

... as if the mesh of words were broken ...

*Lieder in the late
20th century
and beyond*



Clare Lesser
soprano
David Lesser
piano

Clare Lesser soprano | David Lesser piano

Heinz Holliger (b.1939)

Dörfliche Motive: Vier Bagatellen

4:01

1	I.	Der Berg hat einen roten Bart	1:13
2	II.	Ein Heimchen hüpf't ...	0:39
3	III.	Die Hand im Gras	1:28
4	IV.	Ganz plötzlich	0:41

Wolfgang Rihm (b.1952)

Drei Hölderlin-Gedichte

12:01

5	I.	Abbitte	3:50
6	II.	Hälfte des Lebens	5:49
7	III.	An Zimmern	2:21

Michael Finnissy (b.1946)

Hier ist mein Garten

12:44

8	I.	Hier ist mein Garten	5:49
9	II.	Hinten im Winkel des Gartens	6:55

Heinz Holliger (b.1939)

Fünf Mileva-Lieder

11:06

10	I.	Der Abend kommt	1:23
11	II.	Mein Herz ist starr geworden	0:54
12	III.	In die frühe Morgensonne	2:41
13	IV.	Königsblau ist der Himmel	2:41
14	V.	Möge sich dein Leben zu einem runden Kreise bilden	3:25

David Lesser (b.1966)

Dritte Trakt-Musik

10:45

Heinz Holliger (b.1939)

Sechs Lieder nach Gedichten von Christian Morgenstern

12:33

16	I.	Vorfrühling	2:59
17	II.	Der Abend	1:46
18	III.	Schmetterling	0:43
19	IV.	Vöglein Schwermut	3:07
20	V.	Vor Sonnenaufgang	1:33
21	VI.	Herbst	2:23

Total playing time

63:13

... as if the mesh of words were broken ...
Lieder in the late 20th Century and Beyond

*'And, like a dying lady lean and pale,
Who totters forth, wrapped in a gauzy veil'*

The Waning Moon - Shelley

Apt words indeed for a consideration of the late 20th and early 21st century *Lieder* tradition. Although none of the works featured on this disc are settings of Shelley, the sentiments expressed above – that of the passage of time, mutability, fragmentation, erasure and decay – capture the musical spirit, not only of these settings of Goethe (Finnissy), Morgenstern (Holliger), Hölderlin (Rihm), Trakl (Lesser), Alexander Gwerder (Holliger) and Mileva Demenga (Holliger), but also of the texts themselves, which span nearly two centuries of poetry. A set of fragments, defined by the spaces in between, and the traces left behind.

The use of fragmentation is perhaps most explicit in Lesser's setting of Trakl, or perhaps I should say, the performer's setting of Trakl, for it is the performer who chooses the words (drawn from *Helian*), which language(s) to sing them in, and their disposition throughout the work, thereby making each version unique in terms of text material and arrangement. The pitches are indicated only as contours within precise rhythmic cells, so here too there are elements of indeterminacy or undecidability, giving the performer a considerable amount of agency in the realisation of the work. For the current recording, the decision was also made to add two layers of spoken text, one in English, one in German, to echo the sung material.

Why a garden? The garden and its inhabitants (plant and animal) are recurring motifs, with all the weighty associations of *Die Natur*, to be found in more than two centuries worth of art song, and what is more, specifically the garden in autumn in the mode of decay, or of the landscape as night draws in and the light fades, leaving only the cold unknown of the stars, moon and heavens.

Hölderlin's burgeoning autumnal garden of luscious golden pears and wild roses in *Halbte des Lebens* will soon rot and die, ominous crows and ravens occur in both the Goethe and Morgenstern settings, Morgenstern takes things further in *Der Abend, Herbst* and *Vöglein Schwermut* (Death's little feathered messenger), while in Trakl's *Helian* the gods are silenced, condemned to an eternity of stone, the garden is bleak and threatening and the living and the dead are blind to reality, trapped in a labyrinth of their own making. However, not all the transformations are sorrowful: the *Dörfliche Motive* (positively Weberian in their use of counterpoint and fragmentation, even to the point of a single poem being split into four songs), show a nature that is kinder, if still more than a little unnerving and mysterious at times in its transfigurations, while the night sky and heavens of the *Mileva-Lieder* are full of hope, and the garden is a place of life, and yet even here the music allows for a seed of doubt, as though everything is a dream – seen through a gauzy veil perhaps.

