



Design: Cindy Bouwers

# ENCOUNTERS

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**Saturday  
March 5, 1988  
Convocation Hall**

**8:00 p.m.**

The Department of Music  
presents

## **ENCOUNTERS IV**

The final in a series of Four Concerts

**Artistic Directors:**  
Malcolm Forsyth  
Leonard Ratzlaff

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This concert is dedicated to the memory of John Newman (BMus 1985),  
Cathy Boehm-Eichner (BMus 1987), and Carol Pfeiffer (BMus 1987).

### **Program:**

Four Songs to Shakespeare

**Blow, Blow, Thou Winter  
Wind (1903)**  
Frank Bridge  
(1879-1941)

Alan Ord (bass)  
Alexandra Munn (piano)

**Blow, Blow Thou Winter  
Wind (1905)**  
Roger Quilter  
(1877-1953)

**Pretty Ring Time (1925)  
(It Was a Lover and His  
Lass)**  
Peter Warlock  
(1894-1930)

**It Was a Lover and His  
Lass (1940)**  
Gerald Finzi  
(1901-1956)

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**Mes Joies (1837)**  
**(from Six Polish Songs)**  
Frederic Chopin  
(1810-1849)

Alfred Fisher (piano)

Transcribed by  
Franz Liszt  
(1811-1886)

**Miserere (1853)**  
**(from Il Trovatore)**  
Giuseppe Verdi  
(1813-1901)

Transcribed by  
Franz Liszt

**INTERMISSION**

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**Histoire du Soldat (1918)**

*(To be read, played and danced)*

Igor Stravinsky  
(1882-1971)

**Libretto**

C. F. Ramuz  
(1878-1947)

**English Version**

Michael Flanders  
and Kitty Black

**PART I**

Soldier's March  
Scene by the Brook  
Soldier's March  
Scene of the Satchel  
Scene of the Book

**PART II**

Soldier's March  
Royal March  
Little Concerto  
Three Dances: Tango, Valse, Ragtime  
Dance of the Devil  
Little Chorale  
The Devil's Couplets  
Grand Chorale  
Triumphal March of the Devil

Conductor: Malcolm Forsyth

Narrator: Bill Meilen

Choreographer: Ann Kipling Brown

Stage Direction & Lighting: Garth Hobden

Norman Nelson (violin)  
Jan Urke (double bass)  
Dennis Prime (clarinet)  
Diane Persson (bassoon)  
Ivan Mast (trombone)  
Fordyce Pier (cornet à piston)  
Brian Jones (percussion)

Bruce Harvey (Soldier)  
Denise Wagner (Devil)  
Michelle Trischuk (Princess)

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**PROGRAM NOTES**

**and**

**TEXTS**

## Four Songs to Shakespeare

**Blow, Blow, Thou Winter Wind**

**Frank Bridge  
Roger Quilter**

**It Was a Lover and His Lass**  
(Pretty Ring Time)

**Peter Warlock  
Gerald Finzi**

Song settings of Shakespeare are numerous. Presented here are two of his more well known lyrics set by four English composers of the twentieth century. Both lyrics are taken from As You Like It.

Although better known for his masterly orchestral and chamber music, Frank Bridge wrote songs throughout his career, some of which won considerable popularity.

The Finzi piece is from a cycle of five songs entitled Let us Garlands Bring, and was first performed on 12 October, 1942 at a National Gallery concert as a tribute to Ralph Vaughan Williams "on his birthday".

Peter Warlock's (his real name was Philip Heseltine) distinction as a composer of songs has at last been allowed to outweigh the morbid fascination of his split personality and ultimate suicide. Roger Quilter's Songs, which form the major part of his relatively small output, still enjoy great popularity. He also died in tragic circumstances, his mind clouded by mental illness.

Allan Ord

### TEXTS

#### **Blow, Blow, Thou Winter Wind**

Blow, blow, thou winter wind,  
Thou art not so unkind  
As man's ingratitude;  
Thy tooth is not so keen,  
Because thou art not seen,  
Although thy breath be rude.

