



LINN

De Pasión Mortal
Songs from two golden ages

NICHOLAS MULROY ELIZABETH KENNY TOBY CARR

MENU

TRACKLIST

ENGLISH

BIOGRAPHIES



De Pasión Mortal

Songs from two golden ages

NICHOLAS MULROY tenor

ELIZABETH KENNY archlute, guitar, theorbo

TOBY CARR guitars, theorbo

with **MUSIC FOR A WHILE**

Margaret Faultless, Rachel Stroud violin

Anna Curzon, Francesca Gilbert viola

Andrew Skidmore cello

Nicholas Mulroy: all tracks, except 7, 11 & 14 | Elizabeth Kenny: all tracks, except 1, 7, 10 & 12 | Toby Carr: all tracks, except 9 & 11 | Music for a While: tracks 4, 13, 14 & 15

Víctor Jara (1932–1973)

1. **Te recuerdo Amanda** 3:34

Tomás Méndez (1927–1995)

2. **Cucurrucucú paloma** 3:50

Henry Purcell (c. 1659–1695)

3. **O! fair Cedaria, Z. 402** 4:08

Claudio Monteverdi (1567–1643)

4. **Tempo la cetra** 7:34

Silvio Rodríguez (b. 1946)

5. **Hoy mi deber** 3:56

Ariel Ramírez (1921–2010)

6. **Alfonsina y el mar** 4:25

Ñico Rojas (1921–2008)

7. **Retrato de un médico violinista** 5:56

Rafael Hernández Marín (1892–1965)

8. **Silencio** 2:49

Henry Purcell

9. **In the black dismal dungeon of despair, Z. 190** 4:33

Silvio Rodríguez

10. **Óleo de mujer con sombrero** 2:43

Henry Purcell

11. **Prelude – If love's a sweet passion – Gigue** 3:53
(from *The Fairy Queen*, Z. 629)

Silvio Rodríguez

12. **Ojalá** 3:53

Henry Purcell

13. **The sparrow and the gentle dove** 4:50
(from *From Hardy Climes and Dangerous Toils of War*, Z. 325)

14. **Fantasia in G major, Z. 742** 3:40

15. **By beauteous softness** 3:59
(from *Now Does the Glorious Day Appear*, Z. 332)

16. **An Evening Hymn, Z.193** 4:22

Silvio Rodríguez

17. **La Gaviota** 4:34

Total Running Time 72:43

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MENU

‘El amor es como un violín. La música podrá detenerse ahora o después, pero las cuerdas lo recordarán por siempre.’ – Silvio Rodríguez

‘Love is like a violin. The music can stop now or after, but the strings will remember it for ever.’

The beginning of the Baroque era, around 1600, marked a turn away from florid beauty and unity in musical and visual culture, and towards a more faithful reflection of the complexities and even chaos of a human’s interior life. Claudio Monteverdi (1567–1643) was at the vanguard of this process, and is now known as the first great composer of opera; his *L’Orfeo* (1607) absolutely withstands the rigours of time and still packs a devastating emotional punch. It’s here and elsewhere that he teases out the possibilities of musical dialogue between a bassline, its implied harmony, and a voice: the balance of caressing harmony and stinging dissonances, creating music built (in the composer’s words) ‘upon the foundations of truth’. His music administered a kind of shock therapy to the expressive capacity of song.

Indeed, all of the songwriters in this programme work on those foundations, and have urgent truths to tell us. One of the things these songs convey is a sense that, while the world turns and changes, people do not. Here are tales of love, war, loss, joy, separated by time and space, but drawn together by a common and eternal desire to tell stories in music.

Listen to the dialogues between Henry Purcell's sinuously mobile ground (repeated) bass patterns and the voice in these songs. He is able – often transcending the shallowness or sycophancy of his texts – to craft something exquisite: a harmonic turn here, a jewel-like illumination of a word there. Even better, when the string ritornello enters, weaving its fantasy upon the same bass – and the singer stops – it feels like the musical equivalent of stepping into a warm bath. The fact that this is all built from the ground up, upon a pattern that both changes and remains the same as it revolves, feels like a gentle metaphor for the turning of the world.

As we leap forward almost 300 years, it's worth remarking that the compositional techniques employed by Monteverdi and Purcell (two of the very greatest songwriters) remain intact. These Latin American songs by Silvio Rodríguez and Víctor Jara all contain twentieth-century siblings of the ground bass: listen to the rising rapture of *Óleo de mujer con sombrero* or the gentle bolero sway of *Te recuerdo Amanda*. All of these musicians are wildly famous and hugely consequential to the musical story of Latin America in the twentieth century, but largely unknown in the English-speaking world: reason enough to offer these songs here.

In the same way that Gabriel García Márquez, Pablo Neruda and Mario Vargas Llosa defined a new literary reality of their time and place, here are songs that embody a politically engaged and poetically rapturous musical movement which gave voice to an entire continent at a time of rapid progress and violent change. They all belong to their own branch of the *nueva canción* (new song)

set, whose very name suggests the quest for a new and urgent mode of musical expression. You might notice that we're back in the same artistic position as Italy at the start of the seventeenth century ...

Jara's story is a tragic one. He was an early casualty of Pinochet's coup in 1973, when he and many others associated with Allende's socialist government were corralled into the national stadium and killed. Soldiers are said to have stamped on his hands and taunted him about never playing the guitar again. The stadium now bears his name. The jarring contrast between the themes of his songs – love, peace, social justice – and the manner of his death have only added to the symbolism of his work and his fame. *Te recuerdo Amanda* is a story of two factory workers, Manuel and Amanda, who steal five minutes of bliss ('La vida es eterna en cinco minutos' – 'Life is eternal for those five minutes') during their lunch break. One day, however, Manuel is sent 'to the mountains' and never returns, a poignant reference to a grim political reality.