Musically, these themes are continued through the deployment of both fragmentation and erasure, leading to a sense of dizziness as voice and piano navigate the vestiges of song where half the scaffolding has been kicked away. Hölderlin's words are trapped behind the ice wall of Rihm's harmony and dynamics, as the traditional *Lied* is gradually washed away through the three songs. That is not to say that the music is transformed into a radical new style during this process, but what is essentially a musical continuation of the *Lieder* tradition is here subject to a process of decay. The harmony unsettles the flow of the texts, non-functional codas intrude into a seemingly ordered structure, the voice's pedal notes become more detached, while the voice itself is erased, little by little, frequently restricted to a palette of intensely quiet dynamics (as is the piano), leaving the vestiges of sound behind (as a singer, you can feel as though you are being exorcised) – brittle, cold and broken, inhabiting the void left between fragments of text and silence.

This is familiar territory for Rihm, and this archaeology of sound, the gradual unravelling of contrapuntal threads, the frequent decay of sound into silence, and the uncovering and erasing of layers of voice and piano, can also be heard in

his settings of Celan (*Vier Gedichte aus 'Atemwende'* 1973) Lenz (*Lenz-Fragmente* 1980) and Müller (*Ende der Handschrift* 1999).

The verticality of the archaeological narrative, i.e. a slice rather than a layer, can also be heard in Finnissy's use of extended intervals in both voice and piano, and his fondness for extremes of range, especially the vertigo inducing piano bass lines underneath the soprano. This extension of interval (a perennial concern of Finnissy's from his very earliest mature vocal works such as *Song 1* (1966/69-70)) is like a grid or net, that stretches and stretches until the line almost gives way, only to be drawn back at the last minute, either through silence, or intervallic contraction, such as in the obsessive use of minor thirds in the piano that opens the second part of *Hier ist mein Garten*.....

The themes of vestiges and shreds, fragments, traces and erasure extend to the ghosts of the past as well, not so much as the weight of history, and certainly not as pastiche, but as the articulation of a musical hyper-textuality where the play of traces in time allows for a continuous unfolding and contracting, or ebb and flow of resonances. Indeed, when we were rehearsing with him, Holliger remarked that all the composers of his generation were obsessed with Bartók's music when they were young, an early fascination whose ghostly resonances can be heard in the *Sechs Lieder's* hollow fourths and fifths, thin, repetitive accompaniments and modal harmony. The opening song of the *Mileva-Lieder* presents a different musical collision, this time between the 19th and 20th centuries, while the canons that close the cycle bring the listener back to the obsessions of the labyrinth, Webern's Op.16, or the cold paranoia of *Winterreise's* endless circle of time, the waxing and waning of presence and absence, silence, sound and the remnants in between.

'Gewaltig ist das Schweigen des verwüsteten Gartens'

Helian – Trakl

Four Song Cycles and an Autopsy

The three sets of published *Lieder* by Heinz Holliger (b. 1939) create a fascinating perspective on his creative evolution over more than three decades, and form a valuable index to his evolving stylistic concerns.

The four *Dörfliche Motive* (1960-61), to texts by the controversial Swiss poet Alexander Gwerder, are a product of Holliger's first period of creative maturity. The gestural language and miniature timescale is clearly Weberian in origin, but the music is filtered through a rather more Boulezian harmonic aesthetic to create a far more immediately sensuous impact. Both numbers 2 and 3 are remarkable for the way in which Holliger essentially creates a complete song out of a single chord; the third song in particular manages both compositional rigour and a rhapsodic lyricism that anticipates the more extended passion of *Siebengesang* (1966-67), while numbers 1 and 4 seem to re-evolve the spirit of the earlier Viennese master's Expressionist works written prior to 1914.

