

## The Firm

Greta Bradman, soprano



**the firm 2009**

**concert two**

Though the world change swiftly  
as the forms in clouds,  
all perfected things fall back  
to age-old ground.

Over what changes and passes,  
wider and freer,  
your deep songs still hovers,  
O god with the lyre.

Pain has not been understood,  
love has not been learned,  
and what in death removes us

remains undisclosed.  
Alone over the land  
song hallows and heals.

*Sonnets to Orpheus No.1, 19 Rilke*

Pilgrim Church provides wheelchair access via the rear  
(northern) doors.

Toilets can be accessed through the door on the left of the  
performance area.

## **The Firm**

presents

**Greta Bradman, soprano**

and

**Leigh Harrold, piano**

**Mountains**

**Peter Sculthorpe**

**This Too Shall Pass**

**Anne Cawrse**

**Fünf Lieder Op.3**

**Anton Webern**

**short interval**

**Three Pieces**

**Grahame Dudley**

**Hymns to the Night**

**Raymond Chapman Smith**

**Rilke Songs**

**Quentin Grant**

**Mignon Lieder, Op. 62**

**Franz Schubert**

## Mountains (1981)

Peter Sculthorpe

Mountains was commissioned by the Sydney International Piano Competition, 1981, with assistance from the Music board of Australia Council. It was first performed by Gabriella Pusner in Verbugghen Hall, Sydney Conservatorium of music, on 4 July 1981. The work is a response to the mountainous terrain of Tasmania, often known as 'Isle of Mountains', where the composer was born.

## This Too Shall Pass (2009)

Anne Cawrse

- (1) Since I Lost You
- (2) Speak Ye Stones
- (3) My Prime Of Youth
- (4) I Shall Know Why

In order for there to be resurrection, there must first be death; to begin to understand and take delight in love gained, one must first experience love lost; beyond the light of day there will always be the darkness of the night.

I seem to find a simple, honest beauty in melancholy; perhaps it is because these juxtapositions of light and dark, pain and ecstasy, love and loss seems altogether more real, more human. These four elegies (despite its lack of title, I feel the Dickinson poem to be just as elegiac as its preceding songs,) dive into the bittersweet symphony that is life, offering simultaneous consolation and cause for distress. Musically, I wish only to effectively paint the inherent beauty, devotion, sadness and fear of these poet's words. The words of the psalmist conveys for me much of this struggle of paradox within our life journeys: *Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I*

*will not be afraid...* perhaps so, but I must still walk through the valley.

The title of this collection, 'This Too Shall Pass', came after the songs were composed. It is taken from an old Jewish folk story, which Abraham Lincoln referenced in a speech in 1859.

"It is said an eastern monarch once charged his wise men to invent a sentence, to be ever in view, and which should be true and appropriate in all times and situations. They presented him with the words, 'And this, too, shall pass away.' How much it expresses! How chastening in the hour of pride! How consoling in the depths of affliction!"

## Elegy

by D. H. Lawrence (1885-1930)

Since I lost you, my darling, the sky has come near,  
And I am of it, the small sharp stars are quite near,  
The white moon going among them like a white bird  
among snow-berries,  
And the sound of her gently rustling in heaven like a bird I  
hear.

And I am willing to come to you now, my dear,  
As a pigeon lets itself off from a cathedral dome  
To be lost in the haze of the sky, I would like to come,  
And be lost out of sight with you, and be gone like foam.

For I am tired, my dear, and if I could lift my feet,  
My tenacious feet from off the dome of the earth  
To fall like a breath within the breathing wind  
Where you are lost, what rest, my love, what rest!



## **Roman Elegies II**

*by Goethe (1749-1832)*

*Translated Edgar A. Bowring (1826-1911)*

Speak, ye stones, I entreat! Oh speak, ye palaces lofty!  
Utter a word, oh ye streets! Wilt thou not, Genius, awake?  
All that thy sacred walls, eternal Rome, hold within them  
Teemeth with life; but to me, all is still silent and dead.  
Oh, who will whisper unto me,--when shall I see at the  
casement  
That one beauteous form, which, while it scorcheth,  
revives?  
Can I as yet not discern the road, on which I for ever  
To her and from her shall go, heeding not time as it flies?  
Still do I mark the churches, palaces, ruins, and columns,  
As a wise traveller should, would he his journey improve.  
Soon all this will be past; and then will there be but one  
temple,  
Amor's temple alone, where the Initiate may go.  
Thou art indeed a world, oh Rome; and yet, were Love  
absent,  
Then would the world be no world, then would e'en Rome  
be no Rome.

