin Britten became more than just a

past pupil of Frank Bridge. As the many letters from Bridge to his 'Benji' reveal, the older man had assumed the role of mentor and guide. Elsewhere in his correspondence Bridge even refers to Britten as his 'quasi adopted son'. It is little wonder that Britten in turn became Bridge's staunchest champion and advocate.

Writing in 1947, six years after Bridge's death, Britten set out some persuasive reasons why the so-called salon music of Bridge – the easy-going lighter work of his early years – should be taken as seriously as the masterworks of his maturity. 'Bridge was', he observed,

> not only a listener and composer, but a player too... He wanted to write or to play music grateful and easy to listen to, which some people label and dismiss as salon music... His inclination was instinctively towards the French tradition of skill, grace and good workmanship and away from nineteenth century German decadence.

Like his exact contemporary John Ireland, Bridge was never so slavish a follower of his teacher Stanford, and his Brahmsian ways, as some commentators have observed. Even in his most ambitious student works, such as the recently revived String Quintet in E minor (1901), it is the freshness of invention of Dvořák, the emotional energy of Tchaikovsky, and the elegance of the French tradition that seem to have attracted Bridge rather more than what Britten described as 'all that hideous, if worthy striving!'

At home in Brighton there had been plenty of light orchestral fayre for young Frank and his cello playing brother William to experience in their father's theatre orchestras. The best of his orchestral miniatures from this early period are confident and technically accomplished. The **Valse Intermezzo à cordes** (note the French title) is a prime example. Completed in Eastbourne on 22 August 1902, this waltz for strings is the most elegant of all Bridge's student works. The main waltz section is slow and in Bridge's favourite key for strings, E minor (the same key as Elgar's youthful Serenade and Bridge's own Suite for Strings). The melodies have a French accent, with the occasional Russian inflexion. The trio section is faster, the melodies, beginning on the cellos, are more expansive. The Coda builds to a whirlwind climax and ends abruptly in a flurry of high harmonics. The *Valse Intermezzo* was not published or performed until 100 years after its composition. It is now available as the second of four early pieces, assembled and arranged for string orchestra from different manuscript sources; those of the other three are a short piano score sketch also in the string key of E minor (*Moderato*, H 29), a nostalgic violin and piano miniature (*Con moto*, H 22), and a humorous *Scherzo*

Phantastick (H 6) for string quartet, also in E minor.

Bridge never approached writing for the voice with the same adventurous spirit or 'inside knowledge' as he did writing for strings. Two thirds of his fifty-eight songs with piano were composed in his twenties and early thirties and he stopped composing songs altogether in 1925. However, there are some exquisite examples, especially among the slow songs, and there are several unexplored gems, for example the early orchestral songs. **The Hag**, a rumbustious setting of Robert Herrick's poem, was one of the first of his own orchestral works that Bridge ever heard and it was certainly the first he ever conducted in public. Completed on 18 June 1902, this vivid witch's ride was one of the highlights of the very first Patron's Fund Concert, given in the Royal College of Music on 9 December 1902, when it was sung by the baritone Albert Garcia. The series had been established to give promising students from the Royal College of Music and the Royal Academy of Music in London a platform for their work. Bridge's brief but energetic song was heard alongside works by York Bowen and Gustav Holst, among others.

The **Two Songs of Robert Bridges** – the flowing setting of 'I praise the tender flower' and the more animated treatment of 'Thou didst delight my eyes' – were composed in October 1905 and orchestrated in the following January. These, too, were first heard in a Patron's Fund Concert, the twelfth, given this time in the Queen's Hall, London. Robert Chignall was the baritone soloist and Bridge conducted the newly formed London Symphony Orchestra. All three songs here receive their first performance for almost a century. Bridge composed two other orchestral songs in his twenties, settings of Laurence Binyon, which are extant in complete short score.

The **Suite for Strings** in E minor possesses all those ingredients that Benjamin Britten so admired in early Bridge: Gallic grace, technical sophistication, a style grateful to listen to and to play. Bridge composed it over the Christmas period in 1909. Although he never considered himself to be part of an English school of composers – he disliked being pigeonholed – he often wrote themes based on the modes so beloved of the quintessential English composers of the twentieth century: Vaughan Williams, Holst, and Herbert Howells. The opening of the 'Prelude' is the clearest example. A lilting modal melody frames three extended lyrical paragraphs, which build in intensity and incident towards a passionate climax. There is a grace and charm about the 'Intermezzo', whose main theme is a 'country cousin' of the opening modal melody – deftly disguised. With the haunting 'Nocturne' Bridge

enters deeper emotional territory. The harmonic language is much more ambiguous. In what key is the opening phrase, for example? It is worth remembering that Bridge's English String Quartet in 1903 was the first to play Debussy's String Quartet in Britain, and the slow movement of that quartet is perhaps an influence here. The 'Finale' is an extrovert romp, bristling with life and on two occasions given an Elgarian weight. Ever conscious of the niceties of overall balance and proportion, Bridge weaves references to the 'Prelude' and 'Intermezzo' into the movement's development.

The Suite for Strings was not an instant success. In fact, it was not published until after the First World War and received its first significant performance on 8 October 1920, when the composer conducted the work at a Henry Wood Promenade Concert in the Queen's Hall.