A comparison of the *Fünf Mileva Lieder* (1994-95) with the two earlier cycles shows how wide the range of Holliger's musical style became during the 1980s. These songs set poems by the youthful Mileva Demenga (the daughter of Holliger's friend and regular collaborator, the cellist Thomas Demenga) precociously written between the ages of 6-10. Playfully, Holliger's settings become ever more sophisticated and intellectual as the texts become more 'grown-up' in their expression. Beginning with teasing references to a tonal folksong-like lyricism and 19th century influenced piano figuration in the first song, the cycle moves towards the complex (grown-up) mirror canons of the fifth setting, which echo the style of much of the huge, and then recently completed, *Scardanelli-Zyklus* (1975-91).

After the two cycles of Holliger's creative maturity, the *Sechs Lieder* (1956-7) to poems by Christian Morgenstern take us back to the beginnings of Holliger's compositional journey. As Holliger acknowledges, the influences of Fauré, Bussoni, Bartók and Swiss/French Neo-classicism are clearly apparent, and yet

Holliger forges a clear and emotionally powerful mode of utterance from these disparate elements. The approach to Morgenstern's deceptively simple verses is generalist and impressionistic evoking an overall 'summary' of the text's emotions,, and yet the delicately excited textures of *Schmetterling* (no.3) or the quasi-Expressionism of *Vor Sonnenaufgang* (no.5) make a deep emotional impact in performance.

In rehearsal, Holliger insists strongly upon a free and lyrical approach to these songs, emphasising micro-rubato within the measured beat to enhance the vocal delivery, and a more 'romantic' style of pianism, with the breaking of chords, clear changes of voicing between the hands, and strong dynamic contrasts, all of which depart from the apparent clarity of the published score. Holliger also stresses that these are still very much works in development, which may not yet have reached their final form; the orchestral versions of the *Sechs Lieder* may yet be further revised, and changes from the published score to the underlay of words and piano chords to be heard in these recordings were made by Holliger when we rehearsed with him in the summer of 2016!

Compared with the stylistic multiplicities of Holliger's *Lieder*, Wolfgang Rihm has followed a more gradually evolving path away from his neo-Expressionist roots, developing a subtle 'classicism' of delivery where every slight change of gestural contour or harmonic colouring is charged with expressive weight.

The *Drei Hölderlin-Gedichte* (2004) reveal Rihm's approach to his texts at his most refined. The three settings of short texts are all slow and reflective and yet each has its own clear emotional atmosphere, which Rihm's music subtly responds to. The cycle is arranged as a triptych; with two shorter songs flanking the longer and more emotionally complex central *Lied*. This setting of *Hälfte des Lebens* is possibly one of the finest individual songs that Rihm has produced. The range of emotion that is hinted at is very wide, and the detailing, such as the sense of the emotions darkening and becoming more distant and withdrawn, created at the bridge passage between the two halves of the song is quite masterly. Many of Rihm's *Lieder* seem to creatively engage with earlier works

from the German song tradition, and with their autumnal emotions and expansiveness of gesture it is difficult not to sense the ghost of Brahms' *Lieder* hovering behind this remarkably beautiful work.

My own *Dritte Trakl-Musik* (2013-16) is part of an on-going cycle of works reflecting my lifelong fascination with the work of the great Austrian poet Georg Trakl (1887-1914), whose work has proved a fertile source for composers (from Webern to Heinz Holliger and Peter Maxwell Davies), making him one of the most often set German language poets of the last century. In distinction to this *Lied* tradition, none of my works 'sets' Trakl's poetry in a strictly conventional sense (indeed several pieces in the cycle dispense with the voice altogether). What interests me here is the way in which Trakl obsessively returns to descriptions of, what I can only refer to as, different emotional 'speeds' – emotions travelling from the external world into the poet's hyper-neurotic psyche at different rates; some moving incredibly fast, like a bolt of lightning, others taking time to seep into it from a darkening landscape or a shadowy room – which create a sense of multi-layered, dynamic, almost hallucinatory psychological existence beneath a linguistic surface that hovers on the boundaries between Symbolism and Expressionism.

