



resonus

Der Wald

Opera in one Act

Ethel Smyth

Natalya Romaniw, Claire Barnett-Jones, Robert Murray,
Andrew Shore, Morgan Pearse, Matthew Brook

BBC Singers

BBC SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

John Andrews

Ethel Smyth (1858–1944)

Der Wald (The Forest)

Music-Drama with Prologue and Epilogue in One Act
Sung in English

Natalya Romaniw *soprano, Röschen*
Claire Barnett-Jones *mezzo-soprano, Iolanthe*
Robert Murray *tenor, Heinrich*
Andrew Shore *baritone, A Pedlar*
Morgan Pearse *baritone, Rudolf*
Matthew Brook *bass, Peter*
Rebecca Lea *soprano, A Youth*
Andrew Rupp *baritone, First Huntsman*

BBC Singers
Martin Fitzpatrick *Chorus Master*

BBC Symphony Orchestra
Stephen Bryant *Leader*

John Andrews *conductor*

Produced in association with the BBC Symphony Orchestra, the BBC Singers and BBC Radio 3



Ethel Smyth (1858–1944)

Der Wald *

1. Prologue	[5:34]
2. Transformation – Scene I	[2:56]
3. Scene II	[10:06]
4. Scene III	[2:57]
5. Scene IV	[15:27]
6. Scene V	[11:16]
7. Scene VI	[3:36]
8. Scene VII	[2:30]
9. Scene VIII	[1:28]
10. Scene IX	[8:28]
11. Epilogue	[1:59]
Total playing time	[66:21]

* World premiere recording



Ethel Smyth: Der Wald

In one of her many volumes of autobiography, Ethel Smyth describes how 'lying buried in grass and flowers' she and her companion were 'often wakened by the choral singing of larks to discuss the projected choral singing in *Der Wald*'. This was in 1897 and she and her friend Henry Brewster were enjoying a cycling holiday in the Abruzzi region of Italy. 'Bicycles were practically unknown in those parts, and our appearance excited frantic interest', she explained. Back at her home in Surrey she was reputed to be the first woman ever to be seen cycling in the neighbourhood, often smoking a cigar and usually accompanied by her dog.

When in 1867, her father, Major-General John Hall Smyth, was given the command of the Royal Artillery at Aldershot, he had moved his family into a large house called 'Frimhurst' at Frimley Green and it was there, at the age of twelve, that the course of the young Ethel's life was to be changed forever. She had heard a governess who had studied at the Leipzig Conservatory playing a Beethoven piano sonata, and 'then and there conceived the plan, carried out seven years later, of studying at Leipzig' and giving up her life to music. With her father being very much against the idea of his

daughter travelling abroad to study music, it took her those seven years to persuade him to agree to her plan. Not long after she arrived in Germany she was introduced to the Austrian composer Heinrich von Herzogenberg and his beautiful wife Elisabeth, known to her friends as Lisl. While Ethel was soon to fall in love with her, Lisl was to treat Ethel as the daughter she never had. Through the Herzogenbergs, Ethel was to meet many of the leading musicians of the day, notably Johannes Brahms whose music and piano playing she greatly admired although, as a man, she found him rather coarse.

Ethel was also introduced to Lisl's sister, Julia, whose husband was the man destined to become her closest male friend. His name was Henry Bennet Brewster, generally known as Harry or simply H.B. In describing her first meeting with him, she recalled how he 'seemed to have read all books, to have thought all thoughts' and that he was 'extremely good-looking, clean-shaven but for a moustache, a perfect nose and brow, brown eyes set curiously far apart, and fair fluffy hair'. She also noted that he was 'half English, half American, born and bred in France and domiciled in Italy'. Ethel was also more than fascinated by Julia Brewster who she described as being 'the strangest human

being, if human she was, that I or anyone else ever came across'. For her part, Julia, whose constitution was not strong, once remarked to Ethel that she had been feeling 'very well' in order to enjoy her company.

It was not long before H.B. had fallen in love with Ethel but it took longer for her to fall in love with H.B. As she once remarked in a letter to him: 'I wonder why it is so much easier for me to love my own sex more passionately than yours. I can't make it out for I am a very healthy-minded person'. After Julia's death in 1895, H.B. tried to persuade Ethel to marry him, but to no avail.

The following year, H.B. wrote to tell Ethel that he had 'drawn up a little plan for your new opera, just by way of suggesting something to you'. He told her to make any use of it that she could, adding that 'what I have tried for is to frame the passionate human story, to "set" it, in the impression of the forest, which must be the abiding impression. Its peace must close over the victims of the tragedy.' This new opera was *Der Wald*, the one that was to occupy their minds during the cycling holiday in the Abruzzi. The composer herself claimed that her opera was 'a short, poignant tragedy which for a moment interrupts the tranquil rites of the Spirits of the Forest', while the real story was 'the eternal

march of Nature – Nature that enwraps human destiny and reckons [cares for] nothing of mortal joys and sorrows'.

H.B. had also assisted Ethel with the libretto of her first opera, *Fantasio*. This work had its first performance on 24 May 1898 at the Hoftheater in Weimar and she was very keen to have another German premiere for her second opera, despite the fact that the Covent Garden Opera Syndicate had already expressed an interest in it; indeed she had been sent to Paris to play it to André Messager who was to be Covent Garden's Chief Conductor during 1901. She also went to Dresden to visit Count Nikolaus von Seebach, the Intendant of the Opera House there, who had shown some interest in *Fantasio*. In the event, as this meeting came to nothing, she set her sights next on Berlin where she had an ally in the stage director, one Georg Pierson, who, according to Ethel, wanted to 'demonstrate to an astonished world what sort of work a woman, an English woman, could turn out'.

