

ENGLISH PLACES, ENGLISH FACES

PROGRAMME

(instrumental items are oboe & piano except where specified, readings are in italics)

1. PREDOMINANTLY PLACES

<i>England (1943)</i>	<i>Violet Trefusis</i>
Six Studies in English Folk-Song (cor anglais & piano), interspersed with:	R Vaughan Williams
<i>Adlestrop</i>	<i>Edward Thomas</i>
<i>Neutral Tones</i>	<i>Thomas Hardy</i>
<i>Sonnet 98 - From you have I been absent in the Spring</i>	<i>William Shakespeare</i>
<i>Song of the Mad Prince</i>	<i>Walter de la Mare</i>
<i>The Rolling English Road (1914)</i>	<i>G K Chesterton</i>

2. WORK

Temporal Variations (1936), Benjamin Britten - March, Exercises, Commination, Chorale - interspersed with:	
<i>Saturday Night and Sunday Morning (1956)</i>	<i>Alan Sillitoe</i>
<i>What the Chairman told the Poet</i>	<i>Basil Bunting</i>
<i>Oxford University (1995)</i>	<i>Bill Bryson</i>
<i>Building the Ark</i>	<i>Keith Waterhouse</i>

3. PREDOMINANTLY FACES

March in D major	J C Bach
<i>The State Visit of the King of Denmark (1606)</i>	<i>John Harington</i>
Air from Sonata in G minor © 1720)	William Babell
<i>Love in Fantastic Triumph Sate</i>	<i>Aphra Behn</i>
Andante espressivo in D (1801)	Maria Hester Reynolds
<i>My Grandmother</i>	<i>Freya Stark</i>
Dream Children (piano solo) (1902)	Edward Elgar
<i>Painting as a Pastime</i>	<i>Winston Churchill</i>
Popular Song, from 'Façade' (alto sax & piano)	William Walton

- INTERVAL -

4. THE ENGLISH AND WAR

<i>To Lucasta, on Going to the Wars</i>	<i>Richard Lovelace</i>
Allegro from Sonata in F	G F Handel
<i>Seaman's Letter after Trafalgar (1805)</i>	<i>'Sam'</i>
Hornpipe	Henry Purcell
<i>Dive-bombing in Vietnam (1954)</i>	<i>Graham Greene</i>
Lament (1981) (oboe solo)	Paul Reade
<i>This Loneliest Hour (1933)</i>	<i>Vera Brittain</i>
Andantino from Sonata Op 85 (1927)	York Bowen

5. CLASS

Allegro vivace from Sonata in C (1794) (piano solo)	Cecilia Barthélemon
<i>Emma, excerpt (1816)</i>	<i>Jane Austen</i>
Danza Gaya	Madeleine Dring
<i>The English are so Nice!</i>	<i>D H Lawrence</i>
Impromptu No 1 (1984)	Antony le Fleming
<i>Anti-Racist Person</i>	<i>Marsha Prescod</i>
Mad Dogs and Englishmen (alto sax & piano)	Noël Coward

6. ENGLISH HUMOURS

<i>Three poems by W H Auden - Nursery Rhyme, The Composer, and</i> <i>O tell me the truth about Love - interspersed with:</i>	
Sonatina, Op 28 (1951)	Malcolm Arnold
Leggiero - Andante con moto - Vivace	

Performers:

JENNY AGUTTER (reader)
JEREMY POLMEAR (oboe, cor anglais, alto saxophone)
DIANA AMBACHE (piano)

ABOUT THE PROGRAMME

This programme aims to build a cumulative picture of this country and people. It covers four centuries of music and writings. It does not attempt to be comprehensive, but it does attempt to be characteristic - that is, all the pieces represent a strand of typically English thinking or musical form.

