



A Sea Symphony

Programme



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Suite from Disney's "The Little Mermaid"

Alan Menken & Howard Ashman, arr. Crafton Beck & Mark McGurty

Soloists: Jocelyn Campbell and Joanna Parry

La Mer

Claude Debussy

I. De l'aube à midi sur la mer (From dawn to midday on the sea)

III. Dialogue du vent et de la mer (Dialogue of the wind and waves)

- INTERVAL -

A Sea Symphony

Ralph Vaughan Williams

Soprano: Katja Webb

Baritone: Kristin Bowtell

I. A Song for All Seas, All Ships

II. On the Beach at Night, Alone

III. Scherzo: The Waves

IV. The Explorers



Acknowledgements

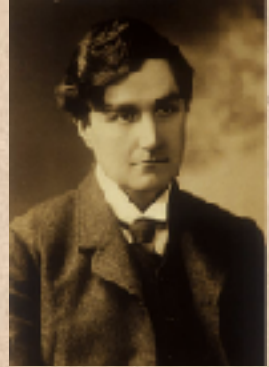
We'd like to thank Mr. Neil Hunt and Mr. Glenn Robinson, the music staff, and concert hall staff at Churchlands Senior High School for your ongoing support in making WACO possible. We are also grateful to Iceberg Media for their ongoing support and beautiful photography. Thank you for helping us to *change lives through music!*

Thank you to Tim White and the Western Australian Academy of Performing Arts for allowing us to borrow the timpani & percussion for this concert. We are grateful for your support and to be able to use such quality instruments. We are also grateful to Lynda Luce for allowing us to borrow your contrabassoon for tonight and so many other past events. Thank you for your continued support of WACO.

Thank you also to the volunteers, committee, and all other people who have helped to make this performance possible. We couldn't do it without you!

Programme Notes: *A Sea Symphony*

Ralph Vaughan Williams (12 October 1872 – 26 August 1958) was an English composer. His musical output, written over sixty years, covers operas, ballets, chamber music, secular and religious songs and nine symphonies.



Born to a vicar, and nephew to two judges, as well as being related through his mother to Charles Darwin, one might have expected him to be profoundly conservative, but his was an extraordinarily liberal family. Despite reservations about his talent, Ralph's father Arthur permitted him to begin music studies at the Royal College of Music, while encouraging him to get a "proper" degree from Trinity College Cambridge.

Over this extended period of development, he received direction from Charles Wood, Hubert Parry, and Charles Villiers Stanford.

These influences could have produced a composer in the Germanic, Romantic tradition of Brahms and Wagner. However, Vaughan Williams was not overly-influenced by the Second Viennese School. What then were his influences? Primarily Tudor music and English folk-song. As did his contemporary the Hungarian composer Zoltan Kodaly, Vaughan Williams spent a couple of years making trips into the English countryside collecting and transcribing folk songs. Shortly after he edited *The English Hymnal* for Oxford University Press, making use of his experience and enthusiasms for the voice to find appropriate musical settings to popular hymns, to expunge some of the less memorable tunes, write accompaniments and compose new tunes. These passions come very much to the fore in his most popular works, the early *Fantasia on a Theme of Thomas Tallis* and his much last *Fantasia on Greensleeves*.

Still insecure about his musical talent, Vaughan Williams sought tuition abroad, in Paris, and was recommended to Ravel. One assumes that Vaughan Williams met with Ravel's approval as Ravel later declared Vaughan Williams to be "my only pupil who does not write my music", a truly genuine compliment.

A Sea Symphony is in fact a song-cycle, setting the sections of the American poet essayist and journalist Walt Whitman's "Leaves of Grass" for soprano, baritone and chorus. Vaughan Williams' first major work, it took him the best part of six years to complete. That his first work should be sea-related is not surprising coming as he did from a nation of seafarers. Was he spurred to do so by the several other contemporary works that are sea-inspired: Stanford's *Songs of the Sea* (1904) and *Songs of the Fleet* (1910), Elgar's *Sea Pictures* (1899), Frank Bridge's *The Sea* (1911). Debussy's *La Mer* (1905)?