Unfortunately for Ethel, Pierson died suddenly while preparing for the first performance of *Der Wald* at the Königliches Opernhaus, but this did not diminish her determination to get it on to the stage. She

took over many of the arrangements, even 'swarming up ladders and across beams' to sort out the lighting to her satisfaction, and dealing with some rather recalcitrant singers. The conductor was to be Karl Muck who, despite his hatred of England and its current Boer War, very much approved of *Der Wald*. In a 1937 radio broadcast, Ethel recalled how she had found that Muck, whom she had known in London, was now a 'man of iron and ice with white set face and a shaking voice' who told her that he was willing to produce her opera but 'between him, the composer and the English race there could be no friendly intercourse, merely the necessary business relations'. The fact that Ethel was very friendly with the German Chancellor Count Bernhard von Bülow and his wife, and had been introduced by them to the Kaiser, helped her cause more than somewhat.

The first performance of *Der Wald* took place on 9 April 1902 and, according to its composer, 'went better than one could have hoped' with the audience, despite some 'well-organized booing and hissing' before and after, being 'interested, attentive and responsive' to her intentions. The Press was generally hostile but several members of the orchestra at the following day's rehearsal

told Ethel that her opera was 'simply magnificent' (*einfach grossartig*).

There were three more performances in Berlin to increasingly enthusiastic audiences, which was possibly why Ethel was offered a date for a Covent Garden premiere later that season, providing that she could get the libretto translated into English in time. So it was that the first London performance of the opera took place on 18 July 1902 and was, according to its composer, 'one of my few almost wholly delightful operatic experiences' and 'the only real blazing triumph I have ever had'. This time she had a 'splendid cast, and a first-rate stage-manager and producer rolled into one' called Francis Neilson who thought the opera 'a strange and beautiful thing'. At one point during the rehearsals, Ethel had to call again on her friends in high places when it seemed that the production was about to be postponed. According to Neilson it was Lady Warwick who was persuaded to send a message to Covent Garden to the effect that King Edward VII, whose mistress she had been for some time, wished to send a representative to the first night of *Der Wald*. According to Ethel, however, it was the King's sister-in-law, the Duchess of Connaught, who informed the directors that the whole Royal Family wished to attend it.

Another hurried trip to Paris resulted in Ethel persuading Maurice Grau, the manager of the Metropolitan Opera in New York, to have *Der Wald* performed there – you are ‘certainly a businesslike woman’ he told her. The performance, which took place on 11 March 1903, as part of a double bill with Verdi’s *Il trovatore*, marked the first time that an opera composed by a woman had been seen at the Metropolitan; there was not to be another until *L’Amour de Loin* by the Finnish composer Kaija Saariaho (1952–2023) was produced there in 2016. The second New York performance of *Der Wald* was coupled with Donizetti’s *La fille du régiment*.

Despite the fact that Grau was taken ill during the preparations for *Der Wald*, all went well and it proved to be the most financially successful production that season. After the first performance, the composer who, at the insistence of her sister, Mary Hunter, was attired in a gown of black silk and with red roses in her hair, received seven curtain calls and an ovation that lasted for more than ten minutes. (At the Covent Garden premiere, Mary had provided her with a ‘modest evening gown of heliotrope silk’. When she had appeared on stage for her applause, Ethel’s friend, Lady Ponsonby, called out ‘who’s that with Neilson’ and when

told who it was, exclaimed, ‘I can’t believe it, Ethel never looked like that.’ It has to be said that Ethel tended to dress in tweeds or a nondescript frock.)

Harry Brewster had not been keen on Ethel taking her opera to America but in a letter to him in 1902 she wrote that ‘I feel I must fight for *Der Wald* because I want women to turn their minds to big and difficult jobs; not just to go on hugging the shore, afraid to put out to sea’. A decade or so later she was to give up composing for two years in order to join Emmeline Pankhurst (another of her female passions) in her fight to achieve ‘Votes for Women’. Indeed, she wrote a marching song which was to become the suffragettes’ anthem – but that is another story.

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Synopsis – Der Wald

A short and tragic story of passion is framed in the tranquillity and everlastingness of Nature represented by the Forest and its Spirits. As the curtain rises, these spirits or elemental forces, under the aspect of Nymphs and Hamadryads are seen engaged in ritual observances around an altar in the wood. Unshackled by Time they sing their own eternity and the brevity of things human. They fade away, the altar disappears, and the play begins.

A peasant girl, Röschen, is engaged to a young woodcutter, Henrich. Congratulations of peasants on wedding fixed for next day. A Pedlar sells his wares. Dance. Iolanthe’s horn is heard: merriment vanishes; terror-stricken the peasants fly. The lovers invoke the protection of the forest.

Iolanthe is a woman of cruel instincts and unbridled passions, supposed to be a witch and dreaded with superstitious fear. She has complete sway over Count Rudolf, the liege lord of the country, whom she despises as a weakling. Struck by Heinrich’s good looks she tries to detach him from his bride and make him enter into her service at the castle. Complaints and reproaches on the part of Count Rudolf; anger and defiance on her part. Her fascinations fail, however, to prevail over Heinrich’s love for Röschen.

The Pedlar’s denunciation of the young woodcutter as the slayer of a deer which the huntsmen find concealed in a well, gives her a chance to compel Heinrich’s obedience or to be revenged on him.

He rejects her and prefers love, which is deathless and mighty, to life which is weak and brief. Thus does the Forest answer the lovers’ prayer. Iolanthe gives the order and Henrich is slain.

