

## ABSTRACT

Title of Dissertation: PASTORALISM IN BRITISH CELLO MUSIC:  
SOLO AND CHAMBER WORKS FROM THE  
1940s TO THE PRESENT DAY

Syneva Colle, Doctor of Musical Arts, 2022

Dissertation directed by: Dr. Eric Kutz, School of Music

This performance dissertation explores solo cello repertoire with connections to the English pastoral style. Although pastoralism peaked in popularity between the two world wars, its essential features have been newly embraced by several twenty-first century British composers. Each work discussed here displays some or all of the following pastoral traits: references to the folk music traditions of the British Isles, musical depictions of nature, melodic or harmonic modalism, non-functional (“coloristic”) chordal writing, expressions of nostalgia, and references to historical British music. The performance programs are comprised of works for unaccompanied cello, works for cello and piano, a cello duo, and a cello concerto with string orchestra accompaniment.

PASTORALISM IN BRITISH CELLO MUSIC:  
SOLO AND CHAMBER WORKS FROM THE 1940s TO THE PRESENT DAY

by

Syneva Colle

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Advisory Committee:

Dr. Eric Kutz, Chair

Professor David Neely

Dr. William Robin

Dr. James Stern

Dr. Christina Walter, Dean's Representative

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## Introduction

The English pastoral style flourished in Great Britain in the early decades of the twentieth century, a product of both individual creativity and larger political currents. Initially fostered by men in leadership at the Royal College of Music (RCM) in London, the pastoral style would come to dominate British musical tastes, holding collective meaning for a nation grappling with world wars and the collapse of its once-powerful empire. The most ubiquitous trait of this music was its transformation of native folk tunes into a modern classical idiom; but several other ingredients contributed to its distinctive sound. Although the style waned in popularity by the 1950s, its legacy still lingers in British music of today. This dissertation examines the presence of pastoral characteristics in the cello repertoire, focusing specifically on solo and chamber music and excluding orchestral works. The use of pastoral idioms produces a “family resemblance” among this otherwise diverse group of works written from 1944 to 2016.

The seeds of English pastoralism were planted as early as 1882, with the establishment of the RCM. School founders George Grove, Charles Villiers Stanford, and Hubert Parry cherished the overtly nationalistic goal of supplanting Teutonic influences with new music by native British composers. Their so-called “renaissance” in English music was invigorated by new scholarship on Tudor and Elizabethan music, hinting at a previous golden age in the English arts. Stanford and Parry were both composers, but their hopes for a new English music fully materialized in their student Ralph Vaughan Williams. An expert on English folk music, Vaughan Williams enfolded folksong traits into his compositions. He crafted his harmonic language around modes (unique scales outside the major-minor system), leading to fresh harmonic colors somewhat similar to French Impressionism. His work was also informed by Tudor models, and touched on topics of English literature and the English landscape.

Vaughan Williams's *Pastoral Symphony*, premiered in 1922, would forever wed his musical style to concepts of the "pastoral," a term borrowed from literature. The word not only connotes rural and natural themes, but suggests lost innocence and a yearning for an idealized past. His music was embraced nationally in the years after World War I, and he found himself the de facto leader of a generation of pastoral composers. These included Gustav Holst, the peer and close friend of Vaughan Williams, and younger composers Gerald Finzi, E. J. Moeran, Constant Lambert, Herbert Howells, and Peter Warlock.

Of this group, few produced significant chamber works for the cello (although Finzi and Howells both wrote cello concertos). E. J. Moeran wrote the largest corpus of cello works: two character pieces, a concerto, and a sonata. Arnold Bax wrote two cello sonatas, of which the *Legend-Sonata* is the more pastoral in tone. Bax sought to distinguish himself from English trends by associating closely with Irish culture; yet his music is still touched by the pastoral influence. Edmund Rubbra never referenced folk tunes in his music, but his cello sonata is imbued with Elizabethan gestures and coloristic heterophony, both core traits of pastoralism. A belated participant in the English pastoral movement was Imogen Holst. Her creative output was wholly shaped by historical English music and folk song. She was, however, less Romantic in her approach than other pastoral composers. Pastoral music was usually quite personal, similar in its subjectivity to nineteenth-century German Romanticism—ironically, the very influence that Grove, Stanford, and Parry had hoped to shed.

By the 1950s, a younger generation was keen to move on from pastoralism. Their critiques of the style could be quite acrid; Elisabeth Lutyens mocked it as "modally-wodally music on the cor anglais" and Michael Nyman warned against "the sad role of the English

pastoral composer, the sentimental nature poet wandering irrelevantly down memory lane.”<sup>1</sup>

Avant-garde, serialist, and minimalist models presided after the war. The presence of folk music was de-centralized as a structural component (without ever disappearing completely). In recent years, however, the distinctive traits of pastoralism have been revived by several British composers. Native folksong is a strong presence in the music of James MacMillan, William Sweeney, and Hilary Tann. Nature depiction is at the heart of Sweeney’s *The Tree o’Licht* and Tann’s *Seven Poems of Stillness*. Errollyn Wallen evokes pastoralism in her cello concerto with her harmonic language, melodic contours, and structure modeled after Vaughan Williams’s *The Lark Ascending*. Non-functional harmonic writing, based in modalism, situates each of these pieces in a shared sound-world with older pastoral works. Less tangibly, they seem to invoke the yearning character and unselfconscious personal vision of “Romantic” pastoralism. All four contemporary composers were trained in avant-garde composition, yet returned to their national heritage as a source of inspiration.

Musical nationalism is closely linked to the pastoral style. Whatever the personal motivations behind the music, the movement as a whole was conceived as a nationalist project, and was pressed into service between the two world wars to promote British unity and enforce a monolithic national identity. Yet paradoxically, the question of national identity within the British Isles—Scottish, Irish, Welsh, and English—is an enigmatic one. Charles Stanford, who pioneered the English national style, was Irish, and his own music exclusively references Irish folk sources. Arnold Bax was English but used Irishness in his music as a kind of exoticism. Moeran was half Irish, but culturally English, and allowed himself to be represented as either Irish or English depending on the context.

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<sup>1</sup> Philip Ernst Rupprecht, *British Musical Modernism: The Manchester Group and Their Contemporaries* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015), 49, 59.

These distinctions are less hazy for modern Scots James MacMillan and William Sweeney. Sweeney goes so far as to identify Englishness as a “foreign” influence on Scottish music; MacMillan likewise has expressed concerns about Scottish music having “shaped itself in London’s shadow.”<sup>2</sup> Both Sweeney and Hilary Tann have found inspiration in the poetry of outspoken nationalists: Hugh MacDiarmid (quoted in the score of *The Tree o’Licht*) and R. S. Thomas (quoted in *Seven Poems of Stillness*). Tann identifies strongly as a composer of Welsh music, despite having spent a decades-long career in the United States: “My relationship to Wales remains very strong...I have a very deep sense of belonging to the landscape of Wales.”<sup>3</sup> Finally, Errollyn Wallen challenges assumptions about English identity by drawing attention to her roots in Belize, a British Commonwealth country. Alongside musical traits, personal concepts of national identity form a key component of the pastoral style.

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<sup>2</sup> Keith Potter, “James MacMillan: A New Celtic Dawn?,” *The Musical Times* 131, no. 1763 (January 1990): 15.

<sup>3</sup> Ona Jarmalavičiūtė, “Connecting the Natural and Human Worlds: Ona Jarmalavičiūtė Talks to the Welsh Composer Hilary Tann,” *Classical Music Daily*, May 27, 2020, <https://www.classicalmusicdaily.com/2020/05/hilarytann.htm>.

# Chapter 1: Recital Program One

## Recital Program

October 9, 2021 at 8:00pm  
Gildenhorn Recital Hall

Syneva Colle, cello  
Alexei Ulitin, piano

Prelude for Cello and Piano	E. J. Moeran (1894–1950)
Irish Lament	E. J. Moeran
Legend-Sonata for Cello and Piano	Arnold Bax (1883–1953)
I. Allegro risoluto	
II. Lento espressivo	
III. Rondo: Allegro	

## INTERMISSION

Cello Sonata No. 1	James MacMillan (b. 1959)
I. Face	
II. Image	

## *Program Notes*

### **E. J. Moeran**

*Prelude for Cello and Piano*

*Irish Lament*

When his close friend “Jack” Moeran died in 1950, Arnold Bax wrote: “He was one of the last of the true romantics. All his work from first to last is characterized by a deep love of nature.”<sup>4</sup> Ernest John Moeran (1894–1950), a native of Norfolk in eastern England, studied composition at the Royal College of Music. His first teacher was Charles Stanford, but his studies were interrupted by war, and he served with the military until being wounded in France in 1917. After the war ended, he continued his musical training with John Ireland. Moeran was an avid collector of folk music, painstakingly notating traditional songs that he discovered through visits to rural villages in Norfolk and County Kerry, Ireland. The preservation of national folk music was of pressing interest to both British and European composers at the turn of the twentieth century, as modernization increasingly marginalized traditional cultures. While participating in this work, Moeran began adapting the sounds of folk music into his own compositions. He took his primary inspiration from the model of Ralph Vaughan Williams.

After the war, Moeran began traveling frequently between England and Ireland. He spent time in London as necessary to promote his music, but whenever possible he fled to the Irish countryside in pursuit of an isolated working environment. He struggled to maintain creative momentum, but found he was most productive “in complete solitude and natural surroundings...

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<sup>4</sup> Arnold Bax, “E. J. Moeran: 1894–1950,” *Music & Letters* 32, no. 2 (April 1951): 126.

such as long rambles over the countryside.”<sup>5</sup> He was most drawn to orchestral writing. Sensitive, richly-scored works such as *In the Mountain Country* (1921) and *Lonely Waters* (1931) are typical of his style. Moeran’s melodic writing bore a strong resemblance to Irish folksong. It was infused with Lombard (short-long) rhythms and open intervals of fourths and fifths, and relied heavily on the minor third. Harmonically, he favored modes and ambiguous combinations of major and minor tonalities. These tonalities married easily with an impressionistic harmonic language; Moeran’s many added-note chords and non-functional sevenths add depth of color rather than creating strong harmonic progressions. His approach to music was very personal, reflecting his emotions in response to nature and country life.

Despite positive critical reception of his music, Moeran’s difficulty in composing increased in tandem with a growing dependence on alcohol, starting in the late 1920s. From 1928 onward, he lived an essentially nomadic life, renting living space in boarding houses. In 1945, he married the cellist Peers Coetmore (1905–1976). Although their marriage was a difficult one and they lived mostly apart, Moeran found fresh inspiration in their relationship, and produced several significant works for cello in the years before his death. The Cello Concerto (1945) and Cello Sonata (1947) are considered his most mature works. The two short character pieces *Prelude* and *Irish Lament* showcase his style in miniature form.

*Prelude for Cello and Piano* (1944) features a melody written in the spirit of a folk song, but original to Moeran. The structure is a simple rounded binary, in which the opening material returns at the end of the piece. To imbue this modest song with emotional drama, Moeran capitalizes on the wide range of the cello. As the phrases of each section increase in length, the melody soars higher, escalating the emotional effect. The piano provides stability with steady

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<sup>5</sup> Tim Rayborn, *A New English Music: Composers and Folk Traditions in England’s Musical Renaissance From the Late 19th to the Mid-20th Century* (Jefferson: McFarland & Co., 2016), 142.

quarter-note chords, but the harmonies are quite innovative, crowded with non-functional sevenths and non-chord tones. Chords with missing thirds and a strongly emphasized minor sixth scale degree evoke the major-minor ambiguity that is fundamental to Irish folk music. Moments of daring dissonance increase the musical drama: for instance in the repeated use of a melodic E-natural over an E-sharp in the piano bass line. The piece culminates in an operatic climax before the return of the opening melody ushers in an intimate closing.

Although *Irish Lament* was published posthumously, Moeran had published a near-identical piece (*Irish Love Song*) for piano solo in 1926, dedicated to his friend and then-housemate Peter Warlock. In October 1943 the composer wrote to Peers Coetmore, “I am most colossally hard at work at the moment. I am on a somewhat elaborate and exceedingly free arrangement for ‘cello and piano of the Irish tune ‘Johnny Asthore’.”<sup>6</sup> Moeran surely exaggerated the labor involved, since there is little alteration from the original besides the soaring cello countermelody that enters in the second half of the piece. The authentic folk tune, more commonly known as “Johnny Mó Mhíle Stór,” is still widely performed by Gaelic folk singers.

The role of the piano in *Irish Lament* differs completely from that of the *Prelude*. It opens with five magnificent arpeggios, like a troubadour’s harp announcing the beginning of a story. Throughout the piece, the piano part is active and improvisatory, ranging through surprising chromaticism and adorning the upper line with sparkling ornaments in the style of a folk singer. The melody, unfolding in even phrases of five bars each, is played first by the cello, and stays within a conservative range appropriate to a human voice. Later the piano takes over the melody, freeing the cello to range more widely in a rhapsodic countermelody.