As you will hear, there are recurring themes in this symphony, starting with the opening flourish from the trumpets and horns, and strong nautical elements with snatches of sea shanties coming out. However, rather than attempt a scholarly analysis of the musical structure of *A Sea Symphony*, I am just going to quote what others have said of it.

In that musical bible of Grove's "A Dictionary of Music and Musicians" Ottaway and Frogley call the work:

"...a triumph of instinct over environment. The tone is optimistic, Whitman's emphasis on the unity of being and the brotherhood of man comes through strongly, and the vitality of the best things in it has proved enduring. Whatever the indebtedness to Parry and Stanford, and in the finale to Elgar, there is no mistaking the physical exhilaration or the visionary rapture."

Ursula Vaughan Williams, in her biography, writes more generally on his philosophy:

"...he was aware of the common aspirations of generations of ordinary men and women with whom he felt a deep, contemplative sympathy. And so there is in his work a fundamental tension between traditional concepts of belief and morality and a modern spiritual anguish which is also visionary."

A Sea Symphony

Text from "Leaves of Grass" by Walt Whitman

I. A Song for All Seas, All Ships.

Behold, the sea itself,
And on its limitless, heaving breast, the ships;
See, where their white sails, bellying in the wind, speckle the green and blue,
See, the steamers coming and going, steaming in or out of port,
See, dusky and undulating, the long pennants of smoke.
Behold, the sea itself,
And on its limitless, heaving breast, the ships.

Today a rude brief recitative,
Of ships sailing the seas, each with its special flag or ship-signal,
Of unnamed heroes in the ships -- of waves spreading and spreading far as
the eye can reach,
Of dashing spray, and the winds piping and blowing,
And out of these a chant for the sailors of all nations,
Fitful, like a surge.
Of sea-captains young or old, and the mates, and of all intrepid sailors,
Of the few, very choice, taciturn, whom fate can never surprise nor death
dismay.
Pick'd sparingly without noise by thee old ocean, chosen by thee,

Thou sea that pickest and cullest the race in time, and unitest nations,
Suckled by thee, old husky nurse, embodying thee,
Indomitable, untamed as thee.

Flaunt out O sea your separate flags of nations!
Flaunt out visible as ever the various ship-signals!
But do you reserve especially for yourself and for the soul of man one flag
above all the rest,

A spiritual woven signal for all nations, emblem of man elate above death,
Token of all brave captains and all intrepid sailors and mates,
And all that went down doing their duty,
Reminiscent of them, twined from all intrepid captains young or old,
A pennant universal, subtly waving all time, o'er all brave sailors,
All seas, all ships.

II. On The Beach At Night Alone

On the beach at night alone,
As the old mother sways her to and fro singing her husky song,
As I watch the bright stars shining, I think a thought of the clef of the universes
and of the future.

A vast similitude interlocks all,
All distances of place however wide,
All distances of time,
All souls, all living bodies though they be ever so different,
All nations, All identities that have existed or may exist,
All lives and deaths, all of the past, present, future,
This vast similitude spans them, and always has spanned,
And shall forever span them and compactly hold and enclose them.

III. (Scherzo) The Waves.

After the sea-ship, after the whistling winds,
After the white-gray sails taut to their spars and ropes,
Below, a myriad, myriad waves hastening, lifting up their necks,
Tending in ceaseless flow toward the track of the ship,
Waves of the ocean bubbling and gurgling, blithely prying,
Waves, undulating waves, liquid, uneven, emulous waves,
Toward that whirling current, laughing and buoyant, with curves,
Where the great vessel sailing and tacking displaced the surface,
Larger and smaller waves in the spread of the ocean yearnfully flowing,
The wake of the sea-ship after she passes, flashing and frolicsome under the
sun,

A motley procession with many a fleck of foam and many fragments,
Following the stately and rapid ship, in the wake following.

IV. The Explorers

O vast Rondure, swimming in space,
Covered all over with visible power and beauty,
Alternate light and day and the teeming spiritual darkness,
Unspeakable high processions of sun and moon and countless stars above,
Below, the manifold grass and waters,
With inscrutable purpose, some hidden prophetic intention,
Now first it seems my thought begins to span thee.