By then his musical style had moved on a good deal. Bridge had begun, as he often wrote to friends, 'to spread my wings'. However, the early 1920s were frustrating years for him. The music he was longing to write demanded more time than he was able to devote to it. There was opportunity only for smaller projects. In July 1921 he composed his second incidental score, this time 'for Denys Grayson and the St James's Theatre' in London. The play was a three-act comedy by Frank Stayton called *Threads*. It ran for twenty-eight performances between 23 August and 17 September 1921, then sank without trace. Even at the time, it was the music that stole the headlines. Bridge found it ironic that a minor, if engaging work such as this should command more attention in four weeks than many of his major pieces did in a lifetime. Nothing of this music was published until 1939 when, along with a number of his shorter piano miniatures, **Two Intermezzi from 'Threads'** appeared in versions for theatre orchestra. The first, a gentle *Andante*, is another of his wistful, 'English' melodies, with falling phrases full of nostalgic regret. The second, *Tempo di valse*, is one of the most high-spirited of Bridge's many dance movements – a pastiche Viennese waltz, with an energy and orchestral colour that look forward to the exuberant Rhapsody *Enter Spring*. Also published in 1939 were two more recycled miniatures, beautifully scored for theatre orchestra and given the title **Two Entr'actes**. 'Rosemary' is the charming and popular second *Sketch* for piano from 1906, and the little 'Canzonetta', originally called 'Happy South', was composed in 1926 after a pleasant holiday to the French Mediterranean.

In 1932 Bridge was invited by the Music Department of Oxford University Press to contribute to an album of Bach transcriptions. This album had been the idea of the pianist

Harriet Cohen, who was a notable Bach interpreter. She gave the first complete performance of *A Bach Book for Harriet Cohen* on 17 October 1932 in the Queen's Hall, London. Bridge chose to set the funeral chorale *Komm, süßer Tod* (Come, sweet death), entitling his piece **Todessehnsucht**. Some of the other composers produced elaborate contrapuntal transcriptions, most notably Vaughan Williams, Herbert Howells, and Arnold Bax. Bridge, on the other hand, offered a simple and stylish three-verse structure in which the piano imitates the harpsichord. In 1936 he produced the richly textured version for large string orchestra, with multiple divisions for all but the double-basses, recorded here. The sound is as luxuriant as in any transcription by Leopold Stokowski. Bridge specifies a string orchestra of twenty-four violins, twelve violas, twelve cellos, and a minimum of four double-basses. In the edition used here the parts have been slightly redistributed so as to make the arrangement performable by a more conventional string band.

When interviewed by *Musical America* during his three-month visit to the United States in 1923, Bridge made it absolutely clear that he was an English composer by virtue of his birth rather than by nationalist musical ideology. All the traditional tunes he set for strings (quartet or orchestra) became a part of the fabric of the composition. This is not arranged music. Just like Benjamin Britten a generation later, Bridge adopted the tunes as if they were his own. In the **Two Old English Songs** of 1916 he set familiar melodies in a sophisticated manner about as far removed from that of Vaughan Williams and Holst as could be imagined. 'Sally in Our Alley' is elaborated and embellished, with sophisticated, highly perfumed harmonies. 'Cherry Ripe' is a miniature technical *tour-de-force*. The bustling opening gives no hint of the tune, and this eventually eases in unannounced, emerging out of the contrapuntal texture as the second subject. There is a touch of class in the way Bridge towards the end combines his own energetic subject with the more sustained phrases of the traditional melody. Even more elaborate is his treatment of the old English dance tune 'Sir Roger de Coverley' of 1922. This, too, was originally a piece for string quartet. Bridge re-composed it for large orchestra later the same year, but the present version for string orchestra from 1939 is the most familiar. **Sir Roger de Coverley** is a diminutive dance poem in two episodes. The first unfolds in a series of free variations; the second might almost be described as a 'knees up', in which Bridge gradually cranks up the energy and textural complexity. The appearance of the Scottish tune 'Auld Lang

Syne' gives this 'Christmas Dance' its seasonal connotation.

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Volume 6

Throughout his career, Frank Bridge considered himself to be very much a 'working' composer, and he developed a musical technique which few of his contemporaries could rival. He was never as confident using words, although the fluency and sheer volume of his correspondence might contradict that judgement. This is how he assessed his own abilities in a letter to his patron Elizabeth Sprague Coolidge in September 1922:

> If there were ever a human being less equipped with the art of expression in words, then he must indeed have been completely hopeless. Everything I put down reads at least one-hundred per cent cooler than I intend it. At last, after a long apprenticeship, I think I know just when and how to put a few cellos and violas and woodwind together, and even add trombones at the right moment – but in words! No, they stump me. After this confession of weakness I am sure you'll know exactly where you have to transpose everything up at least an octave and a half.

In his sixty songs, too, Bridge rarely turned up the thermostat to full. More than half of them were composed early in his career, during or just after his years under the eagle eye of Stanford at the Royal College of Music in London. They are often rather conventional in tone, relying heavily on the expectations of his teacher, or on the styles which were commercially successful at the time – in the songs of Roger Quilter and Maude Valerie White, for example. There is more than a hint of the Victorian or Edwardian salon in songs such as *Go not, happy day* or *E'en as a lovely flower*. What cannot be denied, however, is the technical skill they reveal. What they might lack in personal melodic invention or expression they make up for in the structure and overall tone. They always work.

