



ORCHID CLASSICS

THE SEAFARER

TRIO APACHES
SIR WILLARD WHITE



CLAUDE DEBUSSY (1862-1918) arr. SALLY BEAMISH (b.1956)

La Mer

- | | | |
|---|--|------|
| 1 | De L'Aube a Midi sur la mer. Tres lent | 8:26 |
| 2 | Jeux de Vagues. Allegro | 7:19 |
| 3 | Dialogue du vent et de la Mer. Anime et tumultueux | 8:17 |

SALLY BEAMISH (b.1956)

- | | | |
|---|--|-------|
| 4 | The Seafarer – for voice and piano trio | 28:45 |
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Total time **52:49**

TRIO APACHES

Matthew Trusler (violin)
Thomas Carroll (cello)
Ashley Wass (piano)

Sir Willard White (voice)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dajdU9oQeTI>
Type this link into your browser to view Jila Peacock's evocative ink prints, which were the original visual inspiration for the Seafarer

The Seafarer Project

It was during Ashley's festival in the beautiful city of Lincoln that we played our first concert together as an official trio, with a programme that included **The Seafarer**.

That week, while we worked on the piece and formed ideas for our new ensemble, we became increasingly excited by the idea of challenging what we thought of as conventional trio programming; seeking collaborations which would bring something fresh to the genre, and – perhaps most importantly – commissioning new works would be important elements of our future as a group.

One thing was clear from the very beginning: **The Seafarer** should be the focal point for our first album. We'd fallen in love with the piece (and the poem) and it represented exactly the kind of collaborative repertoire we wanted to explore. A long and fruitless search for a suitable sea-related companion piece led us to the conclusion that this was the moment for our first commission. Asking Sally Beamish to transcribe **La Mer** quickly became our favourite idea.

Our proposal was initially met with polite laughter from Sally, but we kept nagging away and soon persuaded her it was something that absolutely had to be done. Once she'd relented, Sally cleared her diary and started work almost immediately.

Working on the first draft of Sally's score was enormous fun, even if the act of converting this most vibrant and dynamic of orchestral scores into a work which sounded as if it had always been intended as a piano trio was extremely challenging. Sally was amazingly open-minded to our suggestions, diplomatic when we proposed changes that were frankly a bit rubbish and angelically patient as she listened in on our arguments over an oboe solo that Tom was determined to claim for himself. We got there in the end and we're all immensely proud of the final result.

The recording sessions were also quite an experience. Running **The Seafarer** through for the first time with Willard took everyone's breath away and actually left Sally in tears, so we all had to stop for a cup of tea to recover. The power that Willard brought to his narration was completely overwhelming.

We've had an immensely enjoyable time creating this album and, above all else, we hope that comes across when you listen to it.

Trio Apaches, 2014

La Mer

To arrange La Mer for piano trio was one of the biggest challenges I've encountered. The temptation was to represent every note from Debussy's score, but in order to do that (in any case nigh on impossible) all three musicians would have had to be playing all the time, which could have led to an unchanging, dense texture.

I decided instead to look at the piano trio itself as a medium – particularly works such as the Ravel – and reinvent Debussy's orchestral score with the piano trio in mind. I needed to create light and shade, and subtleties of colour. This meant exploring what strings and piano can do in terms of texture, and concentrating on idiomatic and natural techniques. This led to use of harmonics, mutes, bow position – such as sul ponticello (a glassy sound made by playing very near the bridge) – and various doublings between piano and strings, using unisons to create new 'instruments' – like mixing blue and yellow to make green.

Once I'd completed the score, I worked with Matthew, Thomas and Ashley, who often suggested feats of virtuosity I hadn't thought possible, thereby opening up new possibilities previously discounted.

It has been an immensely satisfying experience to collaborate on re-creating this iconic score for these inspirational players.

La Mer, arranged for piano trio, was commissioned by Trio Apaches, with additional funding from the Lincolnshire International Chamber Music Festival and the Les Amis de La Mer scheme, as a companion piece for The Seafarer Trio, and was first performed at LICMF 2013.