The Scene changes back to its first appearance and the Spirits of the Wood take up their ritual where it was interrupted by the incursion of things transient.

Libretto

Prelude

[*The curtain rises: Primeval Forest, Spirits of the Wood etc*]

CHORUS OF WOOD-SPIRITS: Deep hid in the heart of the forest glades ever weaving and hov’ring in lonely mood. Far from the fret and strife of restless mortals we dwell, their voices we hear not, and all is at peace!

Rude tempests are hushed near our leafy shrine in the dew laden silence calmly floating watch we the seasons waxing and waning watch the ages that dawn and depart and whisper the word: Eternity!

How swiftly how surely passeth man’s delight! And e’en like a dream are his pains forget: we the Immortals, fade not neither perish are old as the heavens. And young as the blossoms that herald a bounteous spring.

Scene I

[*The same glade: Enter peasants on tiptoe*]

CHORUS OF PEASANTS: Kind friends are come to say goodbye to Röschen, fair Röschen, the joy and pride of all our hearts, o cruel maid to leave us! In vain had many a galant youth besought her to cast aside her maiden pride and join the ranks of matrons. One day young Heinrich passed her door – ah me! – and long he looked and long he lingered, she smiled on him so sweetly! – ah me! – two hearts were lost that day! The merriest heart, the lightest foot! Alas! Her dancing days are o’er. What youth were bold enough to ask a matron staid to join the dance? Ah me!

RÖSCHEN: Ah! You laugh and scoff, but know that cruel Fate will o’er-take you! Some cunning maid will steal your heart, in loving fetters bind you and then to freedom bid good bye – to freedom!

CHORUS OF PEASANTS: Oh Röschen you are going to wed! Freedom is sweet and men can wait, let them wait! No, no, we cannot wait, so come kiss me quickly if you can.

[*Laughter and confusion: enter a Pedlar with his pack, leading a bear. The women scream.*]

Scene II

PEDLAR: Fear not, he is gentle as a child!
[*He opens his box.*] Ope' wide your eyes and stare!
Combs and brushes, rings and lockets, knives and purses for your pockets, woven goods of finest Flemish stocks and smocks without a blemish, these and more I have to show. See my wares before you go! Story books from learned Milan, life of saint and death of villain, tales of war and battles gory, wild adventures, deeds of glory! See, the matter may affright you, but the prices will delight you! Pins and needles, bows and laces, ribbons, garters, daggers, braces, potent drug and healing plaster going fast and going faster! Look! Oh give my wares a glance! Buy! Oh give my wares a chance! Try these treasures only try them, cheap and good, be sure you buy them; take your chance nor wait another son and daughter, father, mother, gaffer, gammer, lad and lass... [*With pathos*] ...never let the pedlar pass!

[*He goes about, extolling his goods.*]

A YOUTH: Stop! My choice is made! [*He takes a handkerchief and kneeling presents it to Röschen.*] Though humble be the gift I bring, gentle Röschen, deign accept it.

CHORUS OF PEASANTS: Gracefully done! Come, show me your wares I pray; come give me the laces and scarlet ribbons, hurrah hurrah!
Though humble be the gifts we bring gentle Röschen deign accept them! With all our hearts we wish you joy!

RÖSCHEN: How I thank you, my poor words can never say, how shall I thank you? Father you must help me!

RÖSCHEN: [*Touched*] My friends I thank you and love you!
[*She hides her face on Peter's shoulder*]

PETER: 'Tis a dower worthy of a Queen! My Röschen weeps! From grateful hearts will flow such tears!
[*Cheering*] At dawn the wedding, at noon the feast, and merry dance to follow, come one and all!

RÖSCHEN: Come one and all come to my wedding! My heart is light as soaring lark, and like the lark's singing whose song at the gate of Heav'n thrills now with joy, and now with pain! Come join your hands, and dance awhile in the greenwood.

RÖSCHEN: In the greenwood let us dance come join me!

CHORUS OF PEASANTS: In the greenwood let us dance!

[*Dancing and stamping of feet*]

CHORUS OF PEASANTS: O what joy in the cool green wood to be dancing, come, let us sing singing springing, in the green wood dancing prancing. Come ye laggards join the dance, dancing prancing, signing, springing! Come ye laggards join the dance! [*They clap their hands*] One, two, three, bim! Bam! Come ye three!

[*Suddenly, a weird horn-blast is heard in the forest, the peasants cease dancing and turn pale.*]

PEDLAR: What horn is this that rings through the forest?

PETER: 'Tis he Landgrave Rudolf's dread mistress, 'tis Dame Iolanthe!

CHORUS OF PEASANTS: Hark!
[*The peasants cross themselves*]

PEDLAR: Her horn alarms you?

PETER: She is a witch!

[*The Pedlar Laughs: Peter checks him with a terrified gesture.*] [Exit Peter in direction of village: the Pedlar has packed his box and slowly climbs the woodland path. Röschen carries the barrel and glasses indoors, and collects her presents: when singing she is sometimes indoors sometimes outside. The Pedlar, intimidated by the sound of the horn and by her song cannot make his mind up to go, but she cannot see him.]
Fair to behold she walks the forest blighting our maids with the glance of her evil eye, our youths with her lust devouring!

CHORUS OF PEASANTS: Danger is near us! Farewell!
Stay here no longer farewell!

[*All vanish in the wood except Peter, Röschen and the Pedlar who packs up his wares in evident amazement.*]

RÖSCHEN: [*Looking anxiously into the forest.*] Come quick Beloved!

PETER: [*aside*] Woe is me our happy hours now are numbered.

PEDLAR: [*aside*] What simple folk are these!