In *Dritte Trakl-Musik* I created a meta-structure of precise rhythms and melodic shapes (themselves the product of a number of predetermined stages) functioning as a sort of overall map (or maybe an autopsy report), and then allowed the performer to 'fill-in' the exact details of pitch, timbre and text (from a selection of extracts provided from Trakl's poem *Helian*), language and vocal delivery, etc., thus creating a developing partnership between composer and performer. In this version, we further decided to add additional layers of material, mixing and overlapping sung and spoken texts, and using a second (male) speaking voice to create a sense of memory, poly-layered and unpredictable, grounding the central images of the written text.

This version was created in partnership with Adam Binks, Gerhard Gall and Clare Lesser, and is dedicated to my dear friend Hassina Sakhri.

Dörfliche Motive

1.

Der Berg hat einen roten Bart,
Mit dem er morgens die Kinder schreckt.
Denn mitten im Wald, mit Moos bedeckt
Sei nachts die Sonne aufgebahrt.

2.

Ein Heimchen hüpf durch aufgehängtes
Linnen
Mal da, mal dort ein gläsernes Gespräch
Doch dann, als ob das Netz aus Worten
bräch,
Pflückt eine derbe Hand vom Weiß der
Zinnen.

3.

Dir Hand im Gras, den Kopf auf einem
Kissen,
Schläfst du zwischen Wagen und Gebälk
Die Wolke blendet, und so rosenwelk wird
dein Mund
Verwehte Streue küssen.

4.

Ganz plötzlich, abends beim Kaffee,
Schwingt leicht mein Herz sich übers Dach,
Läuft querfeldein bis an den Bach
Der Bauer meint es wär ein... Reh.

*Alexander Xaver
Gwerder*

Village motifs

The mountain has a red beard,
Which he uses to scare children in the
mornings.
Since in the middle of the woods, covered
with moss,
The sun is said to be laid out.
A cricket hops through hung-up linen
Once there, once here, a glassy chat
but then, as if the mesh of words were
broken,
a rough hand plucks off the high-hung
whites.
To you, hand in the grass, with your head
on a pillow,
You're sleeping between waggon and
beams
The cloud is dazzling, and thus shall kiss
your mouth,
Like a withered rose the scattered bedding.
All of a sudden, while having coffee of an
evening,
My heart swings lightly above the roof,
Walks cross country to the brook.
The farmer thinks it were a...deer.

Drei Hölderlin-Gedichte

5. *Abbitte*

Heilig Wesen! gestört hab' ich die goldene
Götterruhe dir oft und der geheimeren
Tiefen Schmerzen des Lebens
Hast du manche gelernt von mir.

O vergiss es, vergib! gleich dem Gewölke
dort

Vor dem friedlichen Mond, geh' ich dahin
und du

Ruhst und glänzt in deiner
Schöne wieder, du süßes Licht!

6. *Hälfte des Lebens*

Mit gelben Birnen hänget
Und voll mit wilden Rosen
Das Land in den See,
Ihr holden Schwäne,
Und trunken von Küssen
Tunkt ihr das Haupt
Ins heilignüchterne Wasser.

Weh mir, wo nehm' ich, wenn
Es Winter ist, die Blumen, und wo
Den Sonnenschein,
Und Schatten der Erde?
Die Mauern stehn
Sprachlos und kalt, im Winde
Klirren die Fahnen.

7. *An Zimmern*

Die Linien des Lebens sind verschieden
Wie Wege sind, und wie der Berge
Grenzen.
Was hier wir sind, kann dort ein Gott
ergänzen
Mit Harmonien und ewigem Lohn und
Frieden.

Three Hölderlin Poems

Apology

Holy being! I have often disturbed your
golden
Godly peace, and of the more secret,
Deeper pains of life,
You have learned much from me.

O forget it, forgive! Like those clouds there
Before the peaceful moon, I shall wither,
And you shall rest and shine again
In your beauty, o sweet light!

Half of Life

With yellow pears
And full of wild roses,
The ground clings to the lake;
You lovely swans,
Intoxicated with kisses,
You dip your heads
Into the sobering holy water.