Sally Beamish, 2014

The Seafarer

translated by Charles Harrison Wallace (1999)

*This is the truth: the way I toiled
distraught, for days on end
enduring cares and bitter bale
within my breast, my keel cleaving
endless halls of heaving waves*

*I would often at the bark's bows wake
the strait night through, steering
her clear of clashing cliffs*

*Cold fetters froze my feet
and hunger seared my heart
with sore sea-weariness*

*That man lolling on fair land
has no earthly inkling of how I
a wretched wreck on ice-cold seas
weathered each winter
exiled from kith and kin*

*Hail scoured my skin and hoar
hung heavy*

*All I ever heard along the ice-way
was sounding sea, the gannet's shanty
whooper and curlew calls and mewling gull
were all my gaming, mead and mirth
At tempest-tested granite crags
the ice-winged tern would taunt
spray-feathered ospreys overhead
would soar and scream*

*No kinsman near to fend off need
no one to comfort or console*

*That fine fellow, carefree in his cups
set snugly up in town, cannot conceive
the load I hauled along the sea-lanes*

*The dark night deepens, northern snow
hardens the soil and hail hits earth
like cold corn*

*Yet my heart hammers now, yearning anew
wanting the steep salt-water road
longing with lust to roam rough seas alone
to seek out some far foreign shore
The mood to wander mills within my mind*

*But none on earth may be so proud
so prodigal or yare in youth
nor so express in action
nor smiled on by so mild a master
that he embark with unconcern
what end for him the Master may intend*

*He will not heed the harp though
and is not gladdened by gold rings
nor woman's winning ways
and wants no worldly joys
only the rolling oceans urge him on
the wave play pulls him and impels*

*Then blossom decks the bower's bough
the bothie blooms, the sea meads gleam
the wide world racks the restless mind*

*of him who on the full flood tide
determines to depart
And heralding his summer hoard of pain
the gowk repeats his plaintive geck
foreboding bitterness of breast*

*Soft-bedded bloods cannot conceive
what some men suffer as abroad
they travel tracks of exile*

*Reckless of that my thought is thrown
beyond my heart's cage now, and hunger
keenly comes again. My mind is cast
upon the sea swell, over the whale's world
widely to course creation's coast*

*The lone call wails above on wing
it steels the unarmed soul to start
across the waters where the whale sways*

*God's visions are to me more vivid
than this dead life loaned out on land
I know its leasehold will not last*

*Still three things twist man's mind
until the day his doom is sealed
age, illness or some stroke of hate
will seize sense from him*

*So any noble spirit will aspire to earn
an everlasting epitaph of praise
for good deeds done on earth, bold blows
dealt at the Devil and against fell foes
before his passing, that posterity*

*delights enjoyed for ever by the brave
among the angels may perpetuate
The days of glory have decayed
the earth has spilled its splendour
there are no captains now, no kings
gold givers such as once there were
the lords who lived with far flung fame
great men of glorious and good renown*

*Virtue is fallen, visions are faded
the weak are left to hold this world
worn low. The flower of the field is old
the leaf is withered and the laurel sere
Throughout this middle isthmus man
meets age hoar-headed, bleak of face
by former friends forsaken, grieving over
scions of lineage long since gone*

*Life ebbs, the flesh feels less
and fails to savour sweet or sour
is frail of hand, feeble of mind
Though men may bury treasured pelf
beside their brother's born remains
and sow his grave with golden goods
he goes where gold is worthless*

*Nor can his sinful soul, quaking before his God
call hoarded gold or mortal glory to his aid
that Architect is awesome
Whose might moves the world
Whose hand has fixed the firmament
earth's vaults and vapours*

*Dull is the man that does not dread the Lord
on him will death's descent be sudden
blissful the man that meekly lives
on him will heaven benisons bestow
A mind was given man by God to glory in His might*

*A man should steer a steadfast course
be constant, clean and just in judgement
a man should curb his love or loathing
though flame consume his comrade
and fire the funeral pyre
for fate is set more surely
God more great, than any man surmise*

*Come, consider where we have a home, how
we can travel to it, how our travail here
will lead us to the living well-head
and heaven haven of our Lord's love*

*Thus let us thank His hallowed Name
that He has granted us His grace
Dominion enduring, the Ancient of Days
for all time*

Amen

Copyright Charles Harrison Wallace. © 1999



from left to right: Matthew Trusler, Thomas Carroll, Sir Willard White, Ashley Wass, Sally Beamish

Sir Willard White (Bass-baritone)

One of the best-loved and most versatile opera stars of the last 40 years, Sir Willard White's illustrious career has taken him to the most prestigious opera houses and concert halls throughout the world, collaborating with conductors, directors and orchestras of the highest calibre.

Highlights in 2013 included Klingsor *Parsifal* at the Royal Opera House, Covent Garden; the role of Priest in the world premiere of Jörg Widmann's *Babylon* at the Bayerische Staatsoper; Méphistophélès *La Damnation de Faust* with Opera de Rouen; Hercules *Alceste* at the Teatro Real; Timur in a concert performance of *Turandot* with Scottish Opera and a new production of *Benvenuto Cellini* for English National Opera. Future engagements include returns to the Royal Opera House, the Festival d'Aix en Provence and Opéra de Lyon, and *La Damnation de Faust* in Verbier and with the Cleveland Orchestra and Charles Dutoit.

