

The pursuit of **HAPPINESS**

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

Overture: *Reasons to be cheerful, Bill Bryson*

1. Happiness through others

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| Air in G minor | Henry Purcell |
| <i>Sonnet 29</i> | <i>Shakespeare</i> |
| Andante, from Duo Sonata in E minor | J C M Widerkehr |
| <i>Wuthering Heights (excerpt)</i> | <i>Emily Brontë</i> |
| Song without Words Op 53 no 2 (piano solo) | Felix Mendelssohn |
| <i>Memories of England (letter, 1829)</i> | <i>Felix Mendelssohn</i> |
| Allegro in F, K370 | Mozart |
| <i>Stranger on a Train</i> | <i>Jenni Diski</i> |
| Summertime (alto sax & piano) | George Gershwin |
| <i>A Subaltern's Love-Song</i> | <i>John Betjeman</i> |

2. Happiness and activity

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| <i>The Wind in the Willows (start)</i> | <i>Kenneth Grahame</i> |
| Habañera (cor anglais & piano) | Ravel |
| <i>My first cartoon</i> | <i>Oliver Postgate</i> |
| Impromptu No 4 | Antony le Fleming |
| <i>Vermeer paints his daughter</i> | <i>Susan Vreeland</i> |
| The Swan (cor anglais & piano) | Saint-Saëns |
| <i>I would like to be a Dot in a painting by Miró</i> | <i>Moniza Alvi</i> |
| Finale from 'Three Piece Suite' | Madeleine Dring |
| <i>Kwangde North Face</i> | <i>David Breashears</i> |
| Variations on 'The Carnival of Venice' | Theodore Lalliet |
| <i>At Lunchtime</i> | <i>Roger McGough</i> |

- INTERVAL -

3. Happiness in Spirit

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| <i>The Smile</i> | <i>William Blake</i> |
| <i>Pied Beauty</i> | <i>Gerard Manley Hopkins</i> |
| <i>Gitanjali (Song Offerings)</i> | <i>Rabindranath Tagore</i> |
| Interspersed with movements from 'Aspects of a Landscape' by Paul Reade (oboe solo): | |
| Birdsong - Sun Dance - Celebration | |
| <i>If -</i> | <i>Rudyard Kipling</i> |
| Piece 4 in Folk-Style (cor anglais & piano) | Schumann |
| <i>In Praise of Alcohol</i> | <i>Iain Banks</i> |
| Begin the Beguine (alto sax & piano) | Cole Porter |
| <i>Getting Older</i> | <i>Elaine Feinstein</i> |
| The Watermill | Ronald Binge |

4. What the Gurus say

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| <i>Days</i> | <i>Philip Larkin</i> |
| Con moto from Sonatina (1942) | Franz Reizenstein |
| <i>Letter to Menoeceus, c300BC</i> | <i>Epicurus</i> |
| Allegro from Sonata, BWV 1020 | Bach |
| <i>Brave New World (1932)</i> | <i>Aldous Huxley</i> |
| Presto from Sonata 53 (piano solo) | Haydn |
| <i>The Pursuit of Happiness</i> | <i>Robert Holden</i> |
| Poiray | Francis Shaw |
| <i>How to be Happy</i> | <i>Gyles Brandreth</i> |
| Can Can (alto sax & piano) | Offenbach |

Performers:

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

ABOUT THE PROGRAMME

Following the success of *English Places*, *English Faces* and *Rites of Passage*, Jenny Agutter and the Polmear Ambache Duo turn their attention to happiness.

Many and varied are the possible paths to happiness - through love and service to others, through work, through not working, by climbing vertiginous mountain cliffs, by lying in a field, via Spirituality or alcoholic Spirit - all these and more are covered in writings from Shakespeare to Gyles Brandreth, and music from Purcell to Offenbach and Gershwin.

And for those whom happiness still eludes, there are always the Gurus to tell us what to do. This programme is not just a fascinating and entertaining collection of readings and music, it aims to make you happier, too.

Among the writers: Jenni **Diski** (born 1947) wrote *Stranger on a Train*, about a rail journey around the circumference of the US, in 2002. The Oliver **Postgate** excerpt comes from his autobiography *Seeing Things* (1999), and Susan **Vreeland's** from *The Girl in Hyacinth Blue*. Moniza **Alvi** was born in 1954 in Lahore, Pakistan, and now lives in London. David **Breashears** is a climber and film director; he directed the Imax movie *Everest*. Rabindranath **Tagore** was the first Asian writer to win a Nobel prize (with *Gitanjali*) in 1913. Iain **Banks** has written twenty novels, and *Raw Spirit* (from which the excerpt is taken) about a search for the perfect dram. Elaine **Feinstein** was born in 1930 in Lancashire. She has written several novels and translated Russian poetry. Dr Robert **Holden** is a lecturer and writer, and holds a PhD in the Psychology of Happiness.

Among the musical items: Johann Wenceslaus **Widerkehr** was an oboist and composer writing in Paris in the early years of the 19th Century. Felix **Mendelssohn** also went to Scotland (the *Hebrides* Overture) and Ireland (*Fingal's Cave*). The **Mozart** piece is the first movement of his *Oboe Quartet*, originally with strings. **Gershwin's** *Summertime* is arranged by Roger Cawkwell. **Ravel's** *Habañera* illustrates the claim that 'all the best Spanish music is written by Frenchmen'. **Antony le Fleming** wrote his *Impromptus* for the Polmear Ambache Duo. He also did the arrangement of *Begin the Beguine*. *The Swan* and *Piece 4 in Folk-Style* were both originally written for cello and piano. Madeleine **Dring** was married to Roger Lord, principal oboe of the London Symphony Orchestra for 25 years. Theodore **Lalliet** was another French oboist/composer; he played in the Paris Opera in the 1860s. Paul **Reade** (1943-1997), as well as writing serious pieces such as *Aspects of a Landscape*, was a prolific writer of music for TV, including the signature tune to Playschool. Franz **Reizenstein** left Germany in the 1930s to live and work in London. Francis **Shaw** originally wrote *Poiray* for a TV series.

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).