Among the most effective are the handful of songs Bridge conceived for voice and orchestra. There are two unorchestrated sketches for low voice of texts by Laurence Binyon – *Lament* and *Fly home, my thoughts* – which anticipate some of his later harmonic adventures. However, the most engaging of all the early orchestral songs is in fact one of Bridge's very first surviving compositions. Dorothy Wordsworth's poem 'The days are cold, the nights are long' is a gentle, rather sentimental nocturnal lyric. Bridge often returned to images of the night – dreams, nightmares, the silence and isolation of darkness – but in this **Berceuse** the night scene

sets the mood for a song of innocence. Bridge responds with an engaging freshness. The song is beautifully scored and the inclusion of a cor anglais and four horns within what is otherwise a small orchestra adds a darker tone – almost Wagnerian in this context – to the central climax.

Bridge took a great deal of trouble over his 1905 setting of Keats's *Asleep*, which he entitled **Adoration**. It exists in a number of versions, the final one dating from 1918, just prior to the song's publication. The impressive thing about the setting is the way in which the cantabile grows in a single rising span from the low, almost supplicant '0 sleep a little while, white pearl!' to blossom in the final realisation, at the top of the voice: 'Vows of my slavery, my giving up, / My sudden adoration, my great love!' The sumptuous orchestration for symphony orchestra with triple woodwind and full brass is probably contemporaneous with the final, published version.

In his book *Sensibility and English Song*, Stephen Banfield refers to a change of tone that became apparent in Bridge's songs around the outbreak of the First World War – a greater assurance, indicating perhaps a more personal expressive imperative. Of course, this was also a time when Bridge was beginning to extend his musical techniques, so the new-found range in his songs may be a direct result of his expanded stylistic horizons. In the gently lilting **Where she lies asleep**, a setting of words by Mary Coleridge, composed in April 1914, the vocal line is freer than before, rhythmically following the rise and fall of the text rather than being cast in a fixed metre. Bridge is also entering new expressive territory here. In *Adoration* the mood moves from quiet contemplation to an ecstatic outpouring of love. In *Where she lies asleep* the love appears all the more intense because it is left unspoken. The latter's companion, the energetic **Love went a-riding**, completed on 5 May 1914, is the composer's most famous song, although in later life Bridge dismissed it as simply one of his pot-boilers. In its original version it has one of his most extrovert piano accompaniments, which he transforms, with unerring skill, into a miniature orchestral showpiece. Love, riding full tilt on the back of Pegasus, is only a fleeting guest despite the pleas of 'all the youths and the maidens'. **Thy hand in mine**, completed on 10 February 1917, is the third and last of the Mary Coleridge settings and offers the resolution, an affirmation of enduring love in simpler, unambiguous terms. The rather restless rocking figure of the first song and the tempestuous galloping of the second have now become steadier, like the beating of two hearts almost in unison.

In March 1918 Bridge wrote another nocturnal song, **Mantle of blue**, setting a gentle

lyric by the Irish poet Padraic Colum. On the face of it the poem is a simple lullaby, but in a radio interview Colum hinted at some deeper meanings. Could the child perhaps be dying? In his setting Bridge seems to have recognised an underlying unease, which he suggests through the ambiguity of major and minor tonalities and the unsettling whole-tone accompaniment in the middle section. **Blow out, you bugles** is a setting of Rupert Brooke's most famous war poem. Bridge completed it in May 1918 at the invitation of the wife of the tenor Gervase Elwes. Bridge dedicated the song to them both, Elwes giving the first performance on 26 October 1918 at the Queen's Hall in London, with the composer conducting. In scale *Blow out, you bugles* is more akin to a solo cantata than a song. The orchestral introduction sets a noble tone. Where Brooke meditates on the sacrifice of so many young lives, Bridge responds with some poignant declamation – a style he would develop further in his one-act opera *The Christmas Rose* (1919–29). Two more features point to later stylistic developments. On the word 'Pain', for example, Bridge introduces a chord comprising overlapping dominant seventh formations, one on F, the bass, and the other a tritone away on B (C flat). Towards the centre of the song, when the trumpet sounds the Last Post, the supporting harmony, with its displaced bass, is the identical chord (though on a different root) with which Bridge was to begin his cello concerto, *Oration*, more than a decade later. With the benefit of hindsight, and despite the undoubted quality of this song, one wonders whether he was entirely at one with the idea of the noble sacrifice that is at the heart of Brooke's poem.

Bridge's finest songs date from the 1920s, in particular three settings of poems by Rabindranath Tagore in the poet's own translations from the Hindi – **Day after day** (January 1922), **Speak to me, my love!** (October 1924) and *Dweller in my deathless dreams* (June 1925). The first two were composed as a pair for mezzo-soprano and orchestra. The third was written with piano accompaniment for the tenor John McCormack. These belong to a very different expressive world – one of alienation, or of thoughts and emotions implied rather than stated. The vocal line is declamatory, the musical language and orchestration are more exotically perfumed, with whole tones and complex higher dominant harmonies. Bridge had learned much, it seems, from Debussy, Ravel, and Scriabin. At the end of the second song, as the two souls finally drift apart and go their own ways, the despairing urgency of the cry 'Speak to me, my love!' is followed by one of the most poignant of musical evocations of the loneliness of separation. As Stephen Banfield

so tellingly puts it, 'The eloquence denied to speech is supplied by the music'.