Willard White was born in Jamaica, where he commenced his musical training at the Jamaican School of Music and then went on to the Juilliard School in New York. Since his operatic debut with the New York City Opera in 1974, he has sung regularly at the Royal Opera, Covent Garden, the Metropolitan Opera, New York, English National Opera, San Francisco Opera, the opera houses of Munich, Amsterdam, Berlin, Brussels, Geneva, Hamburg, Los Angeles, Madrid, Paris, and at the Glyndebourne, Aix-en-Provence and Salzburg festivals. In 1989, White performed the role of Othello in Trevor Nunn's production for the Royal Shakespeare Company, alongside Sir Ian McKellen as Iago and Imogen Stubbs as Desdemona.

On the concert platform White sings regularly with the world's major conductors and orchestras, including the London Symphony, London Philharmonic, BBC Symphony, The Hallé, Royal Philharmonic, Concertgebouw, La Scala, Berliner Philharmoniker, Boston Symphony, New York Philharmonic, Los Angeles Philharmonic and Cleveland Orchestra and he has appeared as soloist many times at the BBC Proms, including the First and Last Night of the Proms and at the Proms in the Park. He has most recently sung Mephistopheles *La Damnation de Faust* and Marke *Tristan & Isolde* Act II under Gergiev; a concert performance of *Pelleas et Melisande* at the Verbier Festival with Charles Dutoit; Gershwin's *Porgy and Bess* in concert with the Berliner Philharmoniker and Sir Simon Rattle; and *Bluebeard's Castle* with the Los Angeles Philharmonic and Esa-Pekka Salonen.

Willard White was awarded the CBE in 1995 and was knighted in the Queen's Birthday Honours in 2004. He is currently President of the Royal Northern College of Music, having succeeded the Duchess of Kent in this role.



photo: Patrick Allen, Opera Omnia

Trio Apaches

French A-pash [noun]

1. ruffian or hooligan
2. the name adopted by a group of 'artistic outcasts', including Ravel and Stravinsky, in the early 1900s

Trio Apaches, comprising three of the UK's most respected soloists, was formed in 2012 as the consequence of a shared desire to focus on innovative projects and challenging cross-genre collaborations, as well as to present masterworks of the trio repertoire in unfamiliar contexts.

Very much representative of the group's intention to create projects outside the traditional realm of the piano trio, this disc features a newly commissioned transcription of Debussy's *La Mer* by Sally Beamish alongside one of Beamish's original works – her powerful setting of the Anglo Saxon poem *The Seafarer*, in which the Trio are joined by Sir Willard White in the role of narrator.

Built on a foundation of great friendship between three colleagues who have collaborated in various forms over many years, Trio Apaches have quickly been embraced on the international concert scene and are unanimously praised for the infectious joy and virtuosity of their performances and the innovative nature of their programmes. They have made numerous appearances on BBC Radio 3, most recently in a live BBC lunchtime concert from the Royal Conservatoire of Scotland in a recital juxtaposing Copland with Tchaikovsky.

Matthew Trusler has developed a reputation as one of Britain's leading violinists. Performing on a bow once owned by Heifetz, Trusler has been invited to perform as a recitalist and concerto soloist throughout Europe, Australia, the USA, Japan and South Africa. In the UK he has performed with major orchestras, including the BBC orchestras, the Philharmonia, London Philharmonic, City of Birmingham, Halle and Academy of St. Martin-in-the-Fields, and has appeared further afield with the Minnesota Orchestra, NDR Hanover, Helsinki Philharmonic, Deutsche Symphony Berlin, Dusseldorf Symphony Orchestra, Flanders Symphony Orchestra, Malaysian Philharmonic, Australian Chamber Orchestra and Johannesburg Philharmonic.

Alongside his concerto performances, Matthew has collaborated with outstanding musicians for chamber work, including Piotr Anderszewski, Lang Lang, Wayne Marshall, Martin Roscoe, Peter Donohoe, Imogen Cooper, Leonidas Kavakos, Lynn Harrell, and Joseph Silverstein. Matthew has performed recitals in leading venues around the world including Wigmore Hall in London, the Auditorium du Louvre in Paris, and the Palais des Beaux Arts in Brussels.

Matthew is the founder and Artistic Director of Orchid Classics, a label that has attracted some of the most important artists of today, and is also the founder of the Lenny Trusler Children's Foundation, raising money for desperately ill babies. Matthew currently holds a teaching post at the Malmö Academy in Sweden.