Rodríguez's songs are marked by their elusive poetic qualities. These are lyrics that resist definition and invite the listener to assemble the picture in their imagination. *Ojalá* is a particularly vivid example of this, a song which has become an anthem for an entire continent, but one whose theme remains a mystery. It might be a love song, but it has assumed tremendous political resonance over time. *La Gaviota* speaks of the horror and trauma of a soldier returning from war, while *Hoy mi deber* shares a universal poetic device with Monteverdi's *Tempo la cetra*: both poets set out to sing of battle or patriotism, but their songs only ever return to love. Interestingly – if you like that sort of

thing – both use the same harmonic warming of the subdominant (or the fourth step of the scale) to illustrate a turn towards matters of the tender heart.

In putting these two apparently disparate traditions together, we invite the listener to find their own connections. Many will not be familiar with both traditions represented here; it's the intention to spread the word about this wonderful, evocative music, as well as to offer it in a context that might be both rewarding and illuminating.

All of these works are testament to the idea that song – with its marriage of text and music, and its ability to articulate, communicate and touch both heart and mind – is a powerful political instrument. These songs arrive not as a shout, but as a whisper on the ear, but are no less effective for that. They also vividly reflect these artists' insights on eternal human themes: love, loss, fear, ecstasy, and much more besides, are all expressed here, in songs full of meaning, beauty and unflinching truth.

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NICHOLAS MULROY tenor

Born in Liverpool, Nicholas Mulroy was a chorister at the Metropolitan Cathedral there. He studied Modern Languages at Cambridge, and completed postgraduate musical studies at the Royal Academy of Music.

He has sung throughout the world, and his work has focused mostly on Baroque repertoire: Bach's Evangelists at the Sydney Opera House and in the composer's own churches in Leipzig, Arnstadt and Weimar; Rameau at the Opéra national de Paris; Monteverdi at Carnegie Hall; and Purcell at Wigmore Hall. He has sung with some of the world's leading ensembles and conductors, including the Royal Concertgebouw Orchestra, Australian Chamber Orchestra, English Baroque Soloists, Brussels Philharmonic, Royal Liverpool Philharmonic, Copenhagen Phil, BBC Philharmonic and Antwerp Symphony Orchestra.

Mulroy has guest-directed the Irish Baroque Orchestra in Monteverdi, Aurora Orchestra in a programme of Bach, Purcell and Latin American songs, and is Associate Director of the Dunedin Consort, with whom he has directed various choral programmes and both of Bach's Passions. He is also the Artistic Director of Cambridge University Chamber Choir.

Other highlights have included appearances with The English Concert, Latvian Radio Choir, City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra and Budapest Festival Orchestra with Iván Fischer. He is a Musician in Residence at Girton College, Cambridge, and a Visiting Professor at the Royal Academy of Music.

ELIZABETH KENNY archlute, guitar, theorbo

Elizabeth Kenny is one of Europe's leading lute players. Her playing has been described as 'radical' (*The Independent on Sunday*) and 'indecently beautiful' (*Toronto Post*). She has devised several critically acclaimed recordings of solo music from the ML Lute Book and, with long standing vocal partners, songs by Lawes, Purcell and Dowland. Her most recent solo recording *Ars longa* (Linn) was nominated for the 2019 BBC Music Magazine Recording of the Year. She has an extensive discography of collaborations with chamber ensembles across Europe and the USA. In 2017 *Shakespeare Songs* with Ian Bostridge and co-collaborators won the Grammy best solo vocal recital, and the same year viol consort Phantasm and Kenny won the Gramophone Early Music Award for their recording of Dowland's *Lachrimae or Seven Tears*.

In thirty years of touring Kenny has played with many of the world's best period instrument groups, including extended spells with Les Arts Florissants and the Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment. She has given premiere performances of solo and chamber pieces by James MacMillan, Benjamin Oliver, Heiner Goebbels, Rachel Stott and Nico Muhly.

Kenny has been Professor of Lute at the Royal Academy of Music since 1999, and Dean of Students since 2020. She was Professor of Musical Performance at the University of Southampton and Director of Performance and Performance Studies at the University of Oxford between 2012 and 2020.

TOBY CARR guitars, theorbo

Lutenist and guitarist Toby Carr is known as a versatile and engaging artist, working with some of the finest musicians in the business. While studying the classical guitar at Trinity Laban Conservatoire of Music and Dance he was introduced to historical plucked instruments, an interest he pursued during a postgraduate degree at the Guildhall School of Music & Drama, graduating in 2016 and welcomed back as a professor in 2021. Now in demand as a soloist, chamber musician and continuo player, his playing has been described as ‘sensuous and vivid’ (*The Guardian*), ‘eloquent’ (*BBC Music Magazine*) and ‘mesmerizing’ (*Opera Today*).

Carr has performed with most of the principal period instrument ensembles in the UK and beyond, as well as with many symphony orchestras, opera companies and ballet companies. He collaborates with singers such as Nicholas Mulroy, Alexander Chance and Helen Charlston. Notable recordings include *Drop not, mine eyes* with Alexander Chance for Linn, and *Battle Cry* with Helen Charlston for Delphian, which won both BBC Music Magazine and Gramophone awards in 2023. He is a member of Ceruleo, Lux Musicae London and Ensemble Augelletti, works frequently with vocal groups Fieri Consort and Ensemble Pro Victoria, and has appeared on recordings with all of these groups.



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