There are only two works in the whole Frank Bridge canon that involve wind instruments alone: the four Divertimenti for wind quartet completed in 1938 and the music composed for The Pageant of London almost thirty years earlier. In 1906 the historian Richard Davey published a history of England, AD 40 – 1900, entitled *The Pageant of London*. Five years later The Pageant of London was staged in celebration of the coronation of George V. A monumental historical spectacle, it presented a series of twenty-eight tableaux which took four days to unfold. It was estimated that more than three million people went to Crystal Palace during the run of performances in May 1911 to see it. Bridge provided music for two of the tableaux, which he numbered Scenes 4 and 5, but which a commentary in *The Musical Times* of the day reported as being Scenes 3 and 4. The performing forces used matched the epic nature of the enterprise and included massed choirs and a huge military band. Bridge's manuscript score specifies an instrumentation that includes no fewer than eighteen clarinets, six cornets, six horns, two tenor tubas, four bass tubas and two double-basses. A full complement of saxophones was available, and although the other contributing composers, who included Vaughan Williams, Holst, McEwen, Frank Tapp, and Haydn Wood, all employed saxophones, Bridge chose not to use them. The suite **The Pageant of London** that receives its premiere recording here is based on a new edition which preserves Bridge's original music intact, but also provides for cuts and optional instruments when, as here, larger forces are not available. The movements for the Pageant of London were the only works Bridge composed for military band. Late in 1927 he refused a commission from the BBC to write a short symphonic poem or overture for the BBC Wireless Military Band. That honour eventually went to Gustav Holst, who replied with his masterpiece *Hammersmith*.

The suite begins with a 'Solemn March' from the first of the two scenes. It is resplendently scored, full of Elgarian pomp and circumstance, and depicts the departure for Bosworth Field of Richard III from London. The suite ends with another 'March' from the same scene, one that was used to illustrate the return to London of King Henry VIII. The main section of this march is a transcription, down a tone, of an organ piece originally composed in 1905 and published in the *First Book of Organ Pieces*. For the trio, Bridge offered a spectacular collage based, appropriately but perhaps not with historical authenticity, on the Westminster chimes. Between these marches comes 'First Discoveries', a sequence of three dances

scored for smaller forces. The 'Introduction' is a pastiche minuet. The 'Pavane' and 'La Romanesca' are adaptations from Renaissance sources. The 'Pavane' is an arrangement of 'Belle qui tiers ma vie' from Arbeau's *Orchésographie* (1588) and predates by fifteen years the famous version by Peter Warlock in his *Capriol Suite*.

In his early twenties Bridge composed a number of genre pieces for various instrumental forces. The **Berceuse** which begins the trio of Edwardian miniatures included on this disc is one of his earliest surviving compositions. An original, somewhat gauche orchestral version remains unpublished. The version recorded here is an orchestration made in 1928 of the simplified version which Bridge had produced for violin and piano in 1902. The **Chant d'espérance** is one of three *Morceaux d'orchestre* also composed during 1902. These are three songs without words – a song of sadness, this song of hope, and a song of joy. They have never been published and of the three, this charming number is by far the most successful. During his student years Bridge improved his technique work by work, and by 1903 he had developed quite a sophisticated approach to the period miniature, as is amply evident in the deft way with which he handles the rhythmic syncopations in his **Serenade** (April 1903), originally written for violin or cello and piano.

After he had finished his Violin Sonata in 1932, Bridge seemed to loose his enthusiasm for composition. His new works were by and large not well received and he hit something of a fallow period. However, he summoned his creative energies briefly on 4 May 1934 to write a tiny Epilogue for orchestra, which was played live on BBC radio, following a Royal Night of Varieties, four days later. Bridge cast **A Royal Night of Variety**, as he named the piece, rather like a fanfare in reverse, gradually winding down from the spirited opening to end on a gentle added-sixth chord. For the broadcast there was a spoken element, placed in the pauses which Bridge had crafted into the score.

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Born in County Durham, the mezzo-soprano **Sarah Connolly** studied piano and singing at the Royal College of Music and has performed in concert at the Salzburg Festival, Vienna Konzerthaus, Berlin Philharmonie, Amsterdam Concertgebouw, and Sydney Opera House with such conductors as Sir Simon Rattle, Sir Colin Davis, Edo de Waart, and Philippe Herreweghe. A regular guest at the BBC Proms, she also took part in the festival for the opening of the new Zankel Hall at Carnegie Hall in New York. She has sung the title roles in *Ariodante* and *Serse*

(New York City Opera) and in *The Rape of Lucretia* (Munich Festival), besides Ino and Juno in *Semele* (San Francisco Opera), Sesto in *Giulio Cesare* (Paris Opéra), and Romeo in *I Capuleti e i Montecchi* and Sesto in *La clemenza di Tito* (English National Opera). She appears on Chandos' recording of Vaughan Williams's *Sir John in Love* under Richard Hickox.

Born in Kent in 1939, the tenor **Philip Langridge** CBE studied at the Royal Academy of Music, London. He appeared at international festivals and opera houses across Europe, North America, and Japan, performing with internationally renowned orchestras under the world's leading conductors. He was also active in recital and formed a trio with the fortepianist David Owen Norris and his daughter, the cellist Jennifer Langridge. He was made a CBE in the Queen's Birthday Honours List of 1994 and received a number of other awards, including the prestigious Olivier Award, the Singer of the Year Award from the Royal Philharmonic Society, the Santay Award from the Worshipful Company of Musicians, and, most recently, the NFMS / Charles Groves Prize in 2001 'for his outstanding contribution to British Music'. He sang Aron in the *Grammy* award-winning recording of *Moses und Aron* under Sir Georg Solti. Philip Langridge appeared on Chandos' recordings of Handel's *Messiah*, Janáček's *Osud*, Dyson's *Quo Vadis*, Tippett's *King Priam*, and Britten's *War Requiem* (*Gramophone* Award), *Peter Grimes* (*Grammy*), *Billy Budd*, and *Death in Venice*. Philip Langridge died in 2010.