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<sup>6</sup> Lionel Hill, *Lonely Waters: The Diary of a Friendship with E. J. Moeran* (London: Thames Pub., 1985), 128.

## **Arnold Bax**

### *Legend-Sonata for Violoncello and Pianoforte*

Although Moeran and Arnold Bax (1883–1953) frequently traveled to Ireland together, the country held a very different significance for each of them. As Bax explained, “Jack’s predilection for the Irish (or rather Kerry) scene must have been wholly instinctive and emotional. He knew nothing of Irish history, nothing of the heroic legends, nothing of the Celtic literary renaissance. He took no interest in the language revival.”<sup>7</sup> Bax’s interest was more erudite; he was involved in Irish politics, learned to speak Gaelic, and took inspiration from Irish literature. He prized the Irish poetry of W. B. Yeats, stating in 1949: “Yeats’s poetry means more to me than all the music of the centuries.”<sup>8</sup> Bax published his own poetry, short stories, and plays under the pen name Dermot O’Byrne. Later in life, the remote village of Glencolumbkille, County Donegal was his favorite place to return to year after year.

As a young person, Bax was surrounded by the privileges of the Edwardian middle class. Growing up in the London suburbs, he enjoyed a large house with a private tennis court and cricket grounds, a family tutor, and a household staff. He was still living at home when he began his studies with Frederick Corder at the Royal Academy of Music. During his student years, Bax was enchanted by the music of Wagner and Richard Strauss; late German Romanticism would remain a strong influence in his music. His tastes were also shaped by travels in Russia, but it was Ireland that captured his imagination from his first visit in 1902. Early compositions such as *A Celtic Song Cycle* (1904), the symphonic poem *In the Faery Hills* (1909) and the orchestral cycle *Eire* (1910) demonstrate his devotion to Irish topics. Celtic-style melodies were often featured in his music,

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<sup>7</sup> Bax, “E. J. Moeran: 1894–1950,” 112.

<sup>8</sup> Lewis Foreman, *Bax: A Composer and His Times*, 3rd ed. (Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 2007), 25.

but he claimed that Celtic idioms entered his writing process subconsciously. For Bax, “Irishness” in music meant evoking an atmosphere of myth and ancient Celtic history, drawing on a broad musical palette, not just the pastoral sound. In fact, he took little interest in the folk-song movement, once writing derisively to a friend, “you might also savour a new rhapsody on Little Puddleswick drinking-songs by R. Vaughan Williams.”<sup>9</sup>

Bax experienced his greatest commercial success during the interwar period. He composed fluently and prolifically. His complex and colorful orchestral music was compared to that of Debussy and Stravinsky. Wartime works such as *The Garden of Fand* (1916) and *Tintagel* (1919) were concert staples in Great Britain in the 1920s. His influence began to wane, however, during the 1930s, at the same time that the pastoral style was losing sway. One of the most severe criticisms of the pastoral style (both then and now) has been the idea that this music flowed from empty nostalgia, reflecting the emotions of privileged people searching for a return to an Edwardian golden age. Nature, country life, and childhood were all absorbed into this fantasy-vision; and indeed, Bax was obsessed with youth. His 1943 autobiography was titled *Farewell, My Youth*. In his personal life, he often behaved like a boy who couldn’t grow up, leaving his wife and children to pursue a series of simultaneous affairs. In his music, too, there is an element of escapism: “adolescent dreams, of more than life can give”<sup>10</sup> in the words of his brother Clifford.

*Legend-Sonata* for cello and piano was commissioned by cellist Florence Hooten in 1942, and completed by February 1943. During the second world war Bax had taken a near-complete hiatus from composing, but he wrote to Aloys Fleischman: “I have been quite busy again since Christmas and have finished a very romantic sonata for cello and piano which gets about as far away from present day realities as it possibly could. I enjoyed writing it and perhaps because of

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<sup>9</sup> Foreman, *Bax: A Composer and His Times*, 116.

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.*, 147.

my long rest from responsible composition it all came very easily.”<sup>11</sup> Bax used the title “Legend” in six separate works. It held for him broad connotations of ancient myth, as he explained in an interview with Henri van Marken: “This is not strictly programme music, but the ideas seemed to me to derive from associations with the old Northern Tales, although I could not tell you what they were about or even their nationality—anywhere in Scotland, Norway or Finland.”<sup>12</sup>

The first movement, “Allegro risoluto,” opens with a robust and foreboding theme in F-sharp minor, propelled by insistent dotted rhythms. From the onset, the harmonic accompaniment is turbulent, avoiding the tonic and leaning heavily on the minor fourth triad (B minor). Bax was a skilled pianist, and the piano writing is quite complex throughout the sonata. The main rhythmic motive romps through a series of mercurial moods, from humorous to dramatic, before leading into the second main theme in the relative major key (A major). Bax was well-known for this kind of sensuous, chromatic melody. His use of harmonic chromaticism shows the influence of Wagner, with dissonances “resolving” into new dissonances. The continuous search for resolution gives the music a ceaseless forward motion. A brief development section restores the driving rhythms of the opening, growing increasingly desperate until the recapitulation of the first theme, now marked “feroce” in both parts. This time around, the piano firmly emphasizes the tonic chord on every downbeat, for a bold and aggressive effect. The second theme returns in F-sharp major, which has a tonally vivid color matched by the piano’s lustrous scalar passages. As the movement draws to a close, the mood descends back into a gloomy mist.

The “Lento espressivo” movement begins with a stately six-bar introduction accompanied by lush rolled chords. The movement has a simple ternary structure in which a sweet melodic section frames a more tempestuous center. The key, E major, is the flat-seventh scale degree of

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<sup>11</sup> Ibid., 364.

<sup>12</sup> Ibid., 365.

the sonata's main key, a hint at the Mixolydian mode which is used throughout this movement. After the introduction, the main melodic theme is introduced by the piano. Lewis Foreman has identified this melody as a variant of "Fand's song of immortal love" from *The Garden of Fand*.<sup>13</sup> (In traditional lore, Fand is a Celtic sea goddess who can take the shape of a bird.) In addition to the Mixolydian mode, Bax incorporates a pentatonic scale; both are musical signifiers of folk music and exoticism. The melody's smooth profile, moving in even eighth-notes, contrasts the pervasive dotted rhythms of the first movement. A sophisticated chromaticism unfolds in the harmonic voices underneath. In the middle section (presented in the parallel minor), melody and countermelody weave around one another in elegant flourishes: a seductive chromatic line and a mysterious half-step descent. When the original melody returns, the texture is transformed by a glistening bell-like accompaniment in the piano.

"Rondo: Allegro" parallels the adventurous character of the first movement. The rondo theme is an obsessive fragment of whirling sixteenth notes. It appears in continuous variations throughout the movement, instilling a lively, sparkling energy. The main key areas of the movement are inspired by modal relationships, the home key of F-sharp minor complemented by the lowered seventh (E minor / E major) and the lowered second (G major). Soon a secondary theme is revealed, dramatically contrasting the main motive. First introduced by the piano, it takes ecstatic flight in a series of rising sequences. Its prominent open fourths and Lombard rhythms serve as examples of how folk music contours had been fully absorbed into Bax's personal style. This theme returns again in the final minutes of the Rondo, now in exultant F-sharp major, with an accompaniment of glittering arpeggios. The music tumbles to a close with unforeseen playfulness, its seriousness evaporating like the happy ending of a fairy tale.

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<sup>13</sup> Ibid., 365.

## James MacMillan

### *Cello Sonata No. 1*

Scottish composer James MacMillan (b. 1959) writes in a unique modernist voice which references influences as disparate as Palestrina and Lutoslawski. He is especially well-known for incorporating themes from his Catholic faith into music, as in his many large-scale works about the Passion of Christ. At the same time, he is deeply invested in the folk traditions of Scotland. In 1999 he stated, “If I have a mission I think it must involve acts of remembrance, of recollection, of rediscovery of the past.”<sup>14</sup> He first sprang to international attention at the 1990 premiere of *The Confession of Isobel Gowdie*. This symphonic work memorialized a seventeenth-century Scottish woman executed for witchcraft. Features of MacMillan’s mature style were already present in this early work: a weighty or spiritual theme, brilliant orchestral colors, and harsh juxtapositions of lyrical and aggressive material. Phillip Cooke has described his works as a “beguiling mix of dramatic violence and tender consolation.”<sup>15</sup> Another prototypical work is the percussion concerto *Veni, Veni Emanuel* (1992), which is woven from the rhythms and intervals of an ancient Catholic plainchant melody. Such borrowing of hymns and chants is a persistent MacMillan trope, although he resists programmatic interpretations of his source material.

MacMillan grew up in the coal-mining village of Kilwinning in Ayrshire, Scotland, the son of a Catholic family with Irish heritage. He studied composition with both John Casken (b. 1949) and Kenneth Leighton (1929–1988), the latter of whom represents an artistic lineage reaching back to the pastoral group. Leighton was acquainted with many of the pastoralists and inherited from

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<sup>14</sup> Richard McGregor, “‘A Metaphor for the Deeper Wintriness’: Exploring James MacMillan’s Musical Identity,” *Tempo* 65, no. 257 (July 2011): 26.

<sup>15</sup> Phillip A. Cooke, *The Music of James MacMillan* (Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 2019), 1.

them a melancholy lyricism, which also lingers in MacMillan's music. While establishing himself as a composer in the classical sphere, MacMillan was also delving into Scottish folk music, touring bars with his folk band Broadstone. In 1984 he penned the faux-folk melody "The Tryst," from which he would borrow extensively in later works. The rhythms and intervals of traditional music made their way into the fabric of his compositions. Complex ornamentations and melismas, inspired by Gaelic psalm-singing and pibroch (bagpipe music), are especially distinctive. Richard McGregor has noted a frequent use of melodic "keening," in which instruments slide between two close pitches, re-creating the sounds of ancient Scottish laments.<sup>16</sup> MacMillan summarizes, "My interest in traditional music has become so deeply absorbed that it is now second nature to me."<sup>17</sup>

The Cello Sonata No. 1 was premiered in 1999 by Raphael Wallfisch (cello) and John York (piano). MacMillan wrote many chamber works in the late 1990s. This was a unique season in a career which had previously been dominated by orchestral works and would later be dominated by choral music. The cello sonata demonstrates on a more intimate scale many of the hallmarks of MacMillan's style, including a penchant for borrowing from his own compositions. It contains several traces of his Cello Concerto, commissioned by Mstislav Rostropovich in 1996. The two works both draw on the opening intervals of the plainchant "Crucem tuam adoramus" ("we adore thy cross"). MacMillan has called the sonata "a plainchant under the skin."<sup>18</sup>

The first movement, "Face," begins in a posture of great serenity, with a simple cello melody floating over a watercolor texture in the piano. The opening interval, a rising minor third, gradually develops into a brief five-note wisp of a melody. This melody, in countless variations

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<sup>16</sup> McGregor, "A Metaphor for the Deeper Wintriness," 30.

<sup>17</sup> James MacMillan, Julian Johnson, and Catherine Sutton, "[Supplement]: Raising Sparks: On the Music of James MacMillan," *Tempo*, New Series, no. 202 (October 1997), 26.

<sup>18</sup> John York, "The Makings of a Cycle? James MacMillan's Cello and Piano Sonatas," *Tempo*, no. 221 (July 2002), 24.

and fragmentations, will become the DNA of the entire sonata. The music overflows with ornaments, grace notes, and melismas. The piano chords are also based on intervals from the five-note theme, producing a tonality that sounds organic despite the lack of traditional harmonic progression. MacMillan's harmonic language is essentially triadic despite the tensions created by added notes. Like the French Impressionists, he uses coloristic harmony to create stasis, with periodic surges of movement into different tonal centers.

Gradually the music becomes more agitated, and the two instruments seem to lose touch with one another. The cello part descends into a series of doleful chords while the pianist introduces a striking new variant of the main motive: a childish, perhaps mocking tune (described in the score "like a child's clockwork musical toy"). This section bears another self-reference to MacMillan's cello concerto, in which a children's hymn is played accompanied by glockenspiel, a timbre that is clearly mimicked here by the high, thin piano register. In its original context the hymn memorialized the tragedy of a 1996 school shooting in Britain. In re-using the idea here, the composer is probably not overtly referencing the event; but it may carry echoes of its former meaning, perhaps evoking lost innocence.

From here, the main motive is taken through a series of diverse transformations, as if searching for its identity. A lilting dotted triplet variation leads to a violent outburst featuring extended techniques for both players. This is followed by a playful dance, then a long closing section in which the cello seems to cry out in desperation, reaching into the highest register and "keening" in the fashion described by McGregor. Meanwhile, the piano beats out a relentless military march. This closing lament slowly fades in preparation for the violent opening of the second movement, "Image."

As suggested by the movement titles, the second half of the sonata mirrors the first, creating a palindromic structure. Each of the thematic variations returns, but fundamentally altered through texture changes and role reversals between the players. The listener experiences familiar musical ideas now distorted or transformed. At last, the musical tension is released; the harmonies turn tonal and the texture hazy. Open arpeggios in the cello evoke a sense of security and rest, although the sound is fragile due to the use of *sul ponticello*. Over this cello accompaniment, the piano plays a strangely familiar melody. It is the mirror image, rhythmically and melodically, of the first forty measures of “Face.” The music fades away with the minor third rising repeatedly like steady breathing.