— — — — —

Down from the gardens of Asia descending,
Adam and Eve appear, then their myriad progeny after them,
Wandering, yearning, curious, with restless explorations,
With questionings, baffled, formless, feverish, with never-happy hearts, that
 sad incessant refrain,
Wherefore unsatisfied soul? Whither O mocking life?
Ah who shall soothe these feverish children?
Who Justify these restless explorations?
Who speak the secret of impassive earth?

— — — — —

Yet soul be sure the first intent remains, and shall be carried out,
Perhaps even now the time has arrived.
After the seas are all crossed,
After the great captains and engineers have accomplished their work,
After the noble inventors,
Finally shall come the poet worthy that name,
The true son of God shall come singing his songs.

— — — — —

O we can wait no longer,
We too take ship O Soul,
Joyous we too launch out on trackless seas,
Fearless for unknown shores on waves of ecstasy to sail,
Amid the wafting winds, (thou pressing me to thee, I thee to me, O Soul,)
Caroling free, singing our song of God,
Chanting our chant of pleasant exploration.

O soul thou pleasest me, I thee,
Sailing these seas or on the hills, or waking in the night,
Thoughts, silent thoughts, of Time and Space and Death, like waters flowing,
Bear me indeed as through the regions infinite,
Whose air I breathe, whose ripples hear, lave me all over,
Bathe me O God in thee, mounting to thee,
I and my soul to range in range of thee,

O soul thou pleasest me, I thee,
Sailing these seas or on the hills, or waking in the night,
Thoughts, silent thoughts, of Time and Space and Death, like waters flowing,
Bear me indeed as through the regions infinite,
Whose air I breathe, whose ripples hear, lave me all over,
Bathe me O God in thee, mounting to thee,
I and my soul to range in range of thee.

O Thou transcendent,
Nameless, the fibre and the breath,
Light of the light, shedding forth universes, thou centre of them.
Swiftly I shrivel at the thought of God,
At Nature and its wonders, Time and Space and Death,
But that I, turning, call to thee O soul, thou actual Me,
And lo, thou gently masterest the orbs,
Thou matest Time, smilest content at Death,
And fillest, swellest full the vastnesses of Space.

Greater than stars or suns,
Bounding O soul thou journeyest forth;

Away O soul! hoist instantly the anchor!
Cut the hawsers -- haul out -- shake out every sail!
Sail forth -- steer for the deep waters only,
Reckless O Soul, exploring, I with thee, and thou with me,
For we are bound where mariner has not yet dared to go,
And we will risk the ship, ourselves and all.
O my brave Soul!
O farther, farther sail!
O daring joy, but safe! are they not all the seas of God?
O farther, farther, farther sail!



Guest Artists



Kristin Bowtell is a baritone and conductor based in Perth, Western Australia. He studied at the University of Western Australia, and with Simon Halsey at the Royal Welsh College of Music and Drama. Kris is an Australia Council ArtStart recipient and was part of the Symphony Services International Conductor Development Program. Recent engagements include The Loudspeaker in The Emperor of Atlantis and Male Chorus in Medée with Lost and Found Opera, and Bottom in A Midsummer Night's Dream for the WA Academy of Performing Arts.

Kristin has performed in multiple roles including The Doctor (Verdi, Macbeth), Water Goblin (Dvorak, Rusalka), Angelotti (Puccini, Tosca), and Bottom (Britten, A Midsummer Night's Dream). Kristin has also sung as a concert soloist in Orff's Carmina Burana, Handel's Messiah, Haydn's The Creation, Mozart's Requiem and Coronation Mass.

Kristin commenced as Music Director of UWA Choral Society last October, and will sing Peter in Hansel and Gretel on 22 February (Opera in the Park, WA Opera & Perth Festival).



Katja Webb completed her Bachelor of Science with a Diploma of Modern Languages in German in 2001 and her Advanced Diploma of Performing Arts in Classical Voice at the West Australian Academy of Performing Arts in 2004.

She has performed in musical theatre and opera productions including 'Les Miserables', 'My Fair Lady', 'Candide', 'Rigoletto' and 'Falstaff'. Katja was one of the West Australian Opera Company's Emerging Artists for 2006, and has performed with the company as a soloist and chorus member.