Roderick Williams is a versatile artist, frequently appearing in opera, concert, and recital throughout Europe and the UK. He has sung the roles of the Count (*The Marriage of Figaro*) and Figaro (*The Barber of Seville*) for Opera North, Donner (*The Rhinegold*) for English National Opera, Watchful and First Shepherd (*The Pilgrim's Progress*) for The Royal Opera, Covent Garden, Marcello (*La bohème*) for Scottish Opera, and Prince André (*War and Peace*) at the Spoleto Festival, among others. He has participated in the premieres of David Sawer's *From Morning to Midnight*, Martin Butler's *A Better Place*, Sally Beamish's *Monster*, and Sir Harrison Birtwistle's *The Ring Dance of the Nazarene*.

He performs a diverse range of concert repertoire and has appeared with the Nash Ensemble as well as with The Gabrieli Consort and Players under Paul McCreesh. His discography includes, for Chandos, the highly acclaimed premiere recordings of Vaughan Williams's *Nocturne* and *The Poisoned Kiss*, both conducted by Richard Hickox.

Born into a musical family, **Alban Gerhardt** studied in his native city, Berlin, at the

Cincinnati Conservatory, and under Boris Pergamenschikov and Frans Helmerson at the Musikhochschule in Cologne. Since his debut as soloist with the Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra in 1991 he has appeared in concert across Europe, working with orchestras such as the Leipzig Gewandhausorchester, Frankfurt Radio Symphony Orchestra, Philharmonisches Staatsorchester Hamburg, Orchestre national de Belgique, Orchestre philharmonique de Nice, Mozarteum Orchester Salzburg, St Petersburg Philharmonic Orchestra, Chicago Symphony Orchestra, and, in the UK, the London Philharmonic Orchestra, BBC Philharmonic, BBC Scottish Symphony Orchestra, City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra, and Royal Scottish National Orchestra. During a tour of Japan he gave a recital in Tokyo's Suntory Hall as well as performances with the Japan Shinsei Symphony Orchestra and Nagoya University Symphony Orchestra. He has appeared at major international music festivals including, in the UK, the Bath, Aldeburgh, Cheltenham, and Edinburgh festivals and the BBC Proms.

Howard Shelley has enjoyed a distinguished career since his acclaimed London debut in 1971. As pianist he has performed, broadcast, and recorded around the world with leading orchestras and conductors. As a conductor, he held the position of Associate and Principal Guest Conductor with the London Mozart Players for more than twenty years, during which time he toured with them extensively, and that of Principal Conductor of Sweden's Uppsala Chamber Orchestra; he works regularly with both symphony and chamber orchestras in the dual role of conductor and soloist.

Since the age of ten he has made many appearances on television. A documentary on Ravel, made in 1998 by the Australian Broadcasting Commission, which featured Howard Shelley as conductor, pianist and presenter, won the Gold Medal for the best arts biography of the year at the New York Festivals Awards, and he was the soloist in the 100th Anniversary of the Proms Concert which was televised worldwide.

He is especially associated with the music of Rachmaninoff and has performed and recorded complete cycles of his concertos and works for solo piano. His recordings of piano concertos by Mozart and Hummel have won exceptional praise, and more than eighty recordings testify to his wide-ranging repertoire.

Founded in 1983, the **BBC National Chorus of Wales** is widely recognised as one of the leading mixed choirs in the United Kingdom. Directed by Adrian Partington, the Chorus

consists of 120 voluntary singers from all walks of life, who possess a love of music and enthusiasm for singing. The Chorus maintains a close relationship with the BBC National Orchestra of Wales with which it has performed works such as Britten's *Spring Symphony* at the BBC Proms with Richard Hickox, and Brahms's *Alto Rhapsody* and Martinů's *Field Mass* (Polní mše) at St David's Hall, Cardiff. The Chorus has also performed Britten's *War Requiem* with Leonard Slatkin and the BBC Symphony Orchestra and Chorus, Tippett's *A Child of Our Time*, Holst's *Hymn of Jesus*, Elgar's *The Music Makers*, and a concert for 'Choirworks' on BBC Radio 3. The Chorus's recording of Mendelssohn's *St Paul* on Chandos has been highly acclaimed.

The **BBC National Orchestra of Wales** occupies an important position as both a national and broadcasting orchestra and went from strength to strength over recent years under a conducting team that included Richard Hickox as Principal Conductor. Its repertoire is extensive and the Orchestra's commitment to the performance of contemporary music is highlighted by the appointment of Michael Berkeley as Composer in Association. With St David's Hall, Cardiff as its performing home, it also presents a concert series at the Brangwyn Hall, Swansea, and tours throughout Wales and internationally. Resound | Atsain, the Orchestra's dynamic Education and Community Department, extends the work of the Orchestra beyond the confines of the concert hall into schools, workplaces, and communities. The BBC National Orchestra of Wales has produced a diverse discography and for Chandos was engaged in the projects to record the complete works for orchestra by Frank Bridge and by Sir Lennox and Michael Berkeley.

At the time of his untimely death at the age of sixty in November 2008, **Richard Hickox** CBE, one of the most gifted and versatile British conductors of his generation, was Music Director of Opera Australia, having served as Principal Conductor of the BBC National Orchestra of Wales from 2000 until 2006 when he became Conductor Emeritus. He founded the City of London Sinfonia, of which he was Music Director, in 1971. He was also Associate Guest Conductor of the London Symphony Orchestra, Conductor Emeritus of the Northern Sinfonia, and co-founder of Collegium Musicum 90.