## Chapter 2: Recital Program Two

### Recital Program

February 13, 2022 at 8:00pm  
Gildenhorn Recital Hall

Syneva Colle, cello  
Guzal Isametdinova, piano

The Fall of the Leaf

Imogen Holst  
(1907–1984)

Cello Sonata in G minor, Op. 60

Edmund Rubbra  
(1901–1986)

- I. Andante moderato
- II. Vivace flessibile
- III. Adagio (Theme and Variations)

### INTERMISSION

Seven Poems of Stillness  
*with words by R. S. Thomas*

Hilary Tann  
(b. 1947)

- I. 'the air / a staircase for silence'
- II. 'the great brush has not rested'
- III. 'like some huge moth out of the darkness'
- IV. 'as the interior of a cathedral'
- V. 'Bright Field / lit bush'
- VI. 'the possibility of your presence'
- VII. 'nights that are so still'

Melissa Littlepage, narrator

Dark Pastoral

Ralph Vaughan Williams  
(1872–1958)  
David Matthews  
(b. 1943)

## *Program Notes*

### **Imogen Holst**

#### *The Fall of the Leaf*

The life of Imogen Holst (1907–1984) formed an unusual connection between opposing factions in British twentieth-century music. She was the only child of Gustav Holst, who along with Ralph Vaughan Williams was a driving force in the creation of the pastoral style. Imogen Holst’s own music was colored by pastoralism as late as the 1980s. Yet she spent the second half of her life in zealous commitment to the music of Benjamin Britten, for whom she was amanuensis, editor, and close friend. Britten made no secret of his disdain for pastoralism, suggesting that it was “a cover for inefficiency or lack of artistic direction.”<sup>19</sup> Holst’s ability to hold these two musical poles in tension speaks to her enthusiasm for all native British composition and her generous interest in the cause of new music.

Holst followed in her father’s footsteps from an early age, developing notable skills as a pianist and a composer while still a teenager. She entered the RCM (where both her father and Vaughan Williams taught) in 1926 with a focus on composition and the piano, but her dreams of a concert career were dashed by recurring phlebitis in her arm. She stayed busy with conducting work, while also studying composition with George Dyson and Vaughan Williams. She was an active participant in the English Folk Dance Society, touring internationally as a performer of English country dances. After graduation, she built an active career as a teacher, conductor, and

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<sup>19</sup> Benjamin Britten, “England and the Folk-Art Problem (1941),” in *Britten on Music*, ed. Paul Kildea (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003), 33.

director of a large community music program at Dartington Hall in Devon. Throughout her life, she would have a keen interest in making music performance accessible to amateurs.

In 1943 Holst struck up a long-distance friendship with Benjamin Britten, whose music she greatly admired. Holst viewed him as the natural successor to her father—despite the marked differences in their music—because he was bringing excellence to the field of British composition. When, in 1952, the invitation came from Britten to move to Aldeburgh, she did so, and stayed for the rest of her life. For the next twelve years she served as his assistant, working punishing hours to complete copies, edits, and reductions of his scores. Her devotion to both the man and his music was all-consuming, sometimes to the point of embarrassment for Britten. Throughout their partnership he was apparently oblivious to her financial situation; she was living in near poverty.

In 1956 Holst became the joint artistic director for the Aldeburgh Festival, a position she would hold for twenty years. She was a pioneer in creating published editions of Elizabethan music, including Purcell's *Dido and Aeneas* which she co-edited with Britten. Although she did not have time to write original music while working with him, she published several books of musical arrangements to be sung by amateurs, including the widely popular *Singing for Pleasure* (1957). In 1964 she resigned as Britten's assistant in order to focus on the promotion of her father's legacy. In addition to authoring his first biography and a retrospective of his music, she catalogued his manuscripts and advocated widely for performances and recordings of his works.

In the last two decades of her life, Holst took up composition again, releasing twenty-eight new titles before her death in 1984. Most of this music was based in folksong and dance, and included chamber works, choral music, and orchestral music. She was reticent about her compositional skills, describing her works as “utilitarian, for learners or when asked.”<sup>20</sup> Her music

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<sup>20</sup> Christopher Grogan, *Imogen Holst: A Life in Music* (Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 2007), 385.

leans heavily on the dance rhythms and melodic contours of Elizabethan music. Her style tends to be spare and linear, dominated by modalism and other synthetic scales. Like many pastoral composers, she was interested in colorful dissonance within a tonal framework, and her harmonies often feature quartal rather than triadic structures.

*The Fall of the Leaf* was commissioned by cellist Pamela Hind O'Malley in 1962. The piece presents three “studies” on a melody taken from the Fitzwilliam Virginal Book, a collection of English harpsichord works from the Renaissance and Elizabethan eras. The original tune by Martin Peerson appears in the Fitzwilliam Book as a lively dance in alla breve time. Holst preserves the original key, D minor, but changes the character completely, presenting the theme as a slow lament accompanied by austere double stops and pizzicato.

Two striking elements from the theme—a descending Aeolian scale and a “sighing” minor second—are recognizable in each of the three variations. Scalar descent is a unifying structural component, evoking the “fall” mentioned in the title. The first variation is a whirlwind of pizzicati in the spirited time signature of 10/8. Its momentum is punctuated by accents and artificial harmonics. It peaks in a long descending trill before dissolving back into pizzicati. Variation II employs a Sarabande-style rhythm and leans heavily on a dissonant second as its main harmonic feature. The desolate melody repeatedly breaks down into precipitous cascades of faster notes. Variation III is a suspenseful perpetual-motion movement that takes the concept of rising and falling scales into the extreme registers of the cello. Suddenly, the mood shifts and the theme is heard again, now singing in the high register of the cello and accompanied by wistful plucked chords.

## Edmund Rubbra

### *Cello Sonata in G minor, Op. 60*

Edmund Rubbra (1901–1986) rarely spoke publicly about his music. Once, when asked to talk about his compositional process, he replied, “I prefer to remain inside my music, not outside it.”<sup>21</sup> As a student of Gustav Holst and later a friend to Vaughan Williams, he could not avoid the influence of English pastoralism, but he remained largely aloof from musical nationalism. His lyrical yet robustly contrapuntal music was difficult to categorize, and did not woo commercial success. After the second world war, Rubbra was often dismissed along with his mentors as old-fashioned, despite the distinct differences between his music and theirs. His close friend Gerald Finzi simply summarized, “everything he has ever written has been Rubbra.”<sup>22</sup>

Rubbra grew up in a working-class Northampton family, lacking any connection to musicians or cultural elites. He was, however, an avid student of music and a fine pianist. He entered University College in Reading in 1920, where he became a student of Gustav Holst, and through Holst’s encouragement achieved a scholarship to the RCM. At first, his music was strongly diatonic and imitative of Holst’s. But his world was expanded when he began to study counterpoint with R. O. Morris. For the rest of his career, Rubbra would be captivated by contrapuntal writing, eventually publishing the book *Counterpoint* in 1960. He was especially interested in the principal of inverted voices in music, seeking to write themes that were “capable of inversion without diminishing their effect.”<sup>23</sup> Rubbra believed that the human ear cannot follow more than three parts at once, so his counterpoint tends to stay within this range, often resulting in

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<sup>21</sup> R. Murray Schafer, *British Composers in Interview* (London: Faber and Faber, 1963), 66.

<sup>22</sup> Leo Black, *Edmund Rubbra: Symphonist* (Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 2008), 6.

<sup>23</sup> Edmund Rubbra, “An Essay in Autobiography,” in *Edmund Rubbra: Composer-Essays*, ed. Lewis Foreman (Rickmansworth, England: Triad Press, 1977), 11.

triadic harmonies. He resisted the suggestion that his music was drily academic, writing, “even if I do use a texture that is erroneously labelled ‘intellectual’, thus leading to the associated idea of ‘austerity’, my heart and senses are quite as warmly involved as are those of the composer of sensuous harmonic music.”<sup>24</sup>

Rubbra rarely acknowledged direct influences on his work, but his interest in Elizabethan music was certainly inherited from the pastoralists. He frequently referenced Renaissance dance styles and other early music sources, as in his orchestral suite *Improvisations on Virginal Pieces by Giles Farnaby*, Op. 50 (1939), based on tunes from the Fitzwilliam Virginal Book. He wrote in a tonal idiom, and was attracted to expressive, lyrical lines. He admitted that he was indifferent to formal structures, writing music measure-by-measure without planning ahead: often with unconventional results. His primary focus was the symphony—he wrote eleven—and Vaughan Williams believed that Rubbra would succeed him as Britain’s most important symphonist.

When war broke out in 1939, Rubbra served first as an army clerk, and later as a pianist in the Army Classical Music Group, performing for the armed forces. Here he met the cellist William Pleeth. Following the war, they would perform together in a piano trio until 1970. Immediately after demobilization in 1946, he wrote the Cello Sonata in G minor for Pleeth and pianist Margaret Good (Pleeth’s wife).

The sonata’s first movement, “Andante moderato,” has an imaginative structure suggestive of both sonata-allegro and rondo form. It is based on two contrasting sections. The A section theme is an impassioned outcry featuring a series of falling fifths. Accompanying harmonies cycle repeatedly between an E-flat major seventh chord and the tonic minor chord, before venturing into more chromatic territory. This emotional music soon segues into a Purcellian dance in 3/8 time,

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<sup>24</sup> Black, *Edmund Rubbra: Symphonist*, 114.

carried along by swiftly moving imitative lines in the piano part. (The gradual increase of tempo to connect slow and fast sections was a favorite device of the composer, heard also in his symphonies.) This triple-meter dance permeated with hemiolas evokes the character of a seventeenth-century hornpipe, and the tonality shifts flexibly between minor and Phrygian modes. A and B sections return in order, recognizable in character but with heavily altered material. An explosive return to the main key of G minor signals the arrival of the closing coda.

The “Vivace flessibile” in C minor is a frenetic dance in compound meter, alternating between suspense and jocularly. Its driving rhythmic motive is formed from quarter + eighth note pairs; the melody associated with this rhythm, however, is in perpetual metamorphosis. A secondary theme, marked *giocoso*, resists the pervading momentum with stubborn cross-rhythms. At times, the cello floats in long melody lines, but the piano part maintains its nonstop wild activity. Bright trills evoke a quasi-Baroque feel. Although Rubbra modulates into several strong key areas, the onset of melodic motives is rarely in line with the harmonic mileposts, making this movement unpredictable at every turn. As if pulling one final prank, the music bursts into an unexpected major chord in the last six bars of the piece, concluding in A-flat major.

The finale begins in G major, although like the second movement it will evolve into a new key by the end. This meditative theme and variations is marked *Adagio*, and the slow pace frames an intense unfolding of polyphonic lines. The opening theme is characterized by slow rising scales, which culminate in a falling figure reminiscent of the first movement’s descending fifths. Almost without exception, the piano line moves in the opposite direction from the cello. Each variation derives its central drama from the opposing motion of the two parts.

The first two variations highlight the intervals of the falling fifth and rising fourth, both taken from the theme; in Variation II, the pianist persistently flips the cellist’s motives upside

down. Variations III and IV increase in tempo, with the pianist turning fragments of the theme into brisk sixteenth-note motives. Between the pianist's right hand and the cello part, the original theme is quoted almost verbatim in Variation IV. The final measures of the theme are then extended to form the basis for Variation V. The tempo relaxes again in Variation VI, with the cellist playing a disconsolate descant over the piano's scalar figures. Variation VII presents the theme in augmentation. Finally, the piece closes with an *adagio* fugue. Within its creeping chromatic subject is hidden the rising scale of the original theme, now cast in G minor. As it grows to its apex it becomes more melodic, shifting from a spiritual lament to a soaring melodic line. A triumphant D major cadence resolves the work.

## **Hilary Tann**

### *Seven Poems of Stillness*

Welsh composer Hilary Tann (b. 1947) is happy to be known as a “nature composer.” Her works celebrate the beauty of the natural world and what she views as the “sacred” in nature. She grew up in the Rhondda Valley in South Wales, composing from the age of six and playing the cello. In addition to music, nature and poetry were important to her from childhood. “My mother was a naturalist and my father loved words, so those two sides...fused in me and I think pretty much made me who I am.”<sup>25</sup> She earned a degree in composition from the University of Wales in Cardiff, where she was the first woman to graduate with honors in composition. An interest in serial music led her to graduate school at Princeton, where she studied with Milton Babbitt and J. K. Randall. She was the third woman to earn a Ph.D. in composition from Princeton. In 1980,

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<sup>25</sup> Hilary Tann, interviewed by Syneva Colle, February 7, 2022.

she became a professor of music at Union College in Schenectady, New York, where she remained until her retirement in 2019.