Woe to me, where shall I find flowers,
When winter's here, and where
Will I find the sunshine,
And the shade of the earth?
The walls are standing
Speechless and cold, and in the wind
The vanes rattle.

About Rooms

Life lines are diverse
Like paths and mountain summits.
What we are here, may there a god complete
With harmonies, eternal reward and peace.

*Friedrich
Hölderlin*

Heir ist mein Garten bestellt

8.

Hier ist mein Garten bestellt, hier wart ich
die Blumen der Liebe,
Wie sie die Muse gewählt, weislich in Beete
verteilt.
Früchtebringenden Zweig, die goldenen
Früchte des Lebens,
Glücklich pflanz ich sie an, warte mit
Freuden sie nun.
Stehe du hier an der Seite, Priap! ich habe
von Dieben
Nichts zu befürchten, und frei pflück und
genieße, wer mag.
Nur bemerke die Heuchler, entnervte,
verschämte Verbrecher;
Nahet sich einer und blinzelt über den
zierlichen Raum,
Ekelt an Früchten der reinen Natur, so straf
ihn von hinten
Mit dem Pfahle, der dir rot von den Hüften
entspringt.

9.

Hinten im Winkel des Gartens, da stand ich,
der letzte der Götter,
Roh gebildet, und schlimm hatte die Zeit
mich verletzt.
Kürbisranken schmiegen sich auf am
veralteten Stamme,
Und schon krachte das Glied unter den
Lasten der Frucht.
Dürres Gereisig neben mir an, dem Winter
gewidmet,
Den ich hasse, denn er schickt mir die Raben
aufs Haupt,

Here my garden is tilled

Here my garden is tilled, here I look after the
flowers of love,
As the muse chose them, wisely spread over
the garden beds.
Fruit-bearing twig, the golden fruits of life,
Happily I planted them and look after them
now with joy.
You Priap, stand here at the side! I have
nothing to fear
From the thieves, and freely may pick and
enjoy whoever chooses to.
Only notice the phoneyes, unnerved,
shamefaced criminals;
If one of them comes closer, and blinks over
this delicate space,
Disgusting the fruits of our pure nature, so
punish him from behind
With the red picket, which springs from your
haunches.

At the back, in the furthest corner of the
garden - there I stood, the last of the gods,
Roughly educated and badly harmed by time.
Pumpkin tendrils cuddled up to the dated
trunk,
And the bough soon cracked under the
weight of its fruit.
Dry twigs surround me, dedicated to winter,
Whom I hate since he sends the ravens to my
head,
To besmirch me infamously; summer sends
the serfs,

Schändlich mich zu besudeln; der Sommer
sendet die Knechte
Die, sich entladende, frech zeigen das rohe
Gesäß.
Unflat oben und unten! ich mußte fürchten,
ein Unflat
Selber zu werden, ein Schwamm, faules,
verlorenes Holz.
Nun durch deine Bemühung, o redlicher
Künstler, gewinn ich
Unter Göttern den Platz, der mir und andern
gebührt.

Wer hat Jupiters Thron, den
schlechterwordnen, befestigt?
Farb und Elfenbein, Marmor und Erz und
Gedicht.

*Johann Wolfgang von
Goethe*

Fünf Mileva-Lieder

10
Der Abend kommt. Er ist still und schön.
Er tut alle schönen Mondstrahlen auf die
Blumen scheinen.
Der Tau kommt auf sie. Der Mond strahlt auf
die Blumen.
Sie sind Edelsteine. Richtige Edelsteine.

11
Mein Herz ist starr geworden
Wegen der Schönheit des Kindes.
Es glänzt vom Himmel wunderbar und
Maria wacht in der Heilige Nacht.

Who, discharging themselves, cheekily
expose their raw buttocks.
Filth from top to bottom! I had to fear, to
become filth myself,
A fungus, foul, lost wood.
Only by your efforts, o candid artist, shall I
win
The place among gods, which is due to me
and others.

Who has fortified Jupiter's throne, so poorly
won?
Colour and ebony, marble and ore, and
poetry.