Among the musical items: the **Vaughan Williams** Studies were written in 1927, originally for the cellist May Muckle. **Benjamin Britten** said he was pleased with his *Temporal Variations* after their first performance in 1936, though they were not published until after his death. Two works were written for the oboist Léon Goossens - **York Bowen's** Sonata of 1927 and **Malcolm Arnold's** Sonatina of 1951. The **J C Bach** March is taken from a set of six sonatas 'for the harpsichord or pianoforte, with an accompaniment for the violin or german flute'. **William Babell** (1690-1723) led an active professional life in London; he is said to have been taught by Handel, and played in the private band of George I. **Maria Hester Reynolds'** Andante is from her violin sonata no 2, opus 13. **Cecilia Barthélemon** was a prominent member of the London musical scene and friend of Haydn - this Sonata is dedicated to him. The **Elgar** piece was inspired by *Dream Children; a Reverie* by Charles Lamb. **Paul Reade** (1943-1997), as well as writing serious pieces such as *Aspects of a Landscape* from which the *Lament* is taken, was a prolific writer of music for TV, including the signature tune to Playschool.

Among the writers: **Violet Trefusis**, perhaps best known for her elopement with Vita Sackville-West, wrote *England* for Horizon magazine. **Edward Thomas** was one of the many poets killed in World War I. **Walter de la Mare** worked for an oil company for twenty years, and **G K Chesterton** made his name in journalism. **Alan Sillitoe's** *Saturday Night and Sunday Morning* was turned down by four publishers before becoming a best-seller. The **Bill Bryson** excerpt is taken from *Notes from a Small Island*, and that of **Graham Greene** from *The Quiet American*. **Sir John Harington** was a godson of Queen Elizabeth I; unfortunately his 1596 *New Discourse on a Stale Subject* (a proposal for the introduction of water closets) helped lead to a period of exile from court. **Aphra Behn** was the first professional English writer; in addition to writing poetry, novels, and plays she also spied for James I in Holland. **Freya Stark** was principally a travel writer, notably in Arabia. **Keith Waterhouse**, as well as his journalistic activities, wrote the novel *Billy Liar*. **Sir Winston Churchill** won the Nobel Prize for literature in 1953. **W H Auden** (1907-73) had many of his poems set to music by Benjamin Britten, and co-wrote the libretto of Stravinsky's *The Rake's Progress*.

ABOUT THE PERFORMERS

Jenny Agutter trained at the Elmhurst Ballet School. She made her debut aged eleven as a dancer in Walt Disney's film *Ballerina*. She first played Roberta on television when she was fourteen, and almost three years later after filming *Walkabout* in Australia, repeated the role in the film of *The Railway Children*. The following year she played Fritha in the BBC TV film of *The Snow Goose*, for which she won an Emmy. Jenny joined the Royal National Theatre in 1973 to play Miranda in Sir Peter Hall's production of *The Tempest* with Sir John Gielgud.

Her many films include *Logan's Run*, *The Eagle Has Landed*, *An American Werewolf in London*, *Sweet William* and *Equus*, for which she won a British Academy Award. She also played in *King Lear* and *Arden of Faversham* at the Royal National Theatre, and *Breaking the Code* on Broadway with Derek Jacobi.

In 2000 Jenny played her own mother in *The Railway Children* for Carlton TV. Other TV appearances include *Spooks*, and as Alan Clark's wife in a dramatisation of his *Diaries* with John Hurt. Her recent TV work includes *Poirot - After the Flood* and *Diamond Geezer*, and recent films include *Irena P*, *Heroes and Villains* and *Act of God*. She was in the 2007 West End revival of *Equus*, with Richard Griffiths and Daniel Radcliffe.

The **Polmear Ambache Duo** was formed in 1977 for a British Council tour of India. They have since performed in thirty three countries, including programmes of Words and Music in the Gulf and Australia. London appearances include recitals at the Wigmore Hall and Purcell Room. They also run courses for businesses, using the Arts as a management training tool. (www.PolmearAmbache.co.uk)

Jeremy Polmear has made four recordings of 19th and 20th century oboe music. He has performed as a guest player with a number of London's chamber orchestras including the London Mozart Players and the City of London Sinfonia. He runs the CD label *Oboe Classics* (www.oboeclassics.com).

Diana Ambache (piano) directs her own classical chamber orchestra, The Ambache (www.ambache.co.uk). With them she has made five recordings of Mozart piano concertos and three of his chamber music. She was shortlisted for the European Women of Achievement Awards 2002 for her work reviving music by women composers of the last 250 years (www.womenofnote.co.uk).