Tann has long had an interest in Japanese folk music. From 1985 to 1991, she studied the shakuhachi (vertical bamboo flute), and spent significant time in Japan. She absorbed Japanese musical concepts such as circular time, the elevated role of timbre, the *johakyū* curve, and the idea of silence as a vital component of music. Japanese folk music dovetailed with Tann's interest in nature. Shakuhachi music often depicts natural elements like wind and water. Many of Tann's works have an improvisatory freedom of motion, as well as strongly emphasized grace notes which mirror the phrasing of the shakuhachi. After delving deeply into both serialism and Japanese music, however, Tann found herself still searching for her own musical voice. As she relates,

“Coming out of Princeton and studying with Milton Babbitt, and others...and having the interest in Japanese music, I thought, ‘Wait a minute. What is *your* background, Hilary?’...‘What is my Welsh tradition?’ And that was a tradition of hymns. And if you listen to *Llef*, the piece for cello and flute, you’ll hear that suddenly I’m being ‘simple’ and...it’s not tonal but it has this echo of Welsh music.”<sup>26</sup>

Tann identifies *Llef* (1988) as the first work to capture her distinctive personality as a composer. The piece, which incorporates the Welsh hymn “Llef,” exhibits characteristics that have continued to be hallmarks of her work, such as clean, linear textures and a meditative yet improvisatory momentum. Tann favors a tonally-centered palette that evades traditional harmonic motion and instead lingers on sonorities. In her larger works, she utilizes lush scoring to evoke

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<sup>26</sup> Tann, interviewed by Syneva Colle.

natural scenes. She cites Sibelius and Shostakovich as influences on her “musical landscapes,” as well as “the English pastoral tradition epitomized by Vaughan Williams.”<sup>27</sup>

Welsh landscape and poetry remain central to Tann’s music. Most of her works are inspired by Welsh poets, including R. S. Thomas, George Herbert, and Menna Elfyn. Her subjects are “most often drawn from a poet’s view of nature—one that has already been compressed and yearns for expansion.”<sup>28</sup> As she explains, “The term *cerdd* in Welsh...can either mean the sounding of music or the sounding of poetry. It’s the same term. So this link between poetry and music...because I’m Welsh, is very deep in me.”<sup>29</sup> For Tann, to read a poem is to hear musical associations.

*Seven Poems of Stillness* features the poetry of R. S. Thomas (1913–2000), a Welsh writer and Anglican priest. It was premiered in 2013 at Manafon Church in Wales, where Thomas himself had served as rector. In this work, seven poems are read by a narrator, intermingled with short, responsive movements for unaccompanied cello. The piece is arranged in an arc, with quiet outer movements framing more active inner ones. At the center of the work, Tann again incorporates the Welsh hymn *Llef* (translated “A cry from the heart”).

The first movement begins with a yearning melody high on the A string. The tonality of the work is flexible, but centers on the pitch E. The opening phrases evoke a mood of waiting and listening, reflecting the poetry which speaks of searching for God in an empty cathedral. A significant motive is introduced: a series of light, detached quarter notes that rise jaggedly upward. According to Tann, this is her musical version of “the air a staircase for silence.” The accumulation of short motives which then continue to reappear is a frequent technique in Tann’s music.

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<sup>27</sup> Jarmalavičiūtė, “Connecting the Natural and Human Worlds.”

<sup>28</sup> Hilary Tann and Arthur Margolin, “Why Probe? A Conversation,” *International Alliance for Women in Music Journal* 20, no. 1 (2014), 10.

<sup>29</sup> Tann, interviewed by Syneva Colle.

Movement II uses shifting meters and swirling groups of sixteenth notes to depict the movement and colors of nature. Rising and falling patterns create a gentle, somewhat circular perpetual motion. This movement is a palindrome, peaking at the center, and the dynamics are terraced to build slowly to the center before gently dying away. In Movement III, the cello juxtaposes harsh chords with fluttering, high melismas. The text depicts the perceived silence of God. This darkest movement concludes with a mysteriously hopeful fanfare of quiet harmonics.

Movement IV, the centerpiece of the work, is framed by a gentle melody executed in false harmonics. After this introduction, the hymn *Llef* is heard, separated into short phrases. Its pervasive rhythm, a quarter + half note, is used as a recurring rhythmic cell throughout the work. The hymn's phrases are boldly declaimed by the cello, and interspersed with other, already familiar motives. Movement V recapitulates the material of Movement II in a new key, this time expanded by an ecstatic series of tremolos. The brief and quiet Movement VI is inspired by the words "the possibility of your presence," which stand in opposition to the silence depicted in Movement III. Movement VII returns to a place of waiting and awareness of God. It begins in C-sharp minor but returns to center on E by the end. The quarter + half note rhythm of the hymn *Llef* is now revealed to echo the beating of waves on the shore.

## **Ralph Vaughan Williams**

### **David Matthews**

#### *Dark Pastoral*

When Ralph Vaughan Williams (1872–1958) enrolled at the RCM in 1890, the school was only seven years old; but its founders were already deeply invested in their vision of an English

musical renaissance. Vaughan Williams did not come from a musical family, and attracted little attention from his teachers at first. Equally as important as the influence of Stanford and Parry was the close friendship he formed with fellow student Gustav Holst. The two composers would exchange advice on virtually all of their works for the next four decades. Both felt that their training at the RCM had been incomplete; and while Holst had to work as a teacher and gigging trombonist to make a living, Vaughan Williams had a private family income and no need for employment. He quickly sought out further mentorship, studying with Max Bruch in Berlin and Maurice Ravel in Paris. His studies with Ravel were focused on orchestration, and from the younger French composer he learned to create a rich color palette of orchestral effects.

Upon his return to England, he did not immediately write any large-scale works. Instead, in 1903 he turned his attention to researching native folk song. In cooperation with the work of Cecil Sharp, he traveled to rural villages to transcribe over eight hundred traditional melodies. The publication of his folk song arrangements would continue for fifty years. He also created a landmark edition of the *English Hymnal*. Over the ensuing decades, he would lecture and write prolifically on the topic of folk music and its vital significance for modern composers. His music increasingly took on the shape of modalism as heard in folksong. Mixing tetrachords from separate modes enabled him to create flexible pitch sets with novel harmonic possibilities.<sup>30</sup> He was also interested in altering the third and sixth scale degrees of a key, a feature of both Elizabethan and folk music. His works were usually linear and melody-driven, with tensions created through the interaction of melody line and bass, rather than through traditional chord progressions.

In time, these characteristics converged in a confident personal style that was modal, atmospheric, and often inspired by landscape topics. In 1909 and 1910 Vaughan Williams released

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<sup>30</sup> James Day, *Vaughan Williams* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1998), 263.

several major works, including *On Wenlock Edge*, the *Sea Symphony*, and *Fantasia on a Theme of Thomas Tallis*. With these premieres, he began to gain recognition in Britain just before the onset of the first world war. By the time he returned from serving in France, he was hailed as the new figurehead of the English musical renaissance, and—to his own surprise—as a role model for many younger composers. The pastoral style was quickly established as the dominant sound of English classical music. In later decades Vaughan Williams would experiment with a harsher harmonic language, and produce an enormous body of music including stage works, song literature, chamber music, and nine symphonies. But he would always be most closely associated with works such as *The Lark Ascending* (1920) and the *Pastoral Symphony* (1922): quiet, luminous pieces that seemed to speak consolation to the post-war experience.

Vaughan Williams produced few works for solo cello. The *Six Studies in English Folk Song* were written for cellist May Mukle in 1927 and are still popular today. In 1930 the *Fantasia on Sussex Folk Tunes* was dedicated to Pablo Casals and premiered by him; both composer and cellist, however, were dissatisfied and the work was withdrawn. A new work for cello and orchestra, intended for Casals, was begun sometime around 1942 and revisited in 1953, but never completed. Vaughan Williams planned four movements, but scrapped the scherzo, leaving a complete first movement and partial sketches for a second and third. In 2010, composer David Matthews took up the second-movement manuscript as inspiration for the piece *Dark Pastoral*.

David Matthews (b. 1943) is primarily a composer of symphonies and chamber music. He grew up in London in a blue-collar family, and discovered an interest in classical music in his teenage years. His school did not offer music courses, however, so he was not qualified to study music at the university level. Instead, after earning a degree in Classics at Nottingham University in 1965, he studied composition privately with Anthony Milner, Nicholas Maw, and Peter

Sculthorpe. Matthews was an assistant to Rosamund Strode (Benjamin Britten's amanuensis after the retirement of Imogen Holst) and spent extended periods working in Aldeburgh. He currently works as a freelance composer and arranger, and is music advisor to the English Chamber Orchestra. He has written nine symphonies and fourteen string quartets to date.

In addition to composing, Matthews has written widely on music, including a biography of Benjamin Britten. He is a strong proponent of the importance of a living folk tradition and music grounded in song and dance. His own music is diatonic, Romantic in its sensibilities, and often inspired by landscape. Rhythmic dance elements are also central. Malcolm MacDonald writes that Matthews, "perhaps more consistently than any other British composer of his generation, [has] engaged with perennial British themes: with landscape, with the pastoral as an ideal."<sup>31</sup> Matthews is consciously invested in the national traditions of British music, viewing himself as a musical descendant of Vaughan Williams, Elgar, and Bax—although he cites Sibelius as his most important influence.<sup>32</sup> His Sixth Symphony, written in 2007, was based on Vaughan Williams's hymn tune *Down Ampney* and premiered at the BBC Proms.

In 2002, British cellist Steven Isserlis introduced Matthews to the unfinished sketches of the Vaughan Williams cello concerto. Ursula Vaughan Williams, the composer's wife, had given instructions before her death that the work was not to be performed due to being incomplete. Nevertheless, the RVW Trustees allowed Matthews to write a new version of the second movement for cello and small orchestra, intended for performance by Isserlis. (The work has also been published in a reduction for piano and cello.)

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<sup>31</sup> Malcolm MacDonald, "A View Into the Landscape: David Matthews at 70," in *David Matthews: Essays, Tributes and Criticism*, ed. Thomas Hyde (London: Plumbago Books, 2014), 138.

<sup>32</sup> Peter Sculthorpe, "David Matthews in Australia—A Memoir," in *David Matthews: Essays, Tributes and Criticism*, ed. Thomas Hyde (London: Plumbago Books, 2014), 99.

*Dark Pastoral* has a sectional structure in which each new segment introduces a different meter and mood, but all are loosely connected to the opening material. Roughly forty measures at the beginning are taken directly from Vaughan Williams's sketches. A brief orchestral introduction prefaces the cello's broad opening melody, harmonized in G minor but with pentatonic tendencies. Similarly to the violin part in *The Lark Ascending*, the melody line takes flight in ornamental runs that heighten the emotional intensity of each phrase. A brooding transition ensues, impelled forward by flowing triplets and building to a tumultuous series of low double stops. The orchestra then moves into a tender E minor section in compound meter. It is here that the manuscript breaks off and Matthews takes over as composer.

In his notes about the work, Matthews emphasizes that he has not tried to imitate Vaughan Williams's style too closely, but rather has continued from the original material as if it were his own piece.<sup>33</sup> He introduces a new, brighter melody which hints at dance rhythms with its swinging 9/8 meter. This leads to a more energetic triple meter section derived from the melodic material of the orchestral introduction. The spare bass line and its unexpected relationship to the melody are reminiscent of the linear writing of Vaughan Williams. Finally, the music calms with a return of the main theme. In this iteration, Matthews replaces the original tonalities with moments of disturbing dissonance. The piece ends in a fragile, searching ascent. *Dark Pastoral* is somewhat in the spirit of a theme and variations, with Matthews freely improvising on the melodic ideas provided by Vaughan Williams. He writes, "The result, I hope, is a kind of collaboration."<sup>34</sup>

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<sup>33</sup> David Matthews, "My New Music," *Musical Opinion* 133, no. 1478 (Sept/Oct 2010), 17.

<sup>34</sup> Matthews, "My New Music," 17.

## Chapter 3: Recital Program Three

### Recital Program

April 4, 2022 at 8:00pm  
Gildenhorn Recital Hall

Syneva Colle, cello

The Tree o' Licht

William Sweeney  
(b. 1950)

Katie McCarthy, cello

Cello Sonata in A minor

E. J. Moeran  
(1894–1950)

I. Tempo moderato  
II. Adagio  
III. Allegro

Jessica McKee, piano

### INTERMISSION

Concerto for Cello and String Orchestra

Errollyn Wallen  
(b. 1958)

Abby Wuehler, violin  
Anna Luebke, violin  
Seth Goodman, viola  
Katie McCarthy, cello  
Omar Martínez-Sandoval, bass

*Program Notes*

**William Sweeney**

*The Tree o' Licht*

Scottish composer William Sweeney (b. 1950) writes in a distinctive style based on his native folk music traditions. Sweeney was raised “in a pebbledash tenement in Drumchapel,” a sector of Glasgow.<sup>35</sup> His parents imparted to him their love of folk music, and a school music teacher, Bob Reid, sparked his interest in playing the clarinet. He went on to study the clarinet at the Royal Scottish Academy of Music and Dance from 1967 to 1970, and at the Royal Academy of Music from 1970 to 1973. He studied composition with Frank Spedding and Harrison Birtwistle. Following his education, Sweeney was a woodwind tutor for several years before joining the music faculty at the University of Glasgow in 1983. He maintained this position, teaching both clarinet and composition, until his retirement in 2020. Sweeney is also an experienced conductor, and has demonstrated a career-long commitment to music education through his work with student and amateur ensembles.