He regularly conducted the major orchestras in the UK and appeared many times at the BBC Proms and at the Aldeburgh, Bath, and Cheltenham festivals, among others. With the London Symphony Orchestra at the Barbican Centre he conducted a number of semi-staged operas, including *Billy Budd*, *Hänsel und Gretel*, and *Salome*. With the Bournemouth Symphony

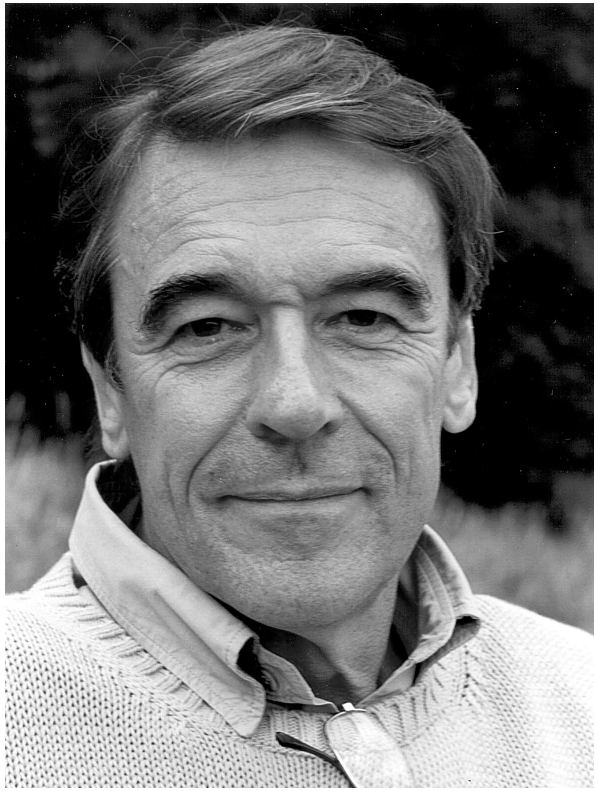
Orchestra he gave the first ever complete cycle of Vaughan Williams's symphonies in London. In the course of an ongoing relationship with the Philharmonia Orchestra he conducted Elgar, Walton, and Britten festivals at the South Bank and a semi-staged performance of *Gloriana* at the Aldeburgh Festival.

Apart from his activities at the Sydney Opera House, he enjoyed recent engagements with The Royal Opera, Covent Garden, English National Opera, Vienna State Opera, and Washington Opera, among others. He guest conducted such world-renowned orchestras as the Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra, Orchestre de Paris, Bavarian Radio Symphony Orchestra, and New York Philharmonic.

His phenomenal success in the recording studio resulted in more than 280 recordings, including most recently cycles of orchestral works by Sir Lennox and Michael Berkeley and Frank Bridge with the BBC National Orchestra of Wales, the symphonies of Vaughan Williams with the London Symphony Orchestra, and a series of operas by Britten with the City of London Sinfonia. He received a Grammy (for *Peter Grimes*) and five *Gramophone* Awards. Richard Hickox was awarded a CBE in the Queen's Jubilee Honours List in 2002, and was the recipient of many other awards, including two Music Awards of the Royal Philharmonic Society, the first ever Sir Charles Groves Award, the *Evening Standard* Opera Award, and the Award of the Association of British Orchestras.

Peter Warren

Sarah Connolly



Rhard Davies

Philip Langridge

Keith Saunders

Roderick Williams

COMPACT DISC FOUR

5 A Prayer

Grant me Thy grace, most merciful Jesus,
that it may be with me,
and may labour with me,
and continue with me to the end.

Grant me always to will and desire
that which is most acceptable to Thee,
and which pleaseth Thee best.
Let Thy will be mine,
and let my will always follow Thine,
and agree perfectly therewith.

Grant me Thy grace *etc.*

Grant that I may die to all things
that are in the world,
and for Thy sake love to be despised
and not to be known in this world.

Grant me Thy grace *etc.*

Grant that I may rest in Thee
above all things that can be desired,
and that my heart may be at peace in Thee.
Thou art the true peace of the heart,
Thou art its only rest;
out of Thee all things are irksome and restless.

In this very peace which is in Thee,
the one supreme Eternal Good,
I will sleep and take my rest.

Thomas à Kempis (1379 / 80 – 1471),
from *The Imitation of Christ*,
Book 3, Chapter 15

COMPACT DISC FIVE

5 The Hag

The hag is astride
This night for to ride,
The devil and she together;
Through thick and through thin,
Now out and then in,
Though ne'er so foul be the weather.

A thorn or a burr
She takes for a spur,
With a lash of a bramble she rides now;
Through brakes and through briars,
O'er ditches and mires,
She follows the spirit that guides now.

No beast for his food
Dares now range the wood,
But hush'd in his lair he lies lurking;
While mischiefs, by these,
On land and on seas,
At noon of night are a-working.

The storm will arise
And trouble the skies;
This night, and more for the wonder,
The ghosts from the tomb
Affrighted will come,
Call'd out by the clap of the thunder.

Robert Herrick (1591 – 1674)

Two Songs of Robert Bridges

6 **1. I Praise the Tender Flower**

I praise the tender flower,
That on a mournful day
Bloomed in my garden bower
And made the winter gay.
Its loveliness contented
My heart tormented.