Heigh-ho! sing heigh-ho! unto the green holly:  
Most friendship is feigning, most loving mere folly:  
Then heigh-ho! the holly! this life is most jolly.

### **Text for Blow, Blow, Thou Winter Wind (continued)**

Freeze, freeze, thou bitter sky,  
That dost not bite so nigh  
As benefits forgot:  
Though thou the waters warp,  
Thy sting is not so sharp  
As friend remembered not.

Heigh-ho! sing heigh-ho! unto the green holly:  
Most friendship is feigning, most loving mere folly:  
Then heigh-ho! the holly! this life is most jolly.

William Shakespeare

### **It Was a Lover and His Lass**

It was a lover and his lass,  
With a hey, and a ho, and a hey nonino  
That o'er the green cornfield did pass  
In spring time, the only pretty ring time,  
When birds do sing, hey ding a ding a ding :  
Sweet lovers love the spring.

Between the acres of the rye,  
With a hey, and a ho, and a hey nonino,  
These pretty country folks would lie,  
In spring time, the only pretty ring time,  
When birds do sing, hey ding a ding a ding :  
Sweet lovers love the spring.

This carol they began that hour,  
With a hey, and a ho, and a hey nonino,  
How that life was but a flower  
In spring time, the only pretty ring time,  
When birds do sing, hey ding a ding a ding :  
Sweet lovers love the spring.

And therefore take the present time  
With a hey, and a ho, and a hey nonino,  
For love is crowned with the prime  
In spring time, the only pretty ring time,  
When birds do sing, hey ding a ding a ding :  
Sweet lovers love the spring.

William Shakespeare

**Mes Joies (1837)**  
(From Six Polish Songs)

**Frederic Chopin**  
Transcribed by Franz Liszt

**Miserere (1853)**

**Giuseppe Verdi**  
Transcribed by Franz Liszt

Liszt's transcriptions of works by other composers cover an astonishing range of music from Arcadelt to Wagner. The Chopin transcriptions are delicate gems while the Trovatore is a virtuoso masterpiece that apotheosizes the lyric and tragic dimensions of the opera.

**Histoire du Soldat (1918)**  
(*To be read, played and danced*)

**Igor Stravinsky**

In 1914 Stravinsky left his native Russia to settle in Switzerland, the outbreak of war being one reason. While there, the Russian revolution of 1917 succeeded in cutting him off entirely from his family estate, and money became a pressing problem. His patron, the impresario Diaghilev, had meanwhile been experiencing difficulties in moving his ballet company around the world due to the war, and financial circumstances eventually left the entire company stranded in Lisbon. Stravinsky, who was with them, had to seek fresh sources of income. Having met the Swiss author Ramuz in 1915, through the conductor Ansermet, their ideas for a new theatrical venture provided a possibility. The two had found an instant friendship and their discussions soon bore fruit. Ramuz recalled, in 1929: "What I recognized in you was an appetite and feeling for life, a love for all that is living... (music) entering through all the inlets of the body: touch, taste, smell, sight, and all the open and docile senses".

They were in many ways complementary in character; Stravinsky impetuous, energetic, neurotic, alternating at rehearsals between gulping kirsch and swallowing aspirin to counteract it; Ramuz shyly venturing suggestions, always understanding the point of view of others.

So in January 1918 they hit on the idea of a small piece, "something with two or three characters and a handful of instrumentalists". As no theatres were available because of the war, a mobile, makeshift set for any hall or the open air had to be used.

They used one of the Russian folktales of Afanasiev, "departicularized it" from its setting in the Nicholas I period of enforced recruitment and made it "anytime or 1918, of many nationalities or none". Ramuz wrote the story "to be read, played and danced" and Stravinsky wrote music that was incidental and independent of the text, so that it might be performed separately as a concert suite.

The first performance was in Lausanne, with Ansermet conducting, but the touring series to which this was to have been the prelude had to be cancelled, as all the actors, musicians and stage-hands contracted the Spanish influenza in the worldwide epidemic of that year, and a second performance took place only years later.