Sweeney’s university education was dominated by the avant-garde style, but he describes having been “a bit dissatisfied” with this approach.<sup>36</sup> His strongest inclinations were toward the electronic music of Karlheinz Stockhausen, and jazz masters including Miles Davis and John Coltrane. Electronic music and jazz would have lasting influences on him. His musical path changed unexpectedly, however, in 1974 after he heard a lecture by the Scottish nationalist poet

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<sup>35</sup> Nan Spowart, “How William Sweeney Rose From Humble Beginnings to Become a Celebrated Composer,” *The National*, December 4, 2017, <https://www.thenational.scot/news/15699394.how-willam-sweeney-rose-from-humble-beginnings-to-become-a-celebrated-composer/>.

<sup>36</sup> Spowart, “How William Sweeney Rose From Humble Beginnings.”

Hugh MacDiarmid (1892–1978). A dedicated Communist and founder of the Scottish National Party, MacDiarmid promoted a revival of native Scottish literature in the twentieth century.<sup>37</sup> He notably wrote poetry in the Scots dialect rather than in English. Inspired by MacDiarmid’s views, Sweeney began to incorporate Scottish folk elements into his music. He recalls, “I tried to reconcile [folk and modern music] and bring it all together. At the time...there was a certain image of what modern music should be, and the direction I struck out in was not really part of that mainstream.”<sup>38</sup>

Sweeney’s melodic style is founded in modalism, and he achieves rich textures through heterophony (the flexible interaction of individual lines). During the 1980s he increasingly combined notated music with improvisational components, even using improvisation in large-scale orchestral works like *An Rathad Ur* (“The New Road” – 1988). In 1987, his choral work *Salm an Fhearainin* (“Psalm of the Land”) was the first extended classical work in the Gaelic language. Three major projects dominated the 1990s: *A Drunk Man Looks at the Thistle*, based on the epic poem by MacDiarmid (1992), *The Woods of Rassay* (1993), and *An Turus* (“The Journey” – 1998), the first ever full-length Gaelic opera.

Two Scottish musical traditions make frequent appearances in Sweeney’s works: Gaelic psalmody and *pibroch*. In Gaelic psalm-singing, an ancient tradition still preserved today, multiple singers perform the same melody while adding unique improvisations. Their phrase entrances are rhythmically staggered, reflecting individual breathing patterns. The result is an intricate network of moving notes, a texture that has become standard in Sweeney’s works. Also centuries old, the *pibroch* form is a theme and variations for highland bagpipes, in which a single melody is repeated with ever-more-complex ornamentations. Sweeney has been using *pibroch* as a structural

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<sup>37</sup> James Reid-Baxter, “William Sweeney and the Voice of the People,” *Tempo*, no. 188 (March 1994), 29.

<sup>38</sup> Spowart, “How William Sweeney Rose from Humble Beginnings.”

component since the 1970s, and he often evokes the performance style of bagpipes with fast groups of ornamental pitches.

Sweeney is discriminating in how he contextualizes Scottish traditions in his own music. He is hesitant about trying to fit native Scottish elements into Western classical structures, “where the result is the obscuring or distortion of a distinctive art, rather than the development of its essential features.”<sup>39</sup> In a 2008 article for *Musica Scotica*, he questions whether techniques learned outside of Scotland’s borders can ever truly translate into a Scottish national music; instead, he suggests that the inherent characteristics of Scottish music should inform the structure of new works. As he describes it, his music “borrows...from that tradition, and gives something of the flavor of it, without being at all, I hope, this top-of-a-biscuit-tin type of Scottishness.”<sup>40</sup>

Written in 2008, *The Tree o’Licht* is one of three works that Sweeney has written for the cello. A previous work, *The Poet Tells of His Fame* (2003), combines solo cello with pre-recorded and live electronic elements; and a cello sonata was written in 2010. *The Tree o’Licht* takes its subject from a text by Hugh MacDiarmid, printed on the first page of the musical score:

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<sup>39</sup> William Sweeney, “The Flyting of Fergusson and MacDiarmid,” in *Musica Scotica: 800 Years of Scottish Music: Proceedings from the 2005 and 2006 Conferences*, ed. By Heather Kelsall, Graham Hair, and Kenneth Elliot (Glasgow: Musica Scotica Trust, 2008), 69.

<sup>40</sup> “Bill Sweeney: Eòlas nan Ribheid,” BBC Scottish Symphony Orchestra Facebook page, 3:26, posted on December 5, 2017, <https://www.facebook.com/bbcso/videos/bill-sweeney-eòlas-nan-ribheid/10156323928754239/>.

“There’s mair in birds than men ha’e faddomed yet.

Tho’ maist churn oot the stock sangs o’ their kind

There’s aiblins [perhaps] genius here and there; and aince

‘Mang whitebeams, hollies, siller birks –

– The tree o’ licht –

I mind

I used to hear a blackie [blackbird] mony a nicht

Singin’ awa t’an unconscionable ‘oor

Wi’ nocht but the water keepin’t company...”

From: *By Wauchopeside*, by Hugh MacDiarmid

Like all of Sweeney’s pibroch-inspired works, *The Tree o’Licht* is organized around the repetition of melodic material which gradually accumulates ornamentation. Not just one, but multiple musical ideas receive this treatment. The primary theme is heard in the opening: a yearning melody phrased in small groups of rising intervals. The tonal center shifts between E and G, with an absent F-sharp introducing the possibility of both Phrygian and Mixolydian modes. In each statement of the main theme, the two cello parts are played slightly out of sync: an invocation of the Gaelic psalm-singing style. Each presents the same melody but with different ornaments. This main theme recurs throughout the piece until it is almost overwhelmed with decorations. Between its returns, several other motives are developed. One is a high, vocal line which always appears against an accompaniment texture; another is a boisterous outburst of thirty-second notes,

tossed back and forth between the two cellos. Sometimes, the two parts join in a series of soft, brooding chords tinged by a disquieting half-step dissonance.

Sweeney combines highly detailed rhythmic notation with aleatory elements. For example, during an extended solo for the second cellist, the first cellist is free to repeat the accompanying arpeggios as many times as they choose. In addition, as the ornamentations become more complex, the two lines may pull apart with individual rubato, before re-aligning at indicated moments. These places of alignment and unison provide resting-points in an otherwise elaborate aural fabric. A mood of great calm descends at the close of the piece, but a half-step dissonance on the final chord subverts complete closure.

### **E. J. Moeran**

#### *Cello Sonata in A minor*

The 1940s were the high point of Moeran's career, bringing public recognition and praise from critics. He received regular commissions, and an acclaimed recording of his Symphony in G minor was produced in 1942. Stand-out works of this period included his Rhapsody No. 3 for piano and orchestra (1943) and the *Fantasy Quartet* (1946). But Moeran's neo-Romantic style was solidly old-fashioned by this time. A recurring criticism was that his technique was too limited, and he responded with a conscious effort at improvement. His vocal cycle *Six Poems of Seumas O'Sullivan* (1944) hints at a newly severe and streamlined approach, harmonically acrid and permeated with irony. He began to release his former dependence on folkish material and to achieve more clarity of texture. But despite these advances, Moeran's difficulty in composing had

reached a crisis point. His close friend Lionel Hill wrote that by early 1949 “his creative ability was beginning to falter, and tragically was not to recover.”<sup>41</sup>

Moeran’s final surge of inspiration came through his late-in-life marriage to the cellist Peers Coetmore, although their union was not destined for success. Moeran’s alcoholism took Coetmore by surprise, and her active social life was incompatible with his need for solitude. When Moeran died, Coetmore was living in Australia, without having ever formalized a separation. In the final years of his life, however, he became single-minded about writing cello music for her to play. He wrote to her, “your ‘cello playing seems to have got into my system to such an extent that I can only think in terms of yourself and your instrument.”<sup>42</sup> Coetmore was a chamber player with a light technique, which may have motivated Moeran’s skillful attention to balancing the needs of cello and accompaniment in his concerto and sonata.

The 1947 sonata was Moeran’s second-to-last completed work (before the Serenade in G), and is widely considered his most progressive. His biographer Geoffrey Self writes, “[H]ere at last is that mature style and individual voice for which he had been seeking all his life.”<sup>43</sup> With an unprecedented level of sophistication, Moeran summons three movements’ worth of material from seeds planted in the first few bars of music. His expressive harmonic writing attains far-flung emotional poles. Notably, he no longer leans on the folksong idiom for support. Although traces of that style, developed over a lifetime, remain, he now turns to more original ideas.

In the striking piano introduction of the “Tempo moderato,” a tight group of intervals plummets to a low bass note. This intervallic contour—which falls, rises, then falls again—is found in every melodic line of the sonata. The cello introduces the first theme, a rising phrase permeated

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<sup>41</sup> Lionel Hill, *Lonely Waters*, 94.

<sup>42</sup> *Ibid.*, 126.

<sup>43</sup> Geoffrey Self, *The Music of E. J. Moeran* (London: Toccata Press, 1986), 205.

with dotted rhythms. Dotted rhythms are a prominent feature of the sonata, lending themselves to great flexibility of character. Harmonically, the first movement roils with bi-modality and chains of diminished seventh chords, surging forward with few moments of resolution. The first section peaks in a militant outburst of falling fifths. The texture quickly clears for a contrasting second theme in F major: a Baxian chromatic line accompanied by sweeping arpeggios. A briefly hopeful closing theme in C major plunges quickly into the development. Moeran merges development and recapitulation by returning to the first theme before the key area has stabilized, preempting a true recapitulation at the onset of the second theme. By the close of the movement, the thematic material has almost completely disintegrated, reduced to ironic statements of a falling minor third.

The second movement, a ternary-form “Adagio,” is in the key of A-flat, a tonality which has already been hinted at during the A-minor first movement. Despite its funereal tempo, the overlapping of the two parts—often cresting at different moments—keeps the motion from stagnating. The hesitant first theme moves in a painful upward climb, constantly stumbling backwards. The piano outlines shadowy chromatic harmonies in a texture that is simple at first, but builds in intensity. A haunting middle section is introduced in the key area of B (both B major and B minor are present). The piano accompaniment conjures a dreamy, pulseless state through non-resolving chords and tied duple and triple rhythms. The music rises to a briefly triumphant culmination. At this moment, the cello presents a single statement of a new countermelody. It is the most folk-like tune in the sonata, descending repeatedly to the same pitch in the manner of traditional Irish tunes. Its inclusion, for a mere six measures at the center point of the sonata, seems to touch on some inner place of peace which will not be accessed again. The dark first theme returns, now accompanied by fleeting moments of polytonality. The final chords fluctuate between A-flat major and A minor, preparing the *attacca* arrival of the finale.

The electrifying opening of the “Allegro” highlights a descending minor third, the heartbeat of the movement. Moeran’s rondo form is imaginatively structured to achieve an inexorable build-up of drama over time. The spritely main theme gives an impression of activity while in fact circling obsessively around a single pitch. The theme is sometimes stated briefly, and at other times extended with an intense rising line of repeated half notes. As the cello segues into an ostinato, the piano introduces a contrasting second theme based on a rising major third. With broad, martial chords and drum-like rhythms, it gathers a fatalistic force before finally exploding into thunderous cello double-stops. The rondo theme returns and leads to a whirling gigue, destabilized by the interplay of 6/8 and 3/4 meters. The crashing return of the second theme signals the height of the movement. Moeran allows himself a final interlude of lyricism by bringing back the second theme from the first movement, now in a more spacious meter. Struggle is overcome in victory; a brief coda restores the rondo theme, and the piece ends triumphantly in A major.

## **Errollyn Wallen**

### *Concerto for Cello and String Orchestra*

Errollyn Wallen (b. 1958) describes her path to composition simply: “Music has always come out of me quite easily.”<sup>44</sup> With a diverse output ranging from pop tracks to operas, Wallen is a leading figure in British contemporary music and the recipient of the CBE, one of Britain’s highest honors. In 1998, her concerto for percussion and orchestra was the first piece by a Black woman to be performed at the BBC Proms.

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<sup>44</sup> Freya Parr, “Music to My Ears: Composer Errollyn Wallen,” *Classical Music Brought to You by BBC Music Magazine*, podcast audio, December 10, 2020, <https://www.classical-music.com/listen/podcast/music-to-my-ears-composer-errollyn-wallen/>.