PETER: [*To Röschen, rousing himself*] I dare not leave you here alone, 'tis far to the village, the priest must wait, go I will not.

RÖSCHEN: Fear not for me! [*Pressingly*] The priest has much to ask you and why should you stay?

Scene III

PETER: I dare not leave you alone.

RÖSCHEN: [*Smiling*] Alone! [*Gaily proudly*] Heinrich will be there his bride to guard!

PETER: [*Nods with meaning*] If so 'tis well!

PEDLAR: Farewell! My path lies through the wood, [*jokingly in answer to a warning gesture of Peter.*] I long to meet the fair Iolanthe!

PETER: [*Gravely*] If that be your road then go with God! And you child stay within till Heinrich comes, I soon shall return.

RÖSCHEN: Sancta Maria Mater Dei, Ora pro nobis peccatoribus. Ora pro nobis nunc et in hora mortis nostrae.

Scene IV

[*Pedlar quite in the background; later Röschen and Heinrich*]

PEDLAR: Weird is the sound of that horn! Bruin! Here let us stay!

[*Someone whistles in the forest; the Pedlar ducks behind a rock; Heinrich springs out of the bushes.*]

HEINRICH: (Pfiff.) (Pfiff.)

RÖSCHEN: [*Joyfully.*] Heinrich, at last!

HEINRICH: Sh!! Are you alone?

RÖSCHEN: Alone! And list'ning for your step, but what have you there?

HEINRICH: [*Dragging a dead roebuck out of the bushes*] Behold my maiden! [*Dramatically*] The game for our feast have I brought you!

RÖSCHEN: [*Horrified*] Heinrich! Heard you the horn we dread?

HEINRICH: I heard it from far, but scarcely heeded.

RÖSCHEN: [*Greatly agitated*] 'Tis death to slay the deer! Ah my love!

HEINRICH: No soul was near! Where can we hide it?

RÖSCHEN: The well is dry, the old well yonder,
here is the lid – hide it in there!
[*Kneeling down they tie the roebuck to the rope
and lower it down the well*]

PEDLAR: [Aside] 'Twere well to be going, no one trusts a
poor pedlar's word. Men's lives count as less than nought,
but game must abound, come Bruin! Let's go while we may!
[*Exits without being seen*]

HEINRICH: [*covering up the well*] There! Lie safe till
tomorrow! [*To Röschen*] But why so pale? If danger were,
it is past!

RÖSCHEN: My heart was heavy, I waited long.

HEINRICH: Hear what fate befell me.
The day was spent, and homeward bent speeding along
was I! When lo! Astride the pathway, a giant with towering
crest I spy! Roots deep thrust down in the soil, his gnarled
arms out-spread, 'twas he, the King of the forest! Crown'd
with leaves his head! [*He seizes Peter's axe and swings it in
the air.*] I gave him not good morrow but swung the
gleaming axe aloft. And fast and faster rained the blows,
severing limb from limb! His blood is flowing fast Hurrah
for life in the woods! Swaying and groaning down crashed
the giants and clear was the path, O love to thee.

[*He drives the axe into the block and opens his arms.
Röschen throws her arms round his neck.*]

RÖSCHEN: Warrior undaunted! My hero beloved!

HEINRICH: [*Points to a bracelet on her arm*] What are these?

RÖSCHEN: My wedding gifts, our friends were here to
wish me joy, and we were merry and danced in the
wood. [*With sudden agitation*] Then loud ring the horn,
the dreadful horn. [*Heinrich smiles*] O love thine you smile,
scorn not my fears.

HEINRICH: [*Tenderly*] Child, what ails you?

RÖSCHEN: I know not. I know not whence spring these
sudden fears. When I woke in the morning my heart was
light as air. When the horn woke the echoes, our comrades
trembling fled the forest. 'Twas I who feared not and
mock'd them! [*Passionately*] Ere you came with longing my
heart was faint, but now since mine eyes behold you
boding dark and wild... Assail me ah! Some pow'r will
divide us... Overwhelm us... O tarry not, the forest is
haunted, near are your foes, here close at hand they seek,
they find you, Heinrich go. [*She claps Heinrich in wild
terror.*] Beloved go... Ah go!

HEINRICH: [*Tenderly*] You speak of fear; yet bid me go and
leave you to tremble alone.

RÖSCHEN: Alone I think ever of thee strong in my love and
fearless. [*She runs to the cottage and shuts the outside
shutters*] But when you are gone in the house will I stay,
with none will I speak what'er may befall windows and
doors will I bar, no smoke shall betray a living hearth...
Father will soon be here, go... Beloved go, linger not...
O linger not.

HEINRICH: [*Passionately*] Then slake my thirst before I go,
one kiss to sooth my longing.

RÖSCHEN: Soon will pass the lonely night, near the hour,
the hour that will bind us heart to heart.

RÖSCHEN and HEINRICH: Heart to heart!

[*She makes him lead her slowly to the cottage:
they remain standing on the doorstep.*]

HEINRICH: This magic hour, this peace, is dropp'd to us from
above. Less gently falls on parching flow'r the dew, fled are
our terrors. Clam and strong, our spirits rest in their love.
Here is my heaven, here, in thy gentle bosom what power
can part us for strong as Death is Love. Thine am I heart of
my heart art thou!

RÖSCHEN: This magic hour, this peace is dropp'd us from

above. On parching flow'r the dew, fled are our terrors, our
spirits rest in their love. Here in thy bosom fades the garish
world for here is heaven.
Thine am I heart of my heart art thou!