I praise the gentle maid
Whose happy voice and smile
To confidence betrayed
My doleful heart awhile:
And gave my spirit deploring
Fresh wings for soaring.

The maid for very fear
Of love I durst not tell:
The rose could never hear,
Though I bespake her well:
So in my song I bind them
For all to find them.

7 **2. Thou Didst Delight My Eyes**

Thou didst delight my eyes:
Yet who am I? nor first
Nor last nor best, that durst
Once dream of thee for prize;
Nor this the only time
Thou shalt set love to rhyme.

Thou didst delight my ear:
Ah! little praise; thy voice
Makes other hearts rejoice,
Makes all ears glad that hear;
And short my joy: but yet,
O song, do not forget.

For what wert thou to me?
How shall I say? The moon,
That pour'd her midnight noon
Upon his wrecking sea; –
A sail, that for a day
Has cheer'd the castaway.

Robert Seymour Bridges (1844 – 1930)

COMPACT DISC SIX

1 Blow out, you bugles

Blow out, you bugles, over the rich Dead!
There's none of these so lonely and poor of old,
But, dying, has made us rarer gifts than gold.
These laid the world away; poured out the red
Sweet wine of youth; gave up the years to be

Of work and joy, and that unhoped serene,
That men call age; and those who would have
been,
Their sons, they gave, their immortality.

Blow, bugles, blow! They brought us, for our
dearth,
Holiness, lacked so long, and Love, and Pain.
Honour has come back, as a king, to earth,
And paid his subjects with a royal wage;
And Nobleness walks in our ways again;
And we have come into our heritage.

Rupert Brooke (1887–1915)

2 Adoration

Asleep! O sleep a little while, white pearl!
And let me kneel, and let me pray to thee,
And let me call Heav'n's blessing on thine eyes,
And let me breathe into the happy air
That doth enfold and touch thee all about,
Vows of my slavery, my giving up,
My sudden adoration, my great love!

John Keats (1795–1821)

3 Where she lies asleep

She sleeps so lightly, that in trembling fear
Beside her, where she lies asleep, I kneel,
The rush of thought and supplication staying,
Lest by some inward sense she see and hear,
If I too clearly think, too loudly feel,
And break her rest by praying.

Mary Elizabeth Coleridge (1861–1907)

4 Love went a-riding

Love went a-riding,
Love went a-riding over the earth,
On Pegasus he rode…

The flowers before him sprang to birth,
And the frozen rivers flowed.
Then all the youths and the maidens cried,
'Stay here with us', 'King of Kings'.
But Love said, 'No! for the horse I ride,
For the horse I ride has wings'.

Mary Elizabeth Coleridge

5 Thy hand in mine

Thy hand in mine, thy hand in mine,
And through the world we two will go,
With love before us as a sign,
Our faces set to ev'ry foe.

My heart in thine, my heart in thine,
Through life, through happy death the same,
We two will kneel before the shrine,
And keep alight the sacred flame.

Mary Elizabeth Coleridge

6 Berceuse

[The Cottager to Her Infant]
The days are cold, the nights are long,
The north-wind sings a doleful song;
Then hush again upon my breast;
All merry things are now at rest,
    Save thee, my pretty Love!

The kitten sleeps upon the hearth,
The crickets long have ceased their mirth;
There's nothing stirring in the house
Save one *wee*, hungry, nibbling mouse,
    Then why so busy thou?

Nay! start not at that sparkling light;
'Tis but the moon that shines so bright
On the window pane bedropped with rain:
Then, little Darling! sleep again,
    And wake when it is day.

Dorothy Wordsworth (1771 – 1855)

7 Mantle of blue

O men from the fields!
Come gently within.
Tread softly, softly,
O men, coming in.

Mavourneen is going
From me and from you,
Where Mary will fold him
With mantle of blue!

From reek of the smoke
And cold of the floor
And the peering of things
Across the half-door.

O men from the fields!
Soft', softly come thro';
Mary puts round him
Her mantle of blue.

Padraic Colum (1881 – 1972)

8 Day after day

Day after day he comes and goes away.
Go, and give him a flower from my hair, my
    friend.
If he asks who was it that sent it,
I entreat you do not tell him my name
For he only comes and goes away.

He sits on the dust under the tree.
Spread there a seat with flowers and leaves,
my friend.
His eyes are sad, and they bring sadness to
my heart.
He does not speak what he has in mind;
He only comes and goes away.

Rabindranath Tagore (1861 – 1941)

9 Speak to me, my love!

Speak to me, my love! Tell me in words what
you sang.
The night is dark. The stars are lost in clouds.
The wind is sighing through the leaves.
I will let loose my hair.
My blue cloak will cling round me like night.
I will clasp your head to my bosom;
And there in the sweet loneliness murmur on
your heart.
I will shut my eyes and listen.
I will not look in your face.
When your words are ended, we will sit still
and silent.
Only the trees will whisper in the dark.
The night will pale. The day will dawn.
We shall look at each other's eyes and go on
our different paths.
Speak to me, my love! Tell me in words what
you sang.

Rabindranath Tagore

Frank Hülsbömer

Alban Gerhardt

The premature death of Richard Hickox on 23 November 2008, at the age of just sixty, deprived the musical world of one of its greatest conductors. The depth and breadth of his musical achievements were astonishing, not least in his remarkable work on behalf of British composers. An inspiring figure, and a guiding light to his friends and colleagues, he had a generosity of spirit and a wonderful quality of empathy for others.