Born in Belize, Wallen moved to London at the age of two, where she was raised by her aunt and uncle. She describes her family as having a deep connection to the British arts, as well as a “love for England and a pride in its culture.”<sup>45</sup> Her uncle introduced her to the works of Tennyson, Wordsworth, and others. She began piano lessons at the age of nine, and describes searching the library for pieces to play: not just piano repertoire but transcriptions of orchestral scores.<sup>46</sup> She was not always encouraged in her love for music, an obstacle which she attributes to race. “When I was a child and loving my classical music, one of my teachers came up to me and said: ‘You know, little girl, this isn’t the music for you.’”<sup>47</sup> Throughout her career, she has encountered resistance to her participation in the sphere of classical music. “I would tell you that racism is still alive and strong in classical music... People would ask me why I liked classical music... they would remind me of my colour and it would pull me up short. I’d think: ‘I’m not thinking about that. I’m just thinking about the music.’”<sup>48</sup>

Wallen studied composition at Goldsmith’s College, King’s College London, and King’s College, Cambridge. Her primary teachers were Nicola LeFanu and David Lumsdaine. As a student, she admired contemporary composers including Boulez and Ligeti. But despite her respect for avant-garde music, her intuition led her in a different direction. Some of her earliest compositions were melodically-driven, and she even wrote pop songs. “I remember being told quite sharply that I shouldn’t both write songs and write for ensembles and expect to have a career. I’m glad I ignored that advice.”<sup>49</sup> Wallen also cites both Bach and Britten as significant

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<sup>45</sup> Vincent Dowd, “‘Traditions should change,’ says Proms composer Errollyn Wallen,” BBC News, September 12, 2020, <https://www.bbc.com/news/entertainment-arts-54115638>.

<sup>46</sup> Parr, “Music to My Ears.”

<sup>47</sup> Jessica Duchon, “10 Questions for Composer Errollyn Wallen,” The Arts Desk, March 16, 2016, <https://theartsdesk.com/new-music/10-questions-composer-errollyn-wallen>.

<sup>48</sup> Hannah Nepilova, “Errollyn Wallen—Picking Up Purcell’s Pieces,” Financial Times, June 3, 2021, <https://www.ft.com/content/2093f729-58e8-4ab9-b7aa-94721d5baf61>.

<sup>49</sup> Duchon, “10 Questions.”

influences. Playing Bach at the piano is part of her daily routine. And it was Britten's *Peter Grimes* that convinced her of the power of opera. She has written sixteen operas to date.

Wallen often performs her own works, acting as both singer and pianist. She is the founder of Ensemble X, a multi-instrumental group dedicated to playing her music. She has written orchestral and theatre works for many of Britain's leading classical ensembles. Her music weaves together influences as disparate as Baroque music, world music, jazz, and minimalism. Rhythmic vitality is a standard component of her works, reflecting the music of her native Central America. Wallen writes, "The richest source of rhythmic complexity and sophistication (that can be heard and felt, as opposed to merely analysed visually) exists today in the very best of funk, jazz, pop, Latin-American and African music. I am, therefore, convinced absolutely that the greatest challenge for me (and my fellow composers) is to learn how to swing!"<sup>50</sup>

A dialogue with British music of the past can often be heard in Wallen's works. Her interest in Henry Purcell runs especially deep. She has produced several experimental arrangements of "Dido's Lament" from *Dido and Aeneas*, and in 2021 she integrated his opera into one of her own: *Dido's Ghost*, which employs a Baroque orchestra alongside an electric guitar and north African percussion instruments. She has also referenced the English pastoral tradition, notably in *Photography* (2016) for string orchestra, and in her cello concerto (2007). "Given the training I had, which was wholly serial—we just didn't write tonal music—I'm amazed that my music is full of almost old-fashioned things. There are bits of Vaughan Williams in it—how did that happen?"<sup>51</sup> For the 2020 BBC Proms, Wallen fused a cherished pastoral classic—Hubert Parry's 1916 hymn "Jerusalem"—with her own eclectic style. Featuring

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<sup>50</sup> Errollyn Wallen, "Slave to the Rhythm," *Contemporary Music Review* Vol. 11, Parts 1 & 2 (1994), 294.

<sup>51</sup> Duchon, "10 Questions."

dissonance and faltering rhythms, her arrangement transformed the words of England's unofficial national anthem into an interrogation about peace and inclusion in modern-day Britain.

In her Cello Concerto, written for cellist Matthew Sharp, Wallen again blends pastoral elements with her own signature style. The piece shares several structural components with Ralph Vaughan Williams's iconic work *The Lark Ascending*. Each begins with an extended solo cadenza, which transitions to a lilting melody in 6/8 meter when the orchestra enters; and each features a luxuriously diatonic, often static harmonic palette. The concerto is distinctly different, however, when it ranges into rugged chromaticism, when the orchestral accompaniment becomes pointillistic, and when its lyricism is interrupted by a rhythmically vibrant dance section.

Of the work's design, Wallen notes: "The structure was really important; I wanted to put the cadenza right at the beginning and push it as far as possible until the orchestra comes in, so the soloist has all the material that drives the work."<sup>52</sup> The cadenza is ambitious in scope, lasting for over five minutes before the ensemble joins. Its tonal center is A minor, with frequent chromatic detours. The opening theme is a rising line of open fifths, soaring into the highest register of the instrument. A dancelike dotted rhythm, recurring often, later becomes a pervasive motive of the concerto. The cadenza covers a spectrum of emotions, from longing to sweetness, from play to desperation. Wallen often disjoints stepwise melodic lines by removing the pitches to different octaves, producing a jagged effect. Frequent huge leaps suggest outcries of emotion.

When the orchestra finally enters, the pent-up tension of the cadenza is dispelled by a flood of tonal harmonies over a steady rhythmic pulse. Superimposed triadic and quartal harmonies form a rich diatonic foundation. The structural sections of the concerto are clearly delineated. At the orchestral entrance, the exposition of a new theme begins. This friendly tune is

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<sup>52</sup> Ibid.

in compound meter, common to English pastoral music, and hovers in the region of C major, although the shifting bass line offers few points of cadence. The next section is a lively dance in 5/8 meter. The soloist flits through a dizzying array of syncopations and leaps, accompanied by bubbling duple and triple counter-rhythms. Static harmonies and short, repeated cycles of notes in the orchestral parts are techniques borrowed from minimalism. This joyful celebration forms the centerpiece of the concerto. It comes to rest in a brief solo cadenza, unabashedly summoning Bach with gentle solo arpeggios, and melding easily into a recapitulation of the pastoral theme.

At this juncture, Wallen begins to collapse the scope of the structural elements. The pastoral theme is heard for a mere twenty-five measures. The dance section does not return. Instead, the Baroque arpeggios are heard again, then quickly overwhelmed by the ominous open fifths from the opening cadenza. In the final section of the concerto, the entire cadenza is played again, almost note-for-note, but now re-contextualized by orchestral accompaniment. The solo line, so unconstrained at the beginning of the piece, now fights to maintain its individualism in the face of aggressive orchestral counterstatements. After the culmination of the cadenza, the intensity of the music quickly drains away. Over a gentle orchestral tremolo, the soloist rises to a delicate trill and fades into silence.

## Conclusion

These eleven recital works are connected not only by musical traits, but by a shared association with musical nationalism. It is virtually impossible to disentangle nationalism from British pastoralism. During the English musical renaissance of the twentieth century, pastoral composers expressed their national identity by melding a modernist style with historical British music: both folk song and Tudor music. These sources offered more than mere inspiration; they became a wellspring of fresh musical materials that generated a distinctive style for an entire group of composers. Ralph Vaughan Williams, by far the most influential English pastoralist, believed that it was impossible for modern composers (of any nationality) to establish an authentic artistic voice without first closely studying the native music of their own country.<sup>53</sup>

Remarkably, his vision is borne out in the music of contemporary composers MacMillan, Tann, Sweeney, and Wallen—each of whom was trained in the avant-garde style but later returned to historical British music as a stimulus for their personal stylistic development. Their music has been shaped by British folk and Renaissance materials; additionally, it has been influenced by the music of Vaughan Williams and his associates. As James MacMillan reflects, “[I]t’s the twentieth century that has most impact on the living British composer today—an era which saw an incredible flowering and opening up in art music on these islands: an astonishing proliferation of music with a healthy breadth of reference, of which the likes of Vaughan Williams, Holst, and Benjamin Britten are figures.”<sup>54</sup> Each contemporary composer has forged intentional connections with the past, while also seeking to impart something personal and new.

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<sup>53</sup> Ralph Vaughan Williams, *Letters of Ralph Vaughan Williams 1895–1958*, ed. Hugh Cobbe (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010), 320.

<sup>54</sup> James MacMillan, “Music Is A Universal Language,” The Cumnock Tryst “Letters,” May 14, 2021, <https://www.thecumnocktryst.com/letters-blog/2021/5/14/a-letter-from-james-macmillan>.

When heard together, these eleven cello works are easily perceived to share a musical kinship, displaying similar contours and colors. Each expresses what MacMillan calls the “profound melancholic sigh in much British musical modernism that can indeed be traced back some generations.”<sup>55</sup> The presence of pastoralism in these works can be analyzed in theoretical terms by unearthing structural components like rhythmic patterns, melodic shapes, modes, and the harmonic organization that supports those modes. But pastoralism can also be perceived intuitively, as a shared “spirit” of poignant and evocative lyricism which renders each of these works unmistakably British.

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<sup>55</sup> MacMillan, *A Scot's Song: A Life of Music* (Edinburgh: Birlinn Limited, 2019), 10, Kindle.

## References

Bax, Arnold. "E. J. Moeran: 1894–1950." *Music & Letters* 32, no. 2 (April 1951): 125–27.

A tribute to Moeran published four months after his death. Bax discusses Moeran's connection to Ireland and poses the often-quoted opinion that Moeran was "an Englishman" for his first thirty years, and "almost exclusively Irish" thereafter.

--. *Legend-Sonata for Violoncello and Pianoforte*. London: Chappell & Co., 1944.

Performance score.

Bax, Arnold. *Farewell, My Youth and Other Writings*. Edited by Lewis Foreman. Aldershot: Scholar Press, 1992.

Bax's autobiography, collected with other essays and interview transcripts. His autobiography colorfully describes his musical interests, his relationship with the English national school, and his predilection for Celtic culture. In "Interview with Watson Lyle (1932)" Bax clarifies his frequent use of the term "Celtic North" in connection with his music.

"Bill Sweeney: Eòlas nan Ribheid." BBC Scottish Symphony Orchestra Facebook page, 3:26. Posted on December 5, 2017. <https://www.facebook.com/bbcso/videos/bill-sweeney-eòlas-nan-ribheid/10156323928754239/>.

A video interview in which Sweeney describes the work "Eòlas nan Ribheid" for clarinet and orchestra. This is the only source I am aware of in which Sweeney explains how he translates the pibroch form and other characteristics of bagpipe playing into music for other instruments.

Black, Leo. *Edmund Rubbra: Symphonist*. Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 2008.

This is the most current and in-depth work available on Rubbra's compositional style, helpful to my project despite being focused on the symphonies. Chapter 1, "General Features," outlines musical characteristics heard throughout Rubbra's oeuvre, and repeatedly uses the cello sonata as an exemplar of these qualities. A detailed biography is found in Chapter 2, "The Early Years." Another point of interest is the discussion of Rubbra's failure to enter the musical mainstream over the course of a long career.

Britten, Benjamin. "An English Composer Sees America (1940)." In *Britten on Music*, ed. Paul Kildea, 24–27. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003.

While contrasting the musical scene in America to that of England, Britten raises the subject of nationalism in music and pinpoints his own objections to the English folk music style. In his opinion, this style "disregarded most of the lessons Europe had to give."

--. "England and the Folk-Art Problem (1941)." In *Britten on Music*, ed. Paul Kildea, 31–35. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003.

Britten details the musical obstacles to creating extended works from folk song: chiefly the difficulty in extrapolating large structures from this material. He also critiques the project of re-introducing folk music to the people of Britain, a movement with which Imogen Holst was closely involved. The inspiration for the pastoral movement, its implementation, and the core ingredients of its music are all brought under condemnation.

Capps, Michael. "World in a Roar: The Music of James MacMillan." *Image* 54. Accessed August 27, 2021. <https://imagejournal.org/article/world-in-a-roar-the-music-of-james-macmillan/>.

An overview of MacMillan's work which magnifies the composer's connection to Scottish folk traditions. This source is unique in identifying musical connections to French Impressionism. This is a Catholic journal article aimed at a non-scholarly readership. Although in my opinion the author is insightful in his musical analyses, he neither interviews MacMillan directly nor cite sources.

Cooke, Phillip A. *The Music of James Macmillan*. Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 2019.

The best and most recent chronological account of MacMillan's life and works, including scholarly analyses of his music. Chapter 1, "*The Keening* – Cumnock, Edinburgh and Durham," demonstrates how Scottish sources used in the early work "*The Keening*" served as a foundation for MacMillan's music and became a lasting component of his style. Subsequent chapters trace the journey from early "Celticism" in MacMillan's music to a focus on religious topics starting in the mid-1990s. Chapter 5, "*Changed – Triduum* and *Quickening*" includes an analysis of the 1996 cello concerto which bears strong similarities to the Cello Sonata No. 1.