Described by *The Strad* as a player of 'authority, passion with an unerring sense of direction, full of colour and underpinned by a clear musical intelligence', Welsh cellist **Thomas Carroll** launched his career when he won both Young Concert Artists Trust and Young Concert Artists, New York, performing in many major venues across Europe, Asia, Africa, Australia and America. He has appeared as concerto soloist with the London Symphony Orchestra, BBC Orchestras and London Philharmonic as well as orchestras such as the Vienna Chamber, Melbourne Symphony and Bayerischer Rundfunk. Much in demand as a chamber musician, Thomas has worked with the Belcea Quartet, Endellion Quartet, Yehudi Menuhin, Gidon Kremer, Mischa Maisky, Michael Collins, at Wigmore Hall, the Edinburgh and Cheltenham International Festivals, among many others.

His recordings include Michael Berkeley's String Quintet with the Chilingirian Quartet for Chandos and a critically acclaimed recital disc with pianist, Llyr Williams on Orchid Classics (ORC100016).

Recent engagements include concerts at the Louvre in Paris, Konzerthaus in Vienna, the Dubrovnik Festival, Mecklenburg Festival and The International Chamber Music Festival in Utrecht. Thomas is also in demand as a conductor, and was recently appointed Chief Conductor of the Orpheus Sinfonia. Thomas is currently a Professor at the Royal College of Music in London and the Yehudi Menuhin School.

Ashley Wass is firmly established as one of the leading performers of his generation. Described by Gramophone Magazine as a 'thoroughbred who possesses the enviable gift to turn almost anything he plays into pure gold', he is the only British winner of the London International Piano Competition, prizewinner at the Leeds Piano Competition, and a former BBC Radio 3 New Generation Artist. Increasingly in demand on the international stage, he has performed as soloist with numerous leading ensembles, including all of the BBC orchestras, the Philharmonia, Orchestre National de Lille, Vienna Chamber Orchestra, Hong Kong Philharmonic, RLPO, and under the baton of conductors such as Simon Rattle and Osmo Vanska.

Ashley is also much in demand as a chamber musician, performing regularly at many of the major European festivals, and at the Marlboro Music Festival, playing chamber music with musicians such as Mitsuko Uchida, Richard Goode and members of the Guarneri Quartet and Beaux Arts Trio. He has performed at many of the world's finest venues including Wigmore Hall, Philadelphia's Kimmel Center, the Vienna Konzerthaus and Carnegie Hall in New York.

Ashley Wass is the Artistic Director of the Lincolnshire International Chamber Music Festival. The Festival has grown from strength to strength during his tenure, with sold-out performances of challenging repertoire and broadcasts on BBC Radio 3. Ashley is currently a Professor of Piano at the Royal College of Music, London, and is an Associate of the Royal Academy of Music.

Sally Beamish

Sally Beamish was born in London. Formerly a viola player, she moved from London to Scotland in 1990. Her music embraces many influences, particularly jazz and Scottish traditional music. She has written for numerous soloists, including Tabea Zimmermann, Håkan Hardenberger and Steven Isserlis. Beamish's music is performed and broadcast internationally. Her string quartet for the Elias Quartet, *Reed Stanzas*, received its premiere at the 2011 BBC Proms, and won a Royal Philharmonic Society Award.

In 2012 Beamish was BBC Radio 3 Composer of the Week; and Branford Marsalis premiered *Albatross* at the World Saxophone Congress in St Andrews, with the composer at the piano. He will also be recording the saxophone version of *Under the Wing of the Rock*, dedicated to him, for BIS, on a disc with RSNO and NYOS, in 2014, as well as concertos performed by James Crabb (accordion) and Håkan Hardenberger (trumpet), with conductor Martyn Brabbins. In 2013, Beamish's *Variations on a Theme of Benjamin Britten* were premiered by the Academy of Saint Martin in the Fields. And *Flodden*, written to commemorate the 500th anniversary of the battle, was premiered by the SCO, and shortlisted for an RPS Award. 2014 features two recordings of Beamish's 'sea' music: as well as this CD her concerto for Scottish Fiddle and Harp, *Seavaigers*, recorded by Chris Stout and Catriona McKay, will be released with the Scottish Ensemble.

The centenary of the First World War is also marked by *Equal Voices*, a major work for the LSO, with poet Sir Andrew Motion, and a performance at the BBC Proms of Beamish's Violin Concerto (1994), with Anthony Marwood and the BBCSO, conducted by Martyn Brabbins.

2016 sees a full-length ballet for Birmingham Royal Ballet with choreographer David Bintley.

Trio Apaches would like to thank all the members of 'Les Amis de la Mer' for their support of this project.

Producer: Michael Ponder
Engineer: Mike Clements

Recorded at St George's Brandon Hill, Bristol 1-2 October 2013 (La Mer);
6-7 January 2014 (The Seafarer)

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