RÖSCHEN and HEINRICH: O what pow'r can part us?
What power can part us? [*They turn to the forest*] Turn to
us and hear us, O sacred forest hear our cry, if harm be
near us, watch o're thine own and shelter us who dwell
beneath thy roof! O Mother, thy mighty heart hath taught
us mighty love! Changeless, eternal love. In childhood's
years our playmate and friend, we still implore thy fostering
care, need thy counsel, crave thine aid! Sombre loving
mother! From hidden peril defend us!
Forest defend thine own!

[*Voices of the Spirits from above*]

CHORUS OF WOOD-SPIRITS: How swiftly passeth
man's delight!

[*After a long embrace, Röschen enters the cottage, pointing
in the direction of the village as she gently separates herself
from Heinrich. Meanwhile, Iolanthe has appeared on
horseback in the background. She watches Heinrich, jumps
from her horse, with a gesture bidding her train to lead it
away. Attended by a single body-huntsman she advances
towards Heinrich.*]

Scene V

[*Heinrich turns round, sees Iolanthe, and starts violently.*]

IOLANTHE: My friend, what alarms you?

HEINRICH: [*With hesitation*] I heard no footsteps!

IOLANTHE: So deep the forest gloom, so dim the light! In
this woodland solitude if mortal approach, how often have
I trembled to wonder whether wood-god or but mortal he
be! Alas! No delicate nymph of the woods am I, alone and
strayed from path a helpless woman behold! Whence come

you, and whither bound?

HEINRICH: My name is Heinrich, of Rudolph, are mighty
liege and lord the humblest of vassals, a woodman am I.

IOLANTHE: Lithe of limb, with thews of steel, in the lusty
pride of youth! Methinks I can see the bright axe flash as
it cleaves the air! Friend, you must surely know me?

HEINRICH: [*Uneasily*] I know you not. Unless perchance
'tis Dame Iolanthe.

IOLANTHE: [*Smiling*] You whisper my name with paling
cheek... Heed, heed not these fears? But draw nigh, of your
pity help my weakness! The hunt was up at dawn today and
fierce the noontide, Heinrich I faint for thirst!

[*She sinks upon a rock as if exhausted, and hands him her
drinking horn, and gazes after him admiringly as he goes to
a spring and fills it.*]

IOLANTHE: [*Aside*] Ne'er gazed these eyes on fairer sight!
So young and pure so proud and strong; what sylvan god is
this haunting his glades as of yore for my delight?

[*Heinrich returns and hands her the horn: she drinks,
devouring him meanwhile with her eyes*]

IOLANTHE: I think you, friend. Assuaged is my thirst, yet my
limbs are weary. 'Tis good to linger in so fair a spot. Why
chose you this humble lot?

HEINRICH: [*Simply*] 'Tis all I ask! A woodman bred and born,
[*pointing to the trees*] these are my companions, this the
weapon I love to wield. [*With sudden shyness*] What more
can such as I desire?

IOLANTHE: [*Smiling*] Who knows! You bear a cross bow?
Ye sons of the Forest are marks men all!

HEINRICH: [*Glances involuntarily at the well*] I shoot as well
as many!

IOLANTHE: 'Tis well! You served me in my need, demand of me what boon you will... it shall be granted!

[*At a sign from her the huntsman hands her a hunting horn attached to a chain.*]

HEINRICH: [*Shyly*] I know not what!

IOLANTHE: Then be mine the choice! [*Throwing the chain around his neck*] My gallant huntsmen you join today! I see in your eye the gleam that I love, the glance that quails not! Noble arms we will train you to wield and this I know. Young Heinrich will wield them nobly! [*Gently*] Heinrich be my servant faithful and true!

HEINRICH: Oh, Lady dared I demand of your grace a favour my freedom were the boon! To us of the forest the world of men has nought to say, no happier, no prouder lot I ask, then He ordained who placed me here!

IOLANTHE: So say you now, who ne'er beheld the glory, the pride of Yonder world; ah! Could you but see the Knights in their glittering armour clad, with noble dames at their side, proudly, gaily to some fair tourney speed! Up then, and on where glory's meed awaits you, where verdant bloom the laurels for him who knows not fear! [*Meaningly*] Know ye that strong in her beauty's might, Woman has ruled the world? Sated and cloyed am I with Victory oh Heinrich my pride, my strength have left me, strange it were, and sweet to yield! Love's portals are open, and Love bids me enter in! And one shall walk beside me, he whose bright glance is my sun, he my delight my desire. Thou O Wood God! Love's rarest joys await you in my arms, Heinrich, o Heinrich come!

[*Under the spell of Iolanthe, Heinrich has drawn nearer and nearer to her. He is about to yield, when suddenly, catching sight of the cottage, he recovers himself and starts back from her in horror and distress*]

HEINRICH: [*Distressed*] O noble lady ask it not, it may not be! A pure and loving maiden is my bride. Hers is my heart,

and to her my troth is plighted!

IOLANTHE: [*With contempt*] The village maid that left you but now? She 'tis that keeps you! Stands 'twixt the blaze of the sun and you! O fool! [*Imperiously*] 'Tis for Iolanthe to command! Her humble slaves are ye! This is my will, bid the maid farewell; [*Count Rudolph is seen hastily approaching*] then straight way to the castle hie you, my further pleasure to learn... Be gone!

Scene VI

[*Heinrich goes into the cottage as one dreaming: Rudolph enters in agitation: Iolanthe looks at him coldly. He pauses, in silence.*]

IOLANTHE: [*Coldly*] I called you not!

RUDOLF: [*Humbly*] I would speak with you!

IOLANTHE: Speak but do not linger say on and go!

RUDOLF: At noon I missed you, and long sought you in the gloomy forest aisles, with many a lurking danger haunted: your train dismissed. [*With sudden jealousy*] Why thus alone?