## **Elegy**

*by Chidiock Tichborne (1558-1586)*

*(as printed in Verses of Prayse and Joye, 1586)*

My prime of youth is but a frost of cares,  
My feast of joy is but a dish of pain,  
My crop of corn is but a field of tares,  
And all my good is but vain hope of gain.  
The day is gone and I yet I saw no sun,  
And now I live, and now my life is done.

My tale was heard and yet it was not told  
The fruit is fallen, and yet the leaves are green,  
My youth is spent, and yet I am not old,  
I saw the world, and yet I was not seen,  
My thread is cut, and yet it is not spun,  
And now I live, and now my life is done.

I sought my death and found it in my womb,  
I look't for life and saw it was a shade,  
I trode the earth and knew it was my tomb,  
And now I die, and now I was but made.  
My glass is full, and now my glass is run,  
And now I live, and now my life is done.

## **I Shall Know Why**

*by Emily Dickinson (1830-1886)*

I shall know why -- when Time is over --  
And I have ceased to wonder why --  
Christ will explain each separate anguish  
In the fair schoolroom of the sky --

He will tell me what "Peter" promised --  
And I -- for wonder at his woe --  
I shall forget the drop of Anguish  
That scalds me now -- that scalds me now!

## **Psalm 23 (excerpt)**

Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of  
death, I will not be afraid...

**Fünf Lieder Op.3 (1909)**

**Anton Webern**

Five songs from The Seventh Ring by Stefan George

I.

This is a song  
for you alone:  
of childish beliefs,  
of pious tears...  
through morning gardens it floats  
on light wings.  
Only for you  
would it like to be a song  
that moves the soul.

II.

In the murmuring wind my question was only a dream;  
you replied only with a smile.  
Thus, a wet night kindled a warm glow -  
now May presses,  
and now, for your eyes and hair,  
I must live in yearning all my days.

III.

At the edge of the brook,  
solitary and early,  
the hazel blooms.  
A bird is whistling  
in the cool meadow.  
A beam of light strokes  
and warms us gently  
and quivers and fades.  
The field is fallow,  
the tree yet grey...  
perhaps flowers will be strewn  
after us by Spring.

IV.

In the morning dew you step out  
to gaze at the gauzy cherry tree with me,  
and to breathe in the fragrance of the grass.  
Far away, dust is flying...  
Throughout Nature, nothing yet is thriving  
in fruit or leaf,  
yet around us there are blossoms - a wind blows from the  
south.

V.

The bare tree stretches  
in the winter mist  
with frozen life.  
Let your dream,  
on its quiet journey,  
rise before it!  
It reaches out its arms -  
dwell on this often  
with admiration,  
that in the midst of its affliction,  
and surrounded by ice,  
it yet hopes for Spring!



Webern



George



### Three Pieces (2006)

Grahame Dudley

These pieces are a portion of a work-in-progress.

The first took form over a long period, well into which I realised I was looking at an unconscious distillation of the first piece I ever learnt to play (by ear and feel and helpful parent), the first movement of Beethoven's Sonata in C-sharp minor Op.27 No.2, "The Moonlight". The sustained octave melody, encased in triplets in the right hand, the octave left hand with its see-sawing pivots with the right, and the strange occasional dissonances all appear in some form.

The second piece - partly transitional - quite consciously refers to a wonderful old French Carol called 'Picardy'.

The final piece began as a dramatic journey, but I became more involved in its actual musical material; dissonant chordal suspensions created by closely counterpointing a simple melodic idea. It seems to connect with another favourite work of mine; the slow movement of Brahms's first piano concerto.



### Hymns to the Night (2005) Raymond Chapman Smith

Novalis was the nom de plume of Friedrich Philip, Freiherr von Hardenberg (1772 - 1801). Since their publication in 1800 his Hymns to the Night have been recognised as the central masterpiece of the first phase of German Romanticism.