Five Mileva Songs

Evening is coming. He is silent and beautiful
He pours out all the beautiful rays of
moonlight upon the flowers.
Dew descends on them. The Moon shines
upon the flowers.
They are jewels. Real jewels.

My heart has frozen
Due to the child's beauty.
It shines wonderfully from the skies whilst
Mary keeps watch through the Holy Night.

12

In die frühe Morgensonne,
Singen die Vöglein mit großer Wonne
Auch die Blümlein blühen,
Und das Wasser scheint zu glühen,
In dem die Fische goldig schwimmen,
Und so, so herrlich glimmen!

13

Königsblau ist der Himmel,
Und die Sonne gold und weiß
Wie ein schöner Schimmel.
Die weiße Milchbahn leuchtet auf
Ein glänzender Kahn.
Der heilige Mund spricht:
Ich bin dein schönster Fund!

14

Möge sich dein Leben
Zu einem runden Kreise bilden,
Dein Herz zu einer Mitte.
Das große Meer ist eins mit dir,
Der Himmel fängt dich auf.
Du bist geborgen in den beiden.
Es solle Frieden sein bei euch.

In the early morning sun,
Little birds are singing with great joy
The little flowers bloom aswell,
And the water seems to glow
Where fish are swimming, wrapped in gold,
And shining so, so splendidly!

Royal blue is the sky;
And the sun, golden and white
Like a beautiful white horse.
The white milky way flashes out
A gleaming bark.
The holy mouth says:
I am your most beautiful find!

May your life
Turn into a round circle,
Your heart into a centre.
The great sea is one with you,
The skies are catching you.
You are safe in both.
Peace shall be yours

*Mileva
Demenga*

Sechs Lieder

16 *Vorfrühling*

Vorfrühling seufzt in weiter Nacht,
Dass mir das Herze brechen will;
Die Lande ruhn so menschenstill,
Nur ich bin aufgewacht.

Oh horch, nun bricht des Elses Wall
Auf allen Strömen, allen Seen;
Mir ist, ich müßte mit vergehn
Und, Woge, wieder auferstehn
Zu neuem Klippenfall.

Die Lande ruhn so menschenstill;
Nur hier und dort ist wer erwacht,
Und seine Seele weint und lacht,
Wie es der Tauwind will.

17 *Der Abend*

Auf braunen Sammetshuhen geht
der Abend durch das müde Land,
sein weiter Mantel wallt und weht,
und Schlummer fällt von seiner Hand.

Mit stiller Fackel steckt er nun
der Sterne treue Kerzen an.
Sei ruhig, Herz! Das Dunkel kann
dir nun kein Leid mehr tun.

18 *Schmetterling*

Ein Schmetterling fliegt über mir.
Süße Seele, wo fliegst du hin? -
Von Blume zu Blume -
von Stern zu Stern -!
Der Sonne zu.

Six Songs

Early Spring

Early spring sighs through the vastness of
night,
Which makes my heart want to break;
The surrounds are still, no human sounds
heard,
It is just I who woke.

O listen to those layers of breaking ice,
On all the rivers, all the lakes;
To me it feels as if I should vanish with them
And, wave, should come to life again
To fall afresh, down on the cliffs.

The surrounds are still, no human sounds
heard,
Only here and there someone has awoken,
Whose soul weeps and laughs,
As asked for by the mild breeze.

Evening

On brown shoes of velvet
Evening walks through the weary land,
His broad cloak flutters and wafts,
And sleep's falling from his hand.

Now kindles he with silent torch
The faithful candles of our stars.
Be still, o heart! No further harm
The darkness now can cause.

Butterfly

A butterfly floats above me.
Sweet soul, where are you flying to?
From flower to flower -
From star to star -!
Towards the sun.

19 *Vöglein Schwermut*

Ein schwarzes Vöglein fliegt über die Welt,
das singt so todestraurig...
[Wer es hört, der hört nichts anderes mehr,]
wer es hört, der tut sich ein Leides an,
der mag keine Sonne mehr schauen.

