

Total performance time: approximately 60', with no interval

## Pelléas Ensemble I

**Henry Roberts** flute  
**Luba Tunnicliffe** viola / violin  
**Oliver Wass** harp

**Béla Bartók** (1881–1945), arr. Pelléas  
Romanian Folk Dances (1915) 7'

- i. *Bot tánc / Jocul cu bâță (Stick dance)*
- ii. *Brâul (Sash dance)*
- iii. *Topogó / Pe loc (In one spot)*
- iv. *Bucsumí tánc / Buciumeana (Dance from Bucsum)*
- v. *Román polka / Poarga Românească (Romanian polka)*
- vi. *Aprózó / Mărunțel (Fast dance)*

**Arnold Bax** (1883–1953)  
Elegaic Trio (1916) 9'

**Traditional**, arr. Pelléas  
Selection of Irish Folk Tunes: 10'  
The Kerfunten Jig  
She Moved Through the Fair  
The Leitrim Reel

**Sally Beamish** (b.1956)  
Between Earth and Sea (1997) 10'

**André Jolivet** (1905–1974)  
Petite Suite (1941) 12'  
i. *Prélude. Modéré*  
ii. *Modéré sans traîner*  
iii. *Vivement*  
iv. *Allant*  
v. *(Without title)*

**The Pelléas Ensemble** are Britten Pears Young Artists for 2022–23 and are participants on Chamber Music in Residence at Snape Maltings.

The Pelléas Ensemble have made a name for themselves through their intimate, honest music-making and ambitious programming, and are regularly praised for their compelling performance and immediate connection with the audience. They have won awards from the Royal Philharmonic Society, the Royal Overseas League and the Tillett Trust, and performed extensively across the UK. Their critically acclaimed debut album, 'Nature and the Imagination', (Linn Records, 2021), presents a rich and expressive collection of repertoire spanning three centuries, and demonstrates the versatility of the ensemble.

Alongside creating their own arrangements of existing repertoire, the Pelléas Ensemble are dedicated to performing contemporary music, and have commissioned several new works. Misha Mullov-Abbado's 'Three Meditation Songs' was premiered at Wigmore Hall in 2016, and the ensemble collaborated with the Park Lane Group to commission Benjamin Graves' 'Scherzo', which features on their album.

### **Bartók: Romanian Folk Dances**

When Béla Bartók was in his mid-twenties, he and his friend Zoltán Kodály set out into the Transylvanian countryside to collect and research old folk melodies. The outbreak of World War One put paid to their travels and triggered a period of depression for Bartók, who for a while found himself unable to compose. By then, however, the two men had amassed a vast amount of material and Bartók began to put it to good use. He published his *Romanian Folk Dances* in 1915, originally for piano, with a version for small orchestra appearing a couple of years later.

He believed there were three ways in which a serious composer could use folk music: one was by imitating a particular melody or rhythm, another was by adopting the folk idioms as the basis of a new and unique style. It was the third way that he demonstrates here: using authentic folk melody and adding his own accompaniments.

### **Bax: Elegaic Trio**

Arnold Bax was studying at the Royal Academy of Music when his brother introduced him to the poetry of W.B. Yeats. It made a lasting impression on the young composer and inspired him, in 1902, to visit the west coast of Ireland. 'There,' he said, 'for a moment, the Celt within me was revealed'. It was the start of a lifelong passion for the country and its culture, and in the years leading up to the First World War, Bax made Ireland his home.

He was profoundly affected by the Easter Uprising of 1916 and in particular the subsequent execution of its ringleaders. Several of his good friends were among the victims: he wrote this Elegaic Trio in their memory.

### **Irish Folk Tunes, arr. Pelléas Ensemble**

'The Kerfunten Jig' was written by lute player and flute maker Hammy Hamilton, who was born in Belfast in 1953 and now lives in County Cork. It's followed by the traditional song 'She Moved Through the Fair', in which the narrator sees his lover move away from him through the fair, telling him 'it will not be long, love, till our wedding day'. She returns as a ghost and repeats the words, this time implying their reunion will take place after death. Finally, traditional dance music from one of the smallest counties in the Irish Republic: 'The Leitrim Reel'.

### **Sally Beamish: Between Earth and Sea**

An ancient Celtic lament lies at the heart of this piece, which was commissioned by the Nash Ensemble and first performed in 1997. The lament itself is based on the call of the redshank – a sound that the composer describes as 'a mournful, falling pi-li-li-liu'. In Celtic folklore the redshank symbolized the transition from life to death, existing literally 'Between Earth and Sea': straddling the land on which Man lives and the ocean which represents eternal life.

### **Jolivet: Petite Suite**

André Jolivet was born and died in Paris, where he spent most of his adult life absorbing as many cultural influences as came his way; Debussy and Ravel were soon followed by the atonality and modernism of Schoenberg, ideas he developed further while studying with the avant-garde composer Edgar Varèse. And in the mid-1930s he worked with Messiaen, setting up a society for the promotion of contemporary nationalistic music. During World War Two, however, Jolivet returned to a more lyrical style, but he never stopped searching for the original meaning of music, with a view to restoring it somehow to its ancient roots. In many ways, he embodies this quest in his 1941 *Petite Suite*, combining a lifelong love of rustic elements and dance with echoes of the folk traditions he believed to be at the heart of all music.

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