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Louisa Stuart-Smith – mezzo soprano

Madeleine Brown – piano

Tuesday 17th November 2020 | 8.00pm | Trinity College Chapel

George Frideric Handel (1685-1759) - Rinaldo

Rinaldo's aria *Cara sposa*

Rinaldo's aria *Venti turbini*

Robert Schumann (1810-1856) - Frauenliebe und Leben, Opus 42

1. Seit ich ihn gesehen
2. Er, der herrlichste von allen
3. Ich kann's nicht fassen, nicht glauben
4. Du Ring an meinem finger

Mateo Lincoln (b. 1997) - Song Cycle: *Wakeful Dreams* (2020)

"The Peace of Wild Things"

Words by Wendell Berry (American, b. 1934)

Sonnet 43

Words by William Shakespeare (1564-1616)

"The World is Too Much With Us"

Words by William Wordsworth (English, 1770-1850)

Composer's note

I came across the three poems included here—Shakespeare's, Wordsworth's, and Berry's, at very different points in my life. Wordsworth's words were some of the first I ever read, having been engraved above a window in an old family home in the mountains. Berry's "Peace of Wild Things" came soon thereafter, and I only discovered Shakespeare's Sonnet 43 this past year. Though the lives of these three poets never overlapped, I believe their poems hold similar views on the world, and each poet is writing from a society becoming increasingly distant from nature and from love. I am sure we can say the same of our own. I hope you can find solace in these three songs.

The Peace of Wild Things

Wendell Berry

When despair for the world grows in me
and I wake in the night at the least sound
in fear of what my life and my children's lives may be,
I go and lie down where the wood drake
rests in his beauty on the water, and the great heron feeds.
I come into the peace of wild things
who do not tax their lives with forethought
of grief. I come into the presence of still water.
And I feel above me the day-blind stars
waiting with their light. For a time
I rest in the grace of the world, and am free.

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Sonnet 43

William Shakespeare

When most I wink, then do mine eyes best see,
For all the day they view things unrespected;
But when I sleep, in dreams they look on thee,
And, darkly bright, are bright in dark directed.
Then thou, whose shadow shadows doth make bright,
How would thy shadow's form form happy show
To the clear day with thy much clearer light,
When to unseeing eyes thy shade shines so?
How would, I say, mine eyes be blessed made
By looking on thee in the living day,
When in dead night thy fair imperfect shade
Through heavy sleep on sightless eyes doth stay!
All days are nights to see till I see thee,
And nights bright days when dreams do show thee me.

The World Is Too Much With Us

William Wordsworth

The world is too much with us; late and soon,
Getting and spending we lay waste our powers;
Little we see in Nature that is ours;
We have given our hearts away, a sordid boon!
This Sea that bares her bosom to the moon,
The winds that will be howling at all hours,
And are up-gathered now like sleeping flowers,
For this, for everything, we are out of tune;
It moves us not. --Great God! I'd rather be
A Pagan suckled in a creed outworn;
So might I, standing on this pleasant lea,
Have glimpses that would make me less forlorn;
Have sight of Proteus rising from the sea;
Or hear old Triton blow his wreathèd horn.

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