Allmitternacht ruht es [sich] aus
auf [dem Finger] des Tods.
Der streichelt's leis und spricht ihm zu:
"Flieg, mein [Vögelein!] flieg, mein [Vögelein!]
Und wieder [fliegt's] flötend über die Welt.

20 *Vor Sonnenaufgang*

Raben halten wo im Alpenwald Gericht . . .

Durch den Raum hin schwebt im Morgenlicht
geisterleis der mütterliche Ball . . .

Raben schrein im geisterstummen All . . .

21 *Herbst*

Golden ward die Welt,
Zu lange traf der Sonne süßer Strahl
Das Blatt, den Zweig.
Nun neig dich, Welt, hinab in Winterschlaf.

Bald sinkt's von droben dir
In flockigen Geweben verschleiernd zu
Und bringt dir Ruh, o Welt, o dir,
Zu Gold geliebtes Leben, Ruh.

*Christian
Morgenstern*

Little lugubrious bird

A black little bird flies across the world,
Singing so burdened with death...
[He who can hear that, can't hear anything
else,]
He who can hear that, shall cause himself
harm,
And no longer wishes to see the sun.

Each and every midnight he rests
Upon the finger of death,
Who strokes him quietly and says:
"Fly, my little bird, fly my little bird!"
And again he flies, fluting across the world.

Before sunrise

Ravens hold court somewhere in the alpine
woods...
Through space floats, ghost-like quietly,
the maternal sphere in the morning light...

Ravens screech in the spirit-silent universe...

Autumn

The world turned golden,
The sun's sweet rays had struck too long
The leaves and twigs.
Now bow down, o world, down into winter
sleep.

Soon descends it from above upon you,
In fluffy tissues veiled.
And brings you peace, o world,
To you, o love-forged golden life, comes
peace.



**Clare
Lesser**

**David
Lesser**



Clare Lesser

Clare Lesser studied at The Guildhall School of Music and Drama, London, the University of Birmingham, Birmingham Conservatoire and the University of Sussex. She specialises in the performance of twentieth century and contemporary music, and her work in this field has been nominated for a Royal Philharmonic Society award. She regularly collaborates with composers on new works, giving over fifty world premieres to date.

She has made critically acclaimed recordings of the music of Wolfgang Rihm, Michael Finnissy, Richard Emsley, Hans Werner Henze, and Giacinto Scelsi on the Métier label. She has performed throughout Europe and the Middle East, including at the Edinburgh, Gaudeamus and Avignon International Festivals.

Her current research interests focus on post WWII and contemporary composers, indeterminacy, deconstruction and the aesthetics of graphic scores. She is Professor of Voice at New York University, Abu Dhabi.

David Lesser

David Lesser studied at The Royal College of Music, London, and the University of Huddersfield. He is active as a composer, performer and teacher, and his music has been performed in Europe and America by Ensemble Aleph, Les trois en bloc, Sylvia Hinz, Linda Hirst and Ian Pace.

He studied piano with Robert Sutherland, and has worked with composers Karlheinz Stockhausen, Peter Maxwell Davies, Michael Finnissy, James Dillon and Judith Weir. Her has recorded critically acclaimed discs of music by Michael Finnissy and Wolfgang Rihm on the Métier label.

He has taught at the University of Warwick, the University of Bath, the American Universities of Dubai and Sharjah, UAE, and at New York University, Abu Dhabi.

As a performer he specialises in the music of the 20th century and contemporary repertoires.

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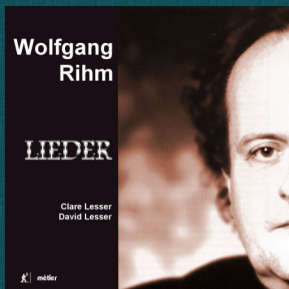
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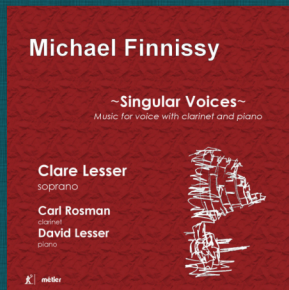


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