Day, James. *Vaughan Williams*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1998.

This biography is based on many primary sources such as personal letters and published articles; but at the same time it seems overly dependent on Ursula Vaughan Williams's biography of her husband. The author shares many unsupported opinions, and book overall has an adulatory tone. Most helpful is the "Epilogue," which summarizes important musical traits and demonstrates how folk tunes were used as structural material in the composer's works.

Dowd, Vincent. "'Traditions should change,' says Proms composer Errollyn Wallen." BBC News. September 12, 2020. <https://www.bbc.com/news/entertainment-arts-54115638>.

A lengthy interview with Wallen ahead of the premiere of her arrangement of "Jerusalem" at the 2020 BBC Proms. She discusses the interplay of her British identity and Caribbean heritage, and describes her approach to re-composing Parry's hymn.

Duchen, Jessica. "10 Questions for Composer Errollyn Wallen." The Arts Desk. March 16, 2016. <https://theartsdesk.com/new-music/10-questions-composer-errollyn-wallen>.

An interview regarding the release of the album *Photography* in 2016, which includes Wallen's cello concerto. Wallen shares the creative impulse behind the concerto and makes connections with English pastoral music. She also discusses her other musical influences, noting the disparity between her avant-garde training and the music she now writes.

Ebbatson, Roger, and Ann Donahue. *An Imaginary England: Nation, Landscape and Literature, 1840–1920*. Aldershot, England: Ashgate Pub., 2005.

A helpful source for understanding English nationalism as a phenomenon unique from other nationalist movements in Europe. The authors explain how landscape became an important signifier of English identity in the era of empire-building. A nostalgic approach to national identity, focused on the "imaginary" homeland and its landscape, became central to English literature in the decades immediately preceding the birth of pastoralism in English music.

Foreman, Lewis. *Bax: A Composer and His Times*. 3rd ed. Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 2007.

The landmark biography of Bax. Foreman interweaves a very thorough biography of Bax with analyses of significant works. As Bax was a prolific writer, primary sources about his life and work abound. Chapter 2, "The Royal Academy of Music," illuminates the stylistic distinctions between composers who taught at the RAM versus the RCM. Chapter 4, "Ireland and Russia," traces the exoticism and fantasy of Bax' music to both Russia and Ireland. Chapter 17, "The Second World War: Storrington," describes the circumstances surrounding the composition of the *Legend-Sonata*.

Frogley, Alain. "Constructing Englishness in Music: National Character and the Reception of Ralph Vaughan Williams. In *Vaughan Williams Studies*, ed. Alain Frogley, 1–22. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996.

A helpful essay which contextualizes the music of Vaughan Williams within the wider zeitgeist of English nationalism. Frogley argues that the composer's legacy must be disentangled from the image of him seized upon by media of his time. In the author's opinion, the pastoral style became associated with nationalism to a degree not fully intended by Vaughan Williams.

Grogan, Christopher. *Imogen Holst: A Life in Music*. Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 2007.

The only biography of Imogen Holst, incorporating many primary sources, especially personal letters. Grogan interweaves the details of Holst's life with some conjectures of his own, particularly his conviction that she had an emotionally repressed childhood with far-reaching consequences in her adult relationships. The book includes Holst's "Aldeburgh Diary" in full, written from September 1952 to March 1954. This lengthy document gives great insight into Holst's personality and preoccupations. Chapter 14, "'A real composer': an introduction to Imogen Holst's musical style," summarizes common musical traits found in her works.

Grover, Ralph Scott. *The Music of Edmund Rubbra*. Aldershot: Scolar Press, 1993.

The only source which attempts to provide an overview of all Rubbra's works. The autobiography found in Chapter 1 is a combination of Rubbra's autobiographical essay—previously printed in Lewis Foreman's book—and the transcripts of three tapes made by Rubbra in 1980. Chapter 8, "The chamber music," includes an analysis of his cello sonata.

Hill, Lionel. *Lonely Waters: The Diary of a Friendship with E. J. Moeran*. London: Thames Pub., 1985.

Hill was a close friend to Moeran from 1943 until the composer's death seven years later. As such, his book is not a scholarly source but rather a collection of all the letters he received from the composer, linked with explanatory paragraphs. The book offers details about Moeran's personal and professional life during his final years (the years during which the cello works were produced). Also included are the complete extant letters from Moeran to Coetmore, which describe the conception of each of the cello works.

Holst, Imogen. *The Fall of the Leaf*. London: Oxford University Press, 1964.

Performance score.

--. *Tune*. New York: October House, 1966.

Holst's concise book about "tunes" is aimed at the musical layman, and describes notable features of melody found across both folk and classical sources. She gives pride of place to English composers, devoting as much attention to Purcell, Gustav Holst, and Britten as she does to Bach and Schoenberg. Chapter 12, "Today's Tunes," discusses English music specifically. In a decade when pastoral music was decidedly passé, Holst declares her own opinion that musicians like her father were in fact bold innovators.

Hughes, Meirion and R. A. Stradling. *The English Musical Renaissance, 1840–1940: Constructing a National Music*. Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2001.

An extensive and meticulously-argued deconstruction of traditional narratives about the English musical renaissance. Meirion and Stradling trace the pastoral movement back to its roots as a feat of cultural engineering, spearheaded by George Grove. They propose that Vaughan William represented a "second wave" of pastoralism, building on the Baroque revival and the efforts of Stanford and Parry toward a nationalist school of music.

Huss, Fabian Gregor. "The Construction of Nature in the Music of E. J. Moeran." *Tempo* 63, No. 248 (April 2009): 35–44.

Huss interrogates the assumption that nature can be "heard" in music, concluding that the nature references in Moeran's music had more to do with his personality and moods than literal depictions of landscape.

--. "The 'Irish Music' of Arnold Bax and E. J. Moeran." In *Music and Identity in Ireland and Beyond*, ed. Mark Fitzgerald and John O'Flynn, 69–81. Farnham: Ashgate Publishing, 2014.

Huss investigates the different meanings of "Irishness" in the music of Bax and Moeran. Bax's interest in Ireland was more personal than musical, so his music carried fewer associations with Irish folk music than did Moeran's. Both interacted with Irish culture to the extent that it suited their personal needs, without attempting to contribute to Irish art music.

Jarmalavičiūtė, Ona. "Connecting the Natural and Human Worlds: Ona Jarmalavičiūtė Talks to the Welsh Composer Hilary Tann." *Classical Music Daily*. May 27, 2020. <https://www.classicalmusicdaily.com/2020/05/hilarytann.htm>.

This interview with Tann largely covers biographical ground. Along with Jennifer Kelly's interview, this is one of the most comprehensive sources available about Tann, who tends to share similar "sound bites" in all her interviews. This is the only one, however, in which the composer describes her connection to Wales as *hiræth*—a traditional Welsh concept of melancholy nostalgia for homeland.

Johnson, Stephen. "James MacMillan." *Tempo*, no. 185 (June 1993): 2–5.

Johnson explores the topic of MacMillan's broad appeal and commercial success, which are perhaps surprising for a composer writing in a modernist style. The author identifies modalism, clear musical gestures, and emotional directness as aspects of MacMillan's appeal.

Kelly, Jennifer. *In Her Own Words: Conversations with Composers in the United States*. New Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2013.

A biographical essay with interview components. Tann describes what it means to her to be a "landscape composer," relates how she discovered a distinctively Welsh compositional voice in the 1980s, and discusses the influence of world music on her works.

Kennedy, Michael. *The Works of Ralph Vaughan Williams*. 2nd ed. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1992.

A chronological narrative which touches on all the major musical works, with extensive analyses. The book is more scholarly in tone than Day's biography, but still written from the subjective vantage-point of a person who was close to Vaughan Williams. It was originally published as a companion book to Ursula Vaughan Williams's biography of her husband.

Loughrey, Bryan. *The Pastoral Mode: A Casebook*. London: Macmillan, 1984.

A collection of essays and quotations from authors who have written about pastoralism over several centuries. The book traces how the definition of pastoralism in literature changed over time, shifting from faux-Grecian romances to the nineteenth-century English pastoralism

which glorified rural life through a lens of nostalgia. This book contextualizes what the word “pastoral” would have meant to those who used it during the English musical renaissance.

MacDonald, Malcolm. “A View Into the Landscape: David Matthews at 70.” In *David Matthews: Essays, Tributes and Criticism*, ed. Thomas Hyde, 137–144. London: Plumbago Books, 2014.

MacDonald examines the presence of landscape in several of Matthews’s major works. He identifies themes of lyricism, depictions of the English landscape, and a Romantic outlook.

MacMillan, James. *A Scot’s Song: A Life of Music*. Edinburgh: Birlinn Limited, 2019. Kindle.

MacMillan’s autobiography, which leans heavily on essays previously published elsewhere. He writes extensively about the influence of various British composers on his music, his interest in Scottish and Irish folk music, and his Catholic spirituality.

--. *Cello Sonata No. 1*. London: Boosey & Hawkes, 2000.

Performance score.

--. “Music Is A Universal Language.” The Cumnock Tryst “Letters.” May 14, 2021.  
<https://www.thecumnocktryst.com/letters-blog/2021/5/14/a-letter-from-james-macmillan>.

A blog post on the website of the Cumnock Tryst, a music festival run by James MacMillan. MacMillan reflects on the lasting influence of early twentieth-century English composers, and emphasizes the significance of community music-making in forging a British musical identity.

MacMillan, James, Julian Johnson, and Catherine Sutton. “[Supplement]: Raising Sparks: On the Music of James MacMillan.” *Tempo*, New Series, no. 202 (October 1997): 1–35.

MacMillan is interviewed here about his compositional process. He shares how both his avant-garde training and his Scottish heritage have interplay in his music. By his own description, his musical idiom is rooted in the specific locale of Scotland.

MacMillan, James, and Richard McGregor. “James MacMillan: A Conversation and Commentary.” *The Musical Times* 151, no. 1912 (Autumn 2010): 69–100.

An interview with James MacMillan which touches on the cello sonata. MacMillan identifies the use of a “generating minor third” as a structural component, and his interest in palindromic designs.

Matthews, David. “An Autobiographical Sketch.” David Matthews Website. September 2018.  
<https://www.david-matthews.co.uk/biography/default.asp>.

The composer’s own account of his life and career. Informal in tone but quite detailed, describing his training, early career, and recent projects.

Matthews, David. "My New Music." *Musical Opinion* 133, no. 1478 (Sept/Oct 2010): 16–17.

Matthews describes his discovery of the Vaughan Williams cello concerto sketches and his process of constructing "Dark Pastoral" from these sketches. He explains which sections belong to Vaughan Williams, and how he married the existing material to his own style.

Matthews, David, and Ralph Vaughan Williams. *Dark Pastoral*. London: Faber Music, 2010.

Performance score.

Maxwell, Ian. *Ernest John Moeran: His Life and Music*. Martlesham: Boydell & Brewer, 2021.

This very recent biography on Moeran claims to incorporate previously unexamined source material. It does little, however, to add to the essential facts already known about Moeran's life, and is riddled with statements of pure conjecture.

McGregor, Richard. "'A Metaphor for the Deeper Wintriness': Exploring James MacMillan's Musical Identity." *Tempo* 65, no. 257 (July 2011): 22–39.

McGregor examines the definition of "Celtic" and how it may apply to MacMillan's music. He clarifies how Celtic elements have been assimilated into MacMillan's style, with specific examples taken from the Cello Sonata No. 1. The composer does not simply insert traditional elements into his music; rather, his structures are derived from those elements.

Mellers, W.H. "Musical Culture in England and U.S.A." *Music & Letters* 24 (October 1943): 223.

A glowing assessment of Rubbra's music from a contemporary critic. Mellers deems Rubbra the perfect example of a composer who balances a modern sound with awareness of the past. He praises Rubbra for avoiding the "provinciality" of the folksong school.

Milner, Anthony. "Radio Notes." *Musical Times* 96, no. 1343 (January 1955): 28–29.

In this review of Rubbra's fifth symphony, Milner compares his work to that of Vaughan Williams. He draws surprising connections between their styles, disparaging Rubbra for writing in a forty-year-old idiom. Milner seems to categorize Rubbra without question as a pastoralist.

Moeran, E. J. *Irish Lament for Piano and Violoncello*. London: Novello, 1952.

Performance score.

--. *Prelude for 'Cello and Piano*. London: Novello, 1944.

Performance score.

--. *Sonata for Cello and Piano*. London: Novello, 1948.

Performance score.

Nepilova, Hannah. "Errollyn Wallen—Picking Up Purcell's Pieces." *Financial Times*. June 3, 2021. <https://www.ft.com/content/2093f729-58e8-4ab9-b7aa-94721d5baf61>.

An interview with Errollyn Wallen about her 2021 opera *Dido's Ghost*. The article illuminates Wallen's relationship to Purcell's music and the process by which she combines past British music with her own style. She also discusses her family history and the racism she has encountered during her classical music career.

Ottaway, Hugh. "Edmund Rubbra and His Recent Works." *The Musical Times* 107, no. 1483 (September 1966): 765–68. Accessed August 26, 2021.

