

# Göknil Meryem Biner (soprano) and Tom McGrath (piano)

**Wednesday Lunchtime Concerts** *providing lunchtime music in the heart of the city since 1974*  
St Andrew's on The Terrace WELLINGTON



## Welcome

It is wonderful that you have come. Thank you.

We want your experience today to be the best that it can be and would appreciate you taking a moment to read the following before the concert commences.

**Keep safe** by locating the exit nearest to your seat.

In the event of an earthquake, our recommendation is to **Drop, Cover and Hold**.

**Bon appetit!** You are welcome to have your lunch during the performance. Switching your cell phone to **silent** is important to the performers and other members of the audience.

Your support by way of a **donation** and telling others about the concerts would be fantastic and very much appreciated. It does make a difference.

If you wish to photograph or video today's concert, please ask for permission from the performer(s) before the concert begins. This is important.

We invite you now to sit back, relax and **enjoy** the concert.

**Our Mission** is to create a lively, open Christian faith community, to act for a just and peaceful world, and to be catalysts for discovery, compassion and celebration in the capital.

These lunchtime concerts are **advertised** through Radio New Zealand Concert's Live Diary at around 8.10 am on the day of the concert, and listed on St Andrew's website.

To be placed on the email **circulation list** for concert information, please email Marjan on [marjan@marjan.co.nz](mailto:marjan@marjan.co.nz). Also join our facebook group Friends of St Andrew's on The Terrace Lunchtime Concerts, <https://www.facebook.com/groups/315497448862287/>.

Check out the noticeboards in the foyer each time you come.

# Programme

## Robert Schumann 1809-1856

### Kinderszenen op 15

- I Von fremden Ländern und Menschen  
(Of Foreign Lands and People)
- II Curiose Geschichte (A Strange Story)
- III Hasche-Mann (Blindman's Bluff)
- IV Bittendes Kind (Pleading Child)
- V Glückes genug (Perfect Happiness)
- VI Wichtige Begebenheit (An Important Happening)
- VII Träumerei (Dreaming)
- VIII Am Kamin (By the Fireside)
- IX Ritter vom Steckenpferd  
(The Knight of the Hobby Horse)
- X Fast zu Ernst (Almost too Serious)
- XI Fürchtenmachen (Frightening)
- XII Kind im Einschlummern (Child Falling Asleep)
- XIII Der Dichter spricht (The Poet Speaks)

## Johannes Brahms 1833-1897

Ständchen (Kugler) op.106 no.1

Wie Melodien (Groth) op.105 no.1

Meine Liebe ist grün (Felix Schumann) op.63 no.5

## Clara Schumann 1819-1896

Am Strande (Burns transl. Gerhard)

Sie liebten sich beide (Heine) op.13 no.2

Liebst du um Schönheit (Rückert) op.12 no.4

Er ist gekommen (Rückert) op.12 no.2

Ich stand in dunklen Träumen (Heine) op.13 no.1

Lorelei (Heine)

“Perhaps it is an echo of the words you once wrote to me – that I often seem to you like a child.”

Robert Schumann on to his fiancé Clara Wieck in March 1839 concerning *Kinderszenen* op. 15. Two years earlier, Schumann had proposed to eighteen year old Clara, who was daughter of his former piano teacher Friedrich Wieck. Her father was vehemently opposed to the the romance that had blossomed since 1835 between his student and his prodigiously talented daughter. Eventually after a legal battle, they arrived in Leipzig on September 10th 1840, the day before her 21st birthday. The following years were full of activity for the young couple. Most of Clara’s lieder, with their sensitivity to the romantic poetry as well as superbly crafted accompaniments date from 1840-44. *Am Strande*, whose swirling accompaniment figure closely resembles that of Schumann’s *Der Nußbaum*, also composed in 1840, was presented to Robert with *Ich Stand in dunklen Träume* upon their first shared Christmas. By this stage she was pregnant with the first of their eight children. The op.12 songs were part of a collaboration with Robert on 12 poems from Rückert’s *Liebesfrühling*.

In 1853, the young Johannes Brahms arrived at the Schumanns with an introduction from the violinist, Joseph Joachim. A lifelong friendship developed between them. Schumann soon published the celebrated article, *New Paths*, which heralded Brahms as the long awaited successor to Beethoven. In 1854, after Robert’s progressing mental illness caused him to attempt suicide by jumping into the Rhine, he was admitted to an asylum near Bonn and forbidden to have contact with Clara. Brahms was able to act as a conduit which must have been difficult, considering that he was in love with Clara himself.

Following Schumann’s death in 1856, Brahms maintained a deep friendship with Clara and their surviving children. He corresponded regularly with Clara, seeking her opinion on his new compositions, many of which were performed or premiered by Clara, while others were musical tributes or dedicated to the Schumann family. The final song in our Brahms selection today, *Meine Liebe ist grün*, was set in 1873 to a euphoric text by Felix Schumann, Clara and Robert’s 8th child, who died of tuberculosis in 1879.

Unfortunately Clara ceased composing when Robert died, but continued to support her family performing, often championing her late husband and Brahms works as well as teaching and touring with Joachim. With Brahms assistance, she also edited her husband’s complete works. Today she is remembered as perhaps the greatest pianist of her age in the romantic Middle-European tradition of Bach, Mozart, Mendelssohn, Schumann and Brahms in direct opposition to the *New German School* of Wagner and Liszt.