IOLANTHE: When in lonely mood alone I wonder I love not him who spies on my path and dogs my footsteps.

RUDOLF: [*Passionately*] My love you thus requite stab thus my heart, Iolanthe!

[*Iolanthe looks at him contemptuously and turns away*]

RUDOLF: Ah turn not in wrath away, what fault is mine? Does aught but your pleasure delight me who live and would die to serve you? You gave me your love Iolanthe, you gave me your love.

[*Iolanthe laughs scornfully*]

IOLANTHE: [*Contemptuously*] Nor sinner nor saint, you wind-shaken reed would fain be Lord of my heart? [*Fiercely*] Enough! Too weak the chain that held me. If spell you cast, its power is gone, gone! And I am free!

RUDOLF: [*As if fighting for breath*] Yon Woodman, you love him, you love him!

IOLANTHE: [*With wild defiance*] And what if I love him? Who dares say me nay?

[*A noise is heard behind the scenes and the Pedlar's voice*]

HUNTSMEN: Our sport you have spoilt!

PEDLAR: Have mercy! Have mercy!

IOLANTHE: Send these brawlers away and go, yes! Go! [*She disappears in the cottage*]

Scene VII

[*The Pedlar is dragged in by Huntsmen; Others lead the bear. They do not see Rudolph who remains standing as if paralysed*]

HUNTSMEN: Tie his hands!

PEDLAR: Kind sirs, let me go!

FIRST HUNTSMAN: You cannot deceive us!

HUNTSMEN: You cannot deceive us!

FIRST HUNTSMAN: You and the bear were after the game.

HUNTSMAN: Were after the game.

FIRST HUNTSMAN & HUNTSMEN: Bruin is angry hark, hark! How he growls.

PEDLAR: Kind sirs, have mercy! Have mercy!

HUNTSMEN: But look! His teeth are gone! What shall we do to plague him?

PEDLAR: [*In despair*] Mercy! Have mercy!

HUNTSMEN: His master shall ride him, come quick tie him on, the impudent rogue.

[*They try to tie the pedlar onto the bears back*]

PEDLAR: O spare us, o spare us, what harm have we done, I and the bear?

HUNTSMEN: Ha ha ha ha! Old Bruin, poor Bruin! Ha ha ha ha ha ha ha!

FIRST HUNTSMAN: Stop! A better plan! [*He lifts the lid of the well. The Huntsman drag the Pedlar to the well. Others seize the rope and begin pulling at it*] You fellows... Let us duck him in the well! Up with the bucket!

HUNTSMEN: Come haul away help us.

FIRST HUNTSMAN: But what have we here? 'Tis heavy as lead.

HUNTSMEN: 'Tis Heavy as lead!

[*They pull up the deer, and are frightened*]

FIRST HUNTSMAN & HUNTSMEN: Good God! A deer!

HUNTSMEN: Whose work is this? Comrades if our Lord chance to pass and should see it.

[*The men who held the Pedlar have let him go. He endeavours to steal away unobserved*]

RUDOLF: [*Stepping forward*] Yonder the culprit! Sieze him!

PEDLAR: Lord I am not guilty!

RUDOLF: [*Sternly*] Say what you know!

PEDLAR: A youth I saw...

RUDOLF: His name?

PEDLAR: I know him not, but I was there when he hid the deer.

RUDOLF: How was he clad?

PEDLAR: Like a Woodman.

RUDOLF: [*Excitedly*] On his back a crossbow?

PEDLAR: A crossbow, [*pointing to the cottage*] my heart aches to think of his bride!

RUDOLF: [*Aside with fierce joy*] 'Tis he his crime be now on his head. This and more be mine to avenge. [*Throwing the Pedlar a purse*] Is for your pains 'tis well. I know the man!

Scene VIII

[*Iolanthe throws open the cottage door and remains standing on the sill, furiously angry*]

IOLANTHE: Still in my path?

RUDOLF: Scorned and betrayed I fear you not! [*Almost raving*] Weak am I, swayed like a reed? Try if you dare, to sway me now. Through him, your false heart has chosen, pierced be that heart by me! [*He drags her to the well*] This deer he slew he in the forest. Black is the crime and dread the death he must die. Vengeance, vengeance! A deadlier crime than this now let him atone! [*To the Huntsman, pointing to the cottage*] Bind him with cords, and lead him to death! [*The Huntsman enter the cottage*] Beware! Rudolph, Lord of the forest is master yet!

[*Exit*]

Scene IX

IOLANTHE: [*With wild cruel triumph*] Now, now is the hour! O slave who dares my favours to scorn, to flout me behold! I will scourge they pride! Bow, insolent hind, thy neck! Here shalt thou sue for mercy! And she, the foolish maid, whose feeble hands hold him back, shall kneel, shall grovel here in the dust.

[*Röschen rushes out of the cottage and falls on her knees before Iolanthe*]

RÖSCHEN: Save him! They lead him to death. O lady have mercy! Save him!

IOLANTHE: [*With cold sarcasm*] Ah me! Well a-day! Perchance 'twas unwise to refuse my favours; Iolanthe had pleaded his cause, nor pleaded in vain; but maybe my power may protect him e'en now, all yet may be well. [*She gazes fixedly at Heinrich. To the Huntsmen*] My steed! I would be gone. [*To Heinrich, looking at him sternly*] If in wiser humbler mood you repent, and fain would serve me, the follow me.

[*Iolanthe goes slowly to the background, at a sign from her, a huntsman disappears in the wood; one hears him blowing his horn and sees Iolanthe waiting among the trees for her horse*]

RÖSCHEN: [*Beside herself*] Do her will, thwart her not, go with her.