Ottaway gives an overview of Rubbra's compositional style, with special attention to structural elements such as polyphony and the expansion of motivic cells. He also notes the Elizabethan influence in Rubbra's music.

Parr, Freya. "Music to My Ears: Composer Errollyn Wallen." *Classical Music Brought to You by BBC Music Magazine*. Podcast audio. December 10, 2020. <https://www.classical-music.com/listen/podcast/music-to-my-ears-composer-errollyn-wallen/>.

In this podcast interview, Wallen describes her childhood, how her interest in music developed, and early barriers to writing. She discusses the influence of avant-garde composers on her music, as well as Britten and Bach.

Potter, Keith. "James MacMillan: A New Celtic Dawn" *The Musical Times* 131, no. 1763 (January 1990): 13–18.

This article describes in more detail than others MacMillan's political connections to Scotland, and the nationalism which the composer identifies in his own music. Potter describes MacMillan's engagement with current issues and his work in educational settings.

Rayborn, Tim. *A New English Music: Composers and Folk Traditions in England's Musical Renaissance From the Late 19th to the Mid-20th Century*. Jefferson: McFarland & Co., 2016.

This resource supersedes previous, similar overviews of the English musical renaissance such as Karolyi's *Modern British Music* and James Day's *'Englishness' in Music*. Rayborn accepts standard interpretations of the period, making this a good companion book to Hughes and Stradling's more deconstructive *The English Musical Renaissance*. Rayborn interacts briefly with their work in Chapter 1, "English Music from the Later 19th Century." Later chapters offer excellent, well-contextualized biographies of the most significant composers in the pastoral style.

Reid-Baxter, James. "William Sweeney and the Voice of the People." *Tempo*, no. 188 (March 1994): 26–30.

Reid-Baxter examines Sweeney's connection to Hugh MacDiarmid. He traces how Sweeney's compositional style has evolved over several decades, and offers specific examples of how Scottish folk idioms have translated into his music.

Rubbra, Edmund. *Counterpoint: A Survey*. London: Hutchinson University Library, 1960.

Rubbra had a lifelong preoccupation with counterpoint; this is his own book on the subject, offering a short and direct explanation of the elements of counterpoint. Musical examples are drawn from a wide range of sources, from Palestrina to Debussy, but Rubbra also gives a significant platform to English composers including Purcell, Vaughan Williams, Elgar, and Holst, demonstrating how closely he followed the music of his British contemporaries.

--. "An Essay in Autobiography." In *Edmund Rubbra: Composer-Essays*, ed. Lewis Foreman, 11–17. Rickmansworth, England: Triad Press, 1977.

This essay, though from a dated collection, is quoted consistently throughout all later resources on Rubbra. The composer gives a surprising amount of attention to his childhood and early experiences, which he felt had a lasting effect on his music.

--. *Sonata in G Minor, Op. 60*. London: Alfred Lengnick & Co., 1946.

Performance score.

Rupprecht, Philip Ernst. *British Musical Modernism: The Manchester Group and Their Contemporaries*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015.

Rupprecht traces the transition from the pastoral school to the Manchester group which supplanted it in the 1950s. He argues that this transition was not as sharply defined as has previously been assumed, and that the fault lines drawn between Britten and Vaughan Williams, in particular, have been exaggerated. This resource helped me to refine my definition of the pastoral style, since Rupprecht demonstrates that composers continued to reference folk music even after discarding the pastoral approach to this material.

Saylor, Eric. *English Pastoral Music: From Arcadia to Utopia, 1900–1955*. Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2017.

Saylor attempts to describe the spirit or ethos behind pastoralism, getting beyond its surface musical traits. By separating pastoralism from the folk music movement and defining it more in terms of its nostalgic qualities, he is able to show that older composers like John Ireland and Edward Elgar also evinced some pastoral motives. Saylor delves deeply into the effect of World War I on pastoral composers. For each composer, he selects one significant work to analyze. He offers an empathetic look at these composers which also recognizing the intrinsic hypocrisy of a privileged class of musicians glorifying rural life.

Scottish Music Centre. "William Sweeney." Accessed August 27, 2021.  
<https://www.scottishmusiccentre.com/william-sweeney>.

A biographical essay about Sweeney, detailing his major works over the decades. This source describes his influences and outlines his musical development along a specific timeline.

Self, Geoffrey. *The Music of E. J. Moeran*. London: Toccata Press, 1986.

The classic biography of Moeran, offering a detailed personal history and close analyses of his major works. It replaced a 1973 biography by Stephen Wild which is virtually impossible to access. Although it was recently superseded by Ian Maxwell's 2021 Moeran biography, I find Self's work to adhere more closely to verifiable facts. His insightful analyses draw out the unifying themes of Moeran's entire musical output.

Schafer, R. Murray. *British Composers in Interview*. London: Faber and Faber, 1963.

A collection of interviews with twentieth-century British composers. The interview with Edmund Rubbra reveals some aspects of the composer's working process, such as his intuitive approach to formal structures, but his comments are often enigmatic.

Sculthorpe, Peter. "David Matthews in Australia—A Memoir." In *David Matthews: Essays, Tributes and Criticism*, ed. Thomas Hyde, 95–102. London: Plumbago Books, 2014.

Sculthorpe was a longtime mentor to David Matthews, and here he recalls the years of their association and collaboration on various projects. In his view, Matthews has intentionally placed himself in a musical lineage inherited from Vaughan Williams, Elgar, and Bax.

Spowart, Nan. "How William Sweeney Rose From Humble Beginnings to Become a Celebrated Composer." *The National*. December 4, 2017.  
<https://www.thenational.scot/news/15699394.how-willam-sweeney-rose-from-humble-beginnings-to-become-a-celebrated-composer/>.

A brief biographical essay about Sweeney which describes his weaving together of influences from folk music and jazz, in addition to his avant-garde training.

Sweeney, William. Sweeney, William. "The Flying of Fergusson and MacDiarmid." In *Musica Scotica: 800 Years of Scottish Music: Proceedings from the 2005 and 2006 Conferences*, ed. Heather Kelsall, Graham Hair, and Kenneth Elliot, 67–72. Glasgow: Musica Scotica Trust, 2008.

In this article, Sweeney examines the duality between nationalism and internationalism in art, through the lens of two Scottish poets and their writings on the subject. While he primarily quotes the views of these two writers, his musical examples hold clear connections to his own music, as in his description of Gaelic psalm-singing. Sweeney expresses his concern that Scotland is in danger of having no national music due to a reliance on "foreign" idioms.

--. *The Tree o' Licht for Two Cellos*. Glasgow: Scottish Music Centre, 2008.

Performance score.

Tann, Hilary. "Biography." Hilary Tann website. Accessed August 27, 2021.  
[https://hilarytann.com/assets/pdf\\_files/HTLongBio.pdf](https://hilarytann.com/assets/pdf_files/HTLongBio.pdf).

A brief biography of Tann's career with emphasis on her major compositions.

--. Interviewed by Syneva Colle, February 7, 2022.

In this recent interview, Tann discussed not only general features of her work (largely echoing sentiments she has expressed elsewhere) but shared in detail about the conception of her work *Seven Poems of Stillness*. She outlined the major musical features of each movement and described how she went about marrying music to the text of R. S. Thomas's poetry.

--. *Seven Poems of Stillness*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2016.

Performance score.

Tann, Hilary and Arthur Margolin. "Why Probe? A Conversation." *International Alliance for Women in Music Journal* 20, no. 1 (2014): 9–12.  
[https://hilarytann.com/assets/pdf\\_files/TannMargolin-Conversation-IAWM-Journal-Spring2014.pdf](https://hilarytann.com/assets/pdf_files/TannMargolin-Conversation-IAWM-Journal-Spring2014.pdf).

For this article, Tann asked her colleague Arthur Margolin to interview her and to press her about what it means to depict nature in music. They discuss whether programmatic reference points are helpful for the listener, and Tann clarifies that they are essential for her writing process, regardless of what the listener receives.

Taruskin, Richard. *The Oxford History of Western Music*. Vol. 3, *The Nineteenth Century*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2010.

Taruskin's work, though not covering the topic of English pastoralism, helped me to better analyze nationalistic traits in music. Chapter 9, "Slavs as Subjects and Citizens," offers a description of how nationalism arose in the music of both Czech and Russian composers. Taruskin distinguishes folk song settings from works written in a truly national style: where structural and compositional materials are motivated by native content.

--. *The Oxford History of Western Music*. Vol. 4, *The Early Twentieth Century*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2010.

In his discussion of Bartók and Janáček in Chapter 7, "Social Validation," Taruskin explains the phrase "neonationalism," which is a helpful lens for viewing twentieth-century nationalistic music. In this approach, composers avoid direct adoptions of folk material. Instead,

they fashion abstract stylistic characteristics that blend the source material with their own modernistic tastes.

Thomson, Aidan. "Bax and the Celtic North." *Journal of the Society for Musicology in Ireland* 8 (2012-2013): 51–87.  
<https://www.musicologyireland.com/jsmi/index.php/journal/article/view/112/115>.

Thomson attempts to identify what the "Celtic North" meant to Bax, who used this phrase often to describe his music. In the 1930s, Bax shifted from Irish topics toward the use of more Sibelian or "northern" titles. Thomson suggests that as a young man, Bax used Irish culture to deconstruct Britishness, whereas later in life he became interested in the elementalism of northern landscapes as an inspiration for his art. This change reflected a similar transition in Irish literary circles.

Tinker, Christopher. "Imogen Holst's Music, 1962-84." *Tempo*, no. 166 (September 1988): 22–27.

Tinker outlines the arrangements and compositions produced by Holst over the course of her lifetime. From her small output, especially the twenty-eight titles composed from 1962 to 1984, Tinker is able to identify recurring stylistic traits, including the use of tonal centers rather than keys, quartal rather than triadic harmonies, and a reliance on the minor second.

Truscott, Harold. "Chamber Music." In *Edmund Rubbra: Composer-Essays*, ed. Lewis Foreman, 53–69. Rickmansworth, England: Triad Press, 1977.

This chapter on Rubbra's chamber music includes a brief discussion of the cello sonata.

Vaughan Williams, Ralph. *Letters of Ralph Vaughan Williams 1895–1958*. Edited by Hugh Cobbe. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010.

Ralph Vaughan Williams's letters offer an extensive look at his life and music. Especially relevant to this project were his views on folk music and its importance for composers, and his relationship to Gustav and Imogen Holst.

--. *National Music and Other Essays*. 2nd ed. Oxfordshire: Oxford University Press, 1987.

A collection of lectures and articles about folk music and nationalist music, with a few other topics included. These articles show how deeply Vaughan Williams had considered the question of nationalism in music. He recognized the competing claims of native and international influences, but argued passionately for the centrality of folksong in any nation's cultural life.

Wallen, Errollyn. "Biography." Errollyn Wallen website. Accessed August 27, 2021.  
<http://www.errollynwallen.com>, <https://www.errollynwallen.com/biography>.

A brief biography outlining Wallen's major projects and her work in many spheres, including chamber music, vocal music, opera, ballet, and educational music.

--. *Cello Concerto*. London: Peters Edition Limited, 2007.

Performance score.

--. "Slave to the Rhythm." *Contemporary Music Review* Vol. 11, Parts 1 & 2 (1994): 293–295.  
<https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/pdf/10.1080/07494469400641221>.

Wallen describes the importance of rhythmic complexity in her work, and her interest in Latin-American and African genres. She suggests that a significant area of growth for classical music composers is to understand and analyze rhythm more deeply.

Whittall, Arnold. "The Matthews Mark: A Philosopher's Perspective." *Tempo* 65, no. 257 (July 2011): 2–10.

Whittall positions himself as a defender of Matthews's Romantic and tonal approach to music. Most of the article is dedicated to an analysis of the Sixth Symphony, which is based on a tune by Vaughan Williams. According to Whittall, this symphony as well as *Dark Pastoral* are works which combine "pastoral simplicity" with innovative technique.

Wiebe, Heather. *Britten's Unquiet Pasts: Sound and Memory in Postwar Reconstruction*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2012.

This book includes a helpful discussion of Britten's engagement with the folksong movement. Although Britten tapped into both folk music and Elizabethan sources for his compositions, his music was distinct from pastoralism. This was largely due to his underlying motivations; he was a cosmopolitan rather than a nationalist artist.

Williams, Raymond. *The Country and the City*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1973.

Williams traces the development of the ideal of the countryside in the English imagination. He demonstrates that English pastoral sentiments were a modern phenomenon in response to the experience of empire and internationalism. Although his work focuses on literature, not music, he makes a compelling case that pastoral art was motivated by a search for "home" in the face of cultural tensions.

York, John. "The Makings of a Cycle? James MacMillan's Cello and Piano Sonatas." *Tempo*, no. 221 (July 2002): 24–28.

York is the pianist who premiered the Cello Sonata No. 1. In this article, he compares several MacMillan chamber works written for cello and piano during a similar timeframe. He notes the suitability of the cello for expressing MacMillan's musical idiom.