The intention to set this poem came into my head when, on a wintry Viennese day in November 2004, my esteemed colleague Herr Doktor Grant and I visited the house in which Schubert died at Kettenbrückengasse 6. Schubert spent the last three months of his life in his brother's modest apartment which is maintained as a marvel of memorial restraint. In these simple, unadorned rooms Schubert completed, amongst many other works, his last three piano sonatas and the sublime String Quintet in C major. The experience of this place was deeply moving and its poignancy was only heightened when we realised that, quite by accident, we were there on November 19 - the day of Schubert's death.

I.

*I quest over there,  
And each pain  
Will someday be a sting  
Of delight.  
In a few moments  
I shall be free,  
And lie drunk  
In Love's lap.*

II.

*Endless living  
Wells up strongly in me,  
I look from above  
Down here after you.  
At that mound  
Your splendour pales –  
A shade brings  
The cooling wreath.*

III.

*O! Breathe me, Beloved,  
Ravish me,  
So I can pass on to sleep  
And to love.  
I feel death's  
Rejuvenating tide  
Transform my blood  
To balm and ether –  
I live by day  
Full of faith and courage  
And perish by night  
In holy fire.*

**Rilke Songs (2009)**

**Quentin Grant**

Four songs to texts by the great early twentieth century lyric poet Rainer Maria Rilke.

*As with all my love songs, these are dedicated to my Annie.*

Burn Out My Eyes

Burn out my eyes: I can still see you,  
Deafen my ears: I can still hear you.  
and without feet I can still come to you  
and without a voice I still can call to you.

Tear my arms from me and I'll still hold you,  
with all my heart as in a single hand,  
stop my heart, and my brain will keep on beating and  
beating, Should your fire at last my brain consume,  
the flowing of my blood will carry thee.

Pathways

Understand, I'll slip quietly  
away from the noisy crowd  
when I see the pale  
stars, blooming, over the oaks.

I will pursue solitary pathways  
through the twilit meadows,  
with only one dream:  
That you come too.

## Sacrifice

How my body blooms from every vein  
more fragrantly, since you appeared to me;  
look, I walk slimmer now and straighter,  
and all you do is wait: who are you then?

Look: I feel how I'm moving away,  
I'm shedding my old life, leaf by leaf.  
Only your smile spreads like untouched stars  
over you and, soon now, over me.

Whatever shines through my childhood years  
still nameless and gleaming like water,  
I will name after you at the temple,  
which blazes brightly from your hair  
and braided gently with your breast.

## Again and Again

Again and again, however we know the landscape of love,  
and the little churchyard with its sorrowing names,  
and the silent abyss into which the others  
fall: again, again the two of us walk out together  
under the ancient trees, lie down again and again  
among the flowers, face to face with the sky.

## Mignon Lieder, Op. 62 (1826)

Franz Schubert

I.  
Don't ask me to speak - ask me to be silent,  
for my secret is a [solemn] duty to me.  
I wish I could bare my soul to you,  
but Fate does not will it.

At the right time, the sun's course will dispell  
the dark night, and it must be illuminated.  
The hard rock will open its bosom; and  
ungrudgingly, the earth will release deep hidden springs.

Others may seek calm in the arms of a friend;  
there one can pour out one's heart in lament.  
But for me alone, a vow locks my lips,  
And only a god has the power to open them.

II.  
So let me seem, until I become so;  
don't take the white dress away from me!  
From the beautiful earth I hasten  
down into that solid house.

There I will repose a moment in peace,  
until I open my eyes afresh;  
then I will leave behind the spotless garment,  
the girdle and the wreath.

And those spirits of heaven  
do not ask whether one is 'man' or 'woman',  
and no clothes, no robes  
will cover my transfigured body.



Although I have lived without trouble and toil,  
I have still felt deep pain.  
Through sorrow I have aged too soon;  
Make me forever young again!

III.  
Only one who knows longing  
Knows what I suffer!  
Alone and cut off  
From all joy,  
I look into the firmament  
In that direction.

Ach! he who loves and knows me  
Is far away.  
I am reeling,  
My entrails are burning.  
Only one who knows longing  
Knows what I suffer!



You are warmly invited to join us after  
the concert for complimentary drinks and  
a selection of Tortes by Gabriele.

Next concert:  
Monday August 17<sup>th</sup>, 8pm  
Antony Gray, piano

Please refer to our web site for further  
information on upcoming concerts

[www.firmmusic.com.au](http://www.firmmusic.com.au)

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