HEINRICH: Love! You bid me leave you, obey th'accurs'd of God?

RÖSCHEN: Brave not her anger, bid me farewell and go, for ah, if I bid you stay, woe is me, my love will be slain! Be slain by me, be slain. Alas!

RÖSCHEN: How can I bear it, go! Go! Or you are lost beloved!

HEINRICH: Röschen, would you bid me forget... betray you?

HEINRICH: Our life is a shadow that passes, but love is mighty and deathless.

RÖSCHEN & HEINRICH: O joy! O pain! Nor danger nor death can part us, nor danger nor death can part us now.

[*They are clasped in a last embrace; Iolanthe's horse is led on in the background; she steps forward*]

IOLANTHE: Behold I wait!

[*Heinrich's gesture indicates that he will not go: she comes nearer and looks at him threateningly*]

IOLANTHE: I wait for you!

RÖSCHEN: [*In proud triumph*] You wait in vain!

IOLANTHE: If this be thy council, proud maid, his blood be on thy head! [*To Heinrich*] Follow me or die!

HEINRICH: [*Heinrich walks firmly up to Iolanthe*] My life you offer me, my faith, my love the price! Then take my life, [*Iolanthe beckons to her huntsmen*] thou damned witch. [*Throws her horn at her feet*] Thus I thank thee, thus I defy thee! Scorn, abhor thee! Strike home, and hell take thy soul!

IOLANTHE: Enough thou base-born slave, then die!

[*Iolanthe points to her hunting knife significantly: the hunters fall upon Heinrich and stab him*]

IOLANTHE: Sharp are your knives and broad his breast! Who defies me beware! To horse! To horse!

[*Iolanthe mounts her horse and vanishes with her train in the forest*]

RÖSCHEN: [*With uplifted arms, in ecstatic passion*] Love has the victory, love and death, love and death. Sacred forest, take thine own! [*She falls lifeless on Heinrich's corpse*]

[*It has become dark, gradually light invades the scene; the spirits are again visible*]

Epilogue

CHORUS OF WOOD-SPIRITS: How swiftly passeth man's delight, and e'en like a dream his pains forgot. We, the immortals, fade not, neither perish, are old as the heavens, as young as the blossoms that herald a bounteous spring.

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The logo for Ambache Charitable Trust features the name 'Ambache' in a large, elegant, blue script font. Below it, the words 'CHARITABLE TRUST' are written in a smaller, blue, all-caps sans-serif font.

Raising the profile of music by women



Claire Barnett-Jones (mezzo-soprano). Fast becoming one of the most sought-after voices on the operatic stage and concert platform, Claire Barnett-Jones was named one of

Operawire's Top 10 Rising Stars and was Finalist and Winner of the Dame Joan Sutherland Audience Prize at BBC Cardiff Singer of the World 2021. Operatic highlights have included Fricka *Die Walküre* for the Tiroler Festspiele Erl; Waltraute *Die Walküre* for the Bayreuth Festival; Jezibaba *Rusalka* (new production) for the Théâtre du Capitole, Toulouse and Madame Flora *The Medium* for Frankfurt Opera. In concert she has worked with Sir Simon Rattle and the London Symphony Orchestra for *Katya Kabanova* and Edward Gardner and the London Philharmonic Orchestra as Sosostriis *Midsummer Marriage*.

Matthew Brook (bass) has appeared as a soloist worldwide, and has enjoyed working with ensembles including all the major UK orchestras, the Freiburger Barockorchester, the



Collegium Vocale Gent, the Gabrieli Consort, the Dunedin Consort, The Sixteen, Nederlandse Bachvereniging, the Handel

and Haydn Society, Les Violons du Roy Quebec, and Orchestre Symphonique de Montréal, amongst many others. He has developed an international reputation for his interpretation of the music of Bach and Handel, and regularly performs pieces such as Beethoven Ninth Symphony and Missa Solemnis, Berlioz *L'Enfance du Christ*, Brahms Requiem, Elgar *Dream of Gerontius*, Haydn *The Creation*, Mendelssohn *Elijah*, and Tippett *A Child of Our Time*.

Robert Murray (tenor) studied at the Royal College of Music and the National Opera Studio, and was a Jette Parker Young Artist. He has performed principal roles with the Royal Opera House, Hamburg State Opera, English and Welsh National operas, Norwegian Opera, Bergen National Opera, Beijing Music Festival, Venice Biennale, and the Salzburg and Edinburgh festivals. He made his debuts with the Bayerische Staatsoper (*Peter Grimes*), Teatro all Scala Milan in (Thomas Adés *The Tempest*) and the Theater an der Wien (title role of Handel *Belshazzar*). He appears regularly in concert with Edward Gardner, Paul McCreesh, Harry Christophers and Sir Simon Rattle.



Morgan Pearse (baritone). Australian born, Morgan Pearse is widely recognised as one of the most exciting and talented baritones of his generation. He made his professional début with English National

Opera singing Figaro / *The Barber of Seville* and since then has worked at the highest level performing regularly with all of the major UK orchestras, the Moscow Philharmonic, Melbourne and Tasmanian Symphony, Academy of Ancient Music, Israel Philharmonic and Netherlands Radio Philharmonic. Operatic roles have include Figaro / *Le nozze di Figaro* for Opernhaus Zurich, Escamillo / *Carmen* and Figaro / *Barbiere* for South Australian Opera, and Papageno / *Die Zauberflöte* for the Badisches Staatstheater. He has given recitals at various venues including the Wigmore Hall.