As a soloist, Katja has sung with choirs in Perth and in Germany, as well as performing recitals for the West Australian Lieder Society and The Society of WA Opera Lovers. Her repertoire includes Faure's 'Requiem', Bach's 'Magnificat in D', 'Christmas Oratorio' and 'Mass in F', Vivaldi's 'Dixit Dominus' and 'Gloria', Handel's 'Messiah' and 'Acis and Galatea', Mozart's 'Requiem', 'Coronation Mass' and 'Exsultate, Jubilate', Haydn's 'Nelson Mass', Dvořák's 'Mass in D' and Rossini's 'Petite Messe Solennelle'.

WA Charity Orchestra

Concertmaster

Sera Lee

1st Violin

Brittany Williams
Chad Saterlee
Jillian Abraham
Lucy Wang
René Kuan
Kate Stanbury
Leyton Hilmer
Thomas Mahoney
Ciara Sudlow

2nd Violin

David Maconochie
Samantha Ion
Charlotte Chadwick
Sarah Fishleigh
Ronald Thomas
Marie-Victoire Cumming
Rachael Ho
Tanya Ramakrishnan
Olivia Bryce

Viola

Aaron Dungey
Scott Trethowen
Amadea Foss
Ulrich Kiefner
Rachael McMinn
William Tran
Hanae Wilding
Katie Doyle
Liam Neville
Alanna van Mierlo

Cello

Elise Chong
Elena Wittkuhn
Hayden Reiss
Mila Snyman
Maia van Kampen
Sarah Hussey

Double Bass

Fraser Soet
Sophie Cornforth
Kirsty Malcolm
Keith Bender

Flute

Megan Barbetti
Tarmon Simpson
Rachel Hicks
piccolo

Oboe

Janine Taylor
Yonna Sunderland

Cor Anglais

Anne Phillips

Clarinet

Lorenzo Italiano
Flynn Passamani
bass clarinet
Stella Sawyer
Christian Colgan
Eb clarinet

Bassoon

Katherine Walpole
Yanika O'Brien
Stuart Ferrie

Contrabassoon

Melissa Mikucki

Horn

Sandra McKenna
Inez McGinley
Milly McAuliffe
Bede van Schaijck

Trumpet

Tracey Harris
Ian Teo
Samantha Marley

Cornet

Chris Zappa
Mathew Leak

Trombone

Katelyn Southon
Dillon Clegg

Bass Trombone

Edward Mikucki

Tuba

Matthew Dekker

Timpani & Percussion

Thomas Robertson
Laura Saxon
Joseph Eng
Tayla Rattray
Jet Kye Chong
Steven Hartley

Harp

Kira Gunn
Mina Mitric

Piano

Kirsty Leong

Organ

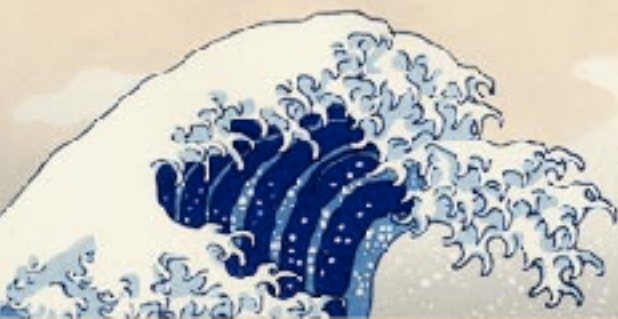
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WACO Choir

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Rose Belford
Eliza Bourgault du
Coudray
Patricia Brown
Dallas Campbell
Jocelyn Campbell
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Louise Carson
Richelle Chen
Mary Claridge
Michael Cliff
Tanya Crewe
Teresa Culbert
Chelsea Davis
Emily Davis
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Debra-Anne Forbes
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Kohsei Gilkes
Kai Han
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Angela Ho
Mai Hoang
Vivienne Horley
Gabriella Ibrahim
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Anna Kania
Matthew Kiely
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Harry Kwon
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Graham Lawrence
David Lawrence
Sarah Lawrence
Christopher Leak
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Jemima Loveland
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