For someone of his musical achievements, he was never arrogant, never pompous. Indeed there was a degree of humility about Richard that was as endearing as it was unexpected. He was light-hearted and, above all, incredibly enthusiastic about those causes which he held dear. His determination to make things happen for these passions was astonishing – without this energy and focus his achievements could not have been as great as they were. He was able to take others with him on his crusades, and all in the pursuit of great music.

Richard was a completely rounded musician with a patience, kindness, and charisma that endeared him to players and singers alike. His enthusiasm bred its own energy and this, in turn, inspired performers. He was superb at marshalling

large forces. He cared about the development of the artists with whom he worked and they repaid this loyalty by giving of their best for him.

An unassuming man who was always a delight to meet, Richard was a tireless musical explorer who was able to create a wonderful sense of spirituality, which lifted performances to become special, memorable events. For these reasons, Richard was loved as well as respected.

The Richard Hickox Legacy is a celebration of the enormously fruitful, long-standing collaboration between Richard Hickox and Chandos, which reached more than 280 recordings. This large discography will remain a testament to his musical energy and exceptional gifts for years to come. The series of re-issues now underway captures all aspects of his art. It demonstrates his commitment to an extraordinarily wide range of music, both vocal and orchestral, from the past three centuries. Through these recordings we can continue to marvel at the consistently high level of his interpretations whilst wondering what more he might have achieved had he lived longer.

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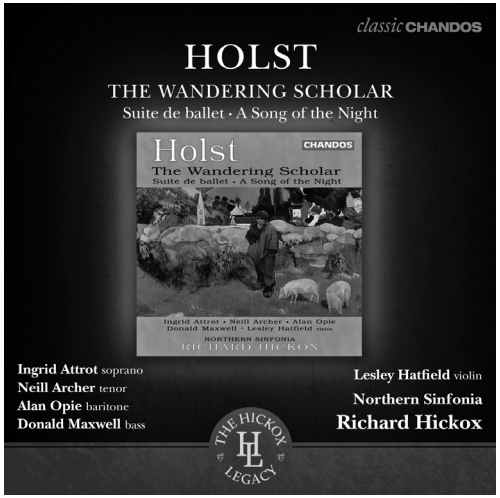

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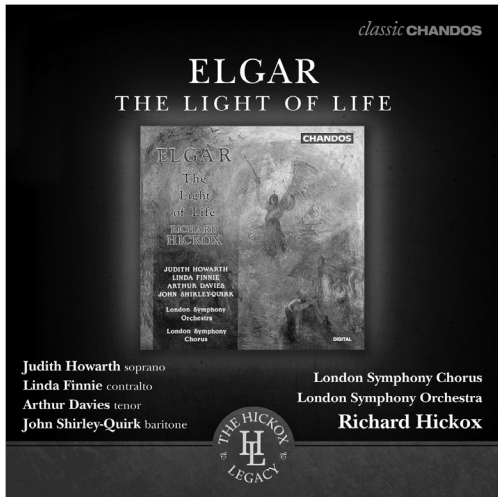

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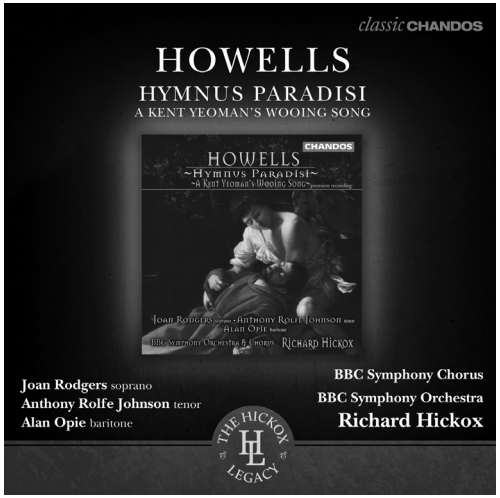

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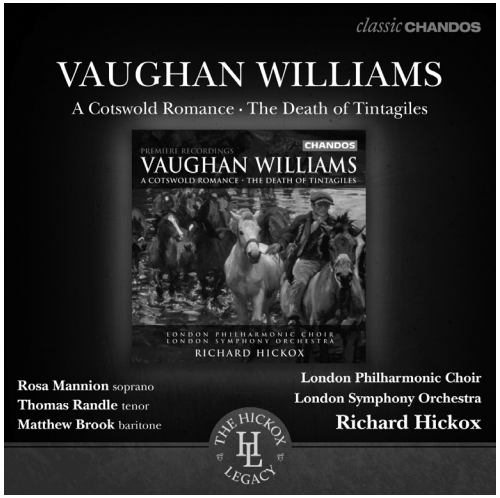

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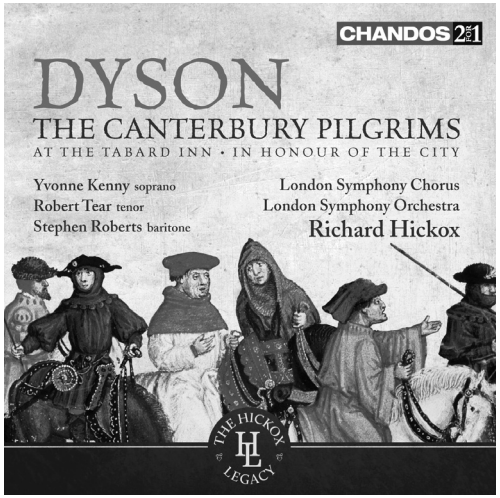

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Mantle of blue | Day after day | Speak to me, my love!
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