Natalya Romaniw (soprano). Welsh-Ukrainian soprano Natalya Romaniw is hailed as one of the most exciting young stars on the stage today. Winner of the Young Artist of the Year at the Gramophone Classical Music Awards 2020, the prestigious Singer Award at the Royal Philharmonic Society 2020 Awards and the 2016 Critic's Choice Award for Music, Romaniw is hailed by the British press as 'the outstanding soprano



of her generation' (*The Daily Telegraph*). Highlights of Romaniw's 2023/24 season include her role debut as Judith in a semi-staged Bartók *Bluebeard's Castle* for the English National Opera and a return to Grange Park Opera. On the concert platform, Romaniw will feature with the City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra and perform Verdi *Requiem* with the Philharmonia and Santtu-Matias Rouvali following her critically acclaimed debut of the work with the Hallé and Sir Mark Elder.

Andrew Shore (baritone) is one of the most outstanding singer/actors and works for all the British houses and major opera houses worldwide including the Metropolitan Opera, San Francisco Opera, Paris Opera, Netherlands Opera, Komische Oper Berlin and Lyric Opera of Chicago. Recent engagements include Major General Stanley / *Pirates of Penzance*, Lord Chancellor / *Iolanthe* and Baron Zeta / *The Merry Widow* (English National Opera), Dad / *Greek* (Scottish Opera at the Edinburgh Festival and in New York), Bartolo / *The Barber of Seville*, title role / *Don Pasquale* (Welsh National Opera), Quince / *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (Aldeburgh Festival), La Roche / *Capriccio* (Garsington), Beckmesser / *Die Meistersinger* (ENO and State Opera South Australia).



BBC Symphony Orchestra

The BBC Symphony Orchestra has been at the heart of British musical life since it was founded in 1930. It plays a central role in the BBC Proms at the Royal Albert Hall, performing at the First and Last Night each year in addition to regular appearances throughout the Proms season with the world's leading conductors and soloists.

The BBC SO performs an annual season of concerts at the Barbican in London, where it is Associate Orchestra. Its commitment to contemporary music is demonstrated by a range of premieres each season, as well as Total Immersion days devoted to specific composers or themes, and its richly varied programming includes well-loved works at the heart of classical music, newly commissioned music, collaborations with highly regarded musicians from the world of pop and, in recent years, evenings of words and music featuring readings by well-known authors.

The BBC SO has close relationships with its world-class roster of conductors and guest artists: Chief Conductor Sakari Oramo, Principal Guest Conductor Dalia Stasevksa, holder of the Günter Wand Conducting Chair Semyon Bychkov, Conductor Laureate

Sir Andrew Davis and Creative Artist in Association Jules Buckley. It also makes regular appearances with the BBC Symphony Chorus.

The vast majority of performances are broadcast on BBC Radio 3 and a number of studio recordings each season are free to attend. These often feature up-and-coming new talent, including members of BBC Radio 3's New Generation Artists scheme. All broadcasts are available for 30 days on BBC Sounds and the BBC SO can also be seen on BBC TV and BBC iPlayer and heard on the BBC's online archive, Experience Classical.

The BBC Symphony Orchestra and Chorus – alongside the BBC Concert Orchestra, BBC Singers and BBC Proms – also offer enjoyable and innovative education and community activities and take a leading role in the BBC Ten Pieces and BBC Young Composer programmes.

BBC Singers

The BBC Singers have held a unique place at the heart of the UK's choral scene for almost 100 years and have collaborated with many of the world's leading composers, conductors and soloists.

They promote a 50:50 gender policy for composers whose music they perform, and they champion composers from all backgrounds. Recent concerts and recordings include music by Joanna Marsh, Soumik Datta, Cecilia McDowall, Sun Keting, and Roderick Williams, and they have performed with singers Laura Mvula, Clare Teal, South Asian dance company Akademi and world music fusion band Kabantu.

The BBC Singers appear annually at the BBC Proms. The 2023 season will see them perform at the First and Last Night of the Proms, with Sir Simon Rattle, an evening with Jon Hopkins and the BBC Symphony Orchestra and a concert with Sofi Jeannin performing two BBC commissions.

The choir are based at the BBC's Maida Vale Studios where they rehearse and record for Radio 3.

They present an annual series of concerts at Milton Court Concert Hall, perform free concerts in London, and appear at major festivals.

The BBC Singers also offer a wide programme of innovative learning activities working with schools, colleges/universities and community groups.



John Andrews (conductor)

Born in Nairobi and brought up in Manchester, John Andrews graduated from Cambridge University with a doctorate in music and history. He won the Orchestra Prize at the Bela Bartok international Opera Conducting Competition and the Leonard Ingrams Memorial Prize from Garsington Opera. With a special affinity for Italian bel canto and English baroque, he has conducted over forty operas with companies including Garsington Opera, the Grange Festival, Buxton Festival, Opera Holland Park, English Touring Opera, Opera de Baugé and the Volkstheater Rostock in Germany. An exponent of

neglected English music, he is Artistic Director of Red Squirrel Opera. He has recorded works by Sir Arthur Sullivan including *The Light of the World* and *Haddon Hall*, *The Mountebanks* (Gilbert/Cellier) and *The Judgement of Paris* (Arne) for Dutton Epoch, Arnold's *The Dancing Master* for Resonus Classics (which won the BBC Music Magazine Opera Recording Award 2021), Sherwood's Double Concerto and Cowen's Fifth Symphony for EM Records and orchestral works by Christopher Wright and Nicholas Barton with the Royal Scottish National Orchestra for Toccata Classics. He is Principal Guest Conductor of the National Symphony Orchestra, and Conductor-in-Association with the English Symphony Orchestra.

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