## Program notes for Histoire du Soldat (continued)

Stravinsky's years in Switzerland had been spent writing mostly small pieces with a Russian dialect, for piano duet, piano solo, so *Histoire* is to be seen as the summation of this spare and taut style, and also the first important piece in what was to become known as his neoclassic period. Mellers, in a discussion of Stravinsky's Russian heritage with its ritual rather than humanistic expression (the latter being a product of the European Renaissance, which never touched Russia), points to the work in the following terms: "The theme of human guilt and responsibility makes a somewhat queasy appearance in a puppet-like parody of the Faust legend...The queasiness, even the cynicism, were serious enough in purpose and effect; and had positive direction in that they led Stravinsky to explore in the 'neoclassic' works of his middle years his relationship to the great humanistic tradition."

Part One has a far more incidental character than Part Two which, in the words of Eric Walter White, "has the music imposing its own values more and more as the play reached its climax, thereby raising it to a higher power than the mere sum of its parts". Inspiration came from a variety of sources, according to the composer, including a well-known French march for the opening phrase of the Soldier's March, the Lutheran chorale "A Mighty Fortress", in the two chorales; the medieval melody "Dies Irae" lurks in the background of the Tango, and was remembered from a dream he had while writing the piece. The Royal March recalls a pasodoble played by a bull-fight band of cornet, trombone and bassoon which he heard in Seville in 1916, when he was stranded along with the Diaghilev company on tour. Suddenly, he recounts, a large brass band came thundering down the street in the Overture to *Tannhäuser*. The pasodoble was drowned out!

The work is notable firstly for its strange ensemble; the treble and bass of each family, plus a percussionist. The soloistic role of the violin is not surprising, considering the story and its concern for the soldier's violin, but the writing for the percussionist is remarkable in its attempt to explore the jazz drums. Stravinsky had purchased a set in Switzerland and taught himself to play, but had not actually heard a jazz band at the time of writing. The dualistic view this gives of the Ragtime is thus all the more remarkable, for it is parody on the one hand, but parody of what he imagined jazz to sound like! Secondly, the absence of any attempt to blend the disparate instruments he had chosen was the virtual beginning of the twentieth century style of "chamber" scoring as opposed to the lushness of Romantic times. Thirdly, the polyrhythmic layering, which enhances this chamber style, is a marvel in itself, though a headache to the musicians who had to cope with its complexities. White compares the imagery with that of the painting, "Three Musicians", by Stravinsky's friend and ally in modernism, Picasso, with particular reference to the disembodied drum ending, where it is as if the spirit of the soldier has left after the triumph of the Devil, "leaving only the skeleton behind".

Malcolm Forsyth



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## **ENCOUNTERS SERIES 1988/89**

We hope you have enjoyed this final concert of our 1987/88 Encounters Series. Planning for the 1988/89 series is currently underway and we welcome your suggestions. If you have a work you would like to see presented or have any comments regarding past presentations, we would like to hear them. Notepaper will be made available at the door during intermission and after tonight's concert. You may either leave your suggestions at the door or mail to the Department of Music, University of Alberta, 3-82 Fine Arts Building, Edmonton, Alberta T6G 2C9. We would appreciate your contributions.

## **CBC RECORDING OF TONIGHT'S CONCERT**

This evening's concert is being recorded by the CBC for broadcast next Sunday, March 13, at 8:00 p.m. on *ALBERTA IN CONCERT* with host Harry Langley. CBC Stereo, 90.9 F.M.

## **DONATIONS**

If you have enjoyed this evening's program and wish to contribute to the continuation of the ENCOUNTERS series, donation forms are available from the Department of Music general office at 3-82 Fine Arts Building, 432-3263. A receipt will be issued by the University for all donations over \$10.00. All contributions may qualify for a matching grant from the Government of Alberta.

## **ARTS BUILDING RENOVATIONS**

The official re-opening of the now beautifully restored Arts Building will take place on March 18th. At long last the work has been completed and washroom facilities are again available on the main floor in the north wing. Our sincere thanks to our patrons for their patience with the inconveniences caused by the restoration work.

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