## **Ständchen**

### **Serenade**

*Franz Kugler*

The moon shines above the mountains,  
So fitting for romance.

A fountain murmurs in the garden,  
Otherwise silence far and wide.

Beside the wall in the shadows,  
There stand three students,  
With flute, violin and zither,  
Singing and playing.

The sounds steal gently  
Into the dreams of the most beautiful of  
girls,  
She gazes at the blond suitor  
And whispers "forget me not."

## **Wie Melodien zieht es mir**

*Klaus Groth*

Thoughts, like melodies, they waft  
quietly through my mind.  
They bloom like spring flowers and  
hover there like a scent.

The word comes to grasp them and lead  
them to the eye.  
Like grey mist, they pale and vanish  
like a breath.

And even so rests in rhyme hidden a  
scent  
That mildly draws a tear out of the  
silent soul.

## **Meine Liebe ist grün**

*Felix Schumann*

My love is green like the lilac bush,  
And my love is as beautiful as the sun,  
Which fills the bush with scent and joy.

My soul has wings like a nightingale,  
And cradles itself in blooming lilac.  
It rejoices and sings love-drunk songs  
enchanted by the scent.

## **Am Strande**

### **On the Shore**

*Robert Burns*

*German translation by Wilhelm  
Gerhard*

Musing on the roaring ocean  
Which divides my love and me;  
Wearying heaven in warm devotion,  
For his weal where'er he be;

Hope and fear's alternate billow  
Yielding late to nature's law;  
Whispering spirits round my pillow  
Talk of him that's far awa.

Ye whom sorrow never wounded,  
Ye who never shed a tear,  
Care-untroubled, joy-surrounded,  
Gaudy day to you is dear.

Gentle night, do thou befriend me;  
Downy sleep, the curtain draw;  
Spirits kind, again attend me,  
Talk of him that's far awa!

**Sie liebten sich beide**

**They Both Loved One Another**

*Heinrich Heine*

They both loved one another,  
But neither would confess it.  
They looked at each other with such  
enmity  
And were perishing from love.

Finally they parted  
And only saw each other sometimes in  
dreams  
They had long since died  
And hardly knew it themselves.

**Liebst Du um Schönheit**

**If You Love for beauty**

*Friedrich Rückert*

If you love for beauty,  
O do not love me.  
Love the sun,  
She has golden hair.

If you love for youth,  
O do not love me.  
Love Springtime,  
Which is young every year.

If you love for riches,  
O do not love me.  
Do love the mermaid  
She has many a clear pearl.

If you love for love,  
O yes, do love me.  
Love me always,  
I will love you forever.

**Er ist gekommen**

**He arrived**

*Friedrich Rückert*

He arrived  
In storm and rain,  
My beating heart  
Received him anxiously.  
How could I have guessed  
That his paths would cross with mine?

He arrived  
In storm and rain,  
He daringly  
Took my heart.  
Did he take mine?  
Did I take his?  
The two were drawn towards each  
other.

He arrived  
In storm and rain.  
Now the blessings of spring  
Have arrived.  
The friend travels on,  
I take it without sadness,  
As he will be mine on all paths.

## **Ich stand in dunklen Tränen**

### **I Was Standing In Dark Tears**

*Heinrich Heine*

I was standing in dark tears  
And looking upon her portrait.  
And the beloved face  
Secretly came to life.  
A wonderful smile  
Formed around her lips,  
And her eyes shone  
As if with sorrowful tears.  
Also my tears were flowing  
Down from my cheeks  
And alas, I cannot believe  
That I have lost you.

## **Lorelei**

*Heinrich Heine*

I do not know what it means,  
My being so sad;  
There is a tale from olden times  
Which does not want to leave my mind.

The air is cool and it's getting dark,  
And calmly the Rhein is flowing.  
The peak of the mountain is gleaming  
In the evening sun.

The most beautiful maiden is sitting  
Up there wonderfully,  
Her golden jewellery shimmers,  
She combs her golden hair.

She combs it with a golden comb  
And is singing a song.  
Which has a curious  
And powerful melody.

The sailor in the little ship  
Is grasped by wild longing.  
He doesn't look out for the rock riffs,  
He only looks up into the heights.

I think the waves are devouring  
Sailor and boat in the end.  
And all that, with her singing,  
The Lorelei has done.

# Biography:

**Göknil Meryem Biner**, of Turkish descent, was born in Munich and studied at the Richard-Strauss-Konservatorium under Kari Löövaas. She performed around Europe, Israel, Japan and New Zealand including broadcasts by Bavarian Radio and Radio New Zealand. With her husband, pianist Tom McGrath, they have given song recitals throughout the country including recitals in Wellington's Ilott Theatre, the Christchurch Arts Festival and tours for Chamber Music New Zealand. She premiered the role of Sister Angela in Anthony Ritchie's *The God Boy* and recently appeared in Phillip Norman's *A Christmas Carol* as Mrs Cratchitt. She enjoys teaching singing and Yoga alongside raising their two children.

**Tom McGrath** was born in Wellington and studied with Diedre Irons at the University of Canterbury and at the Richard-Strauss-Konservatorium in Munich. A prizewinning song accompanist, he participated in courses by Graham Johnson and Dietrich Fischer-Dieskau and has performed and recorded in Europe, Japan and New Zealand. He has made two CDs of music by Anthony Ritchie for Ode Records as well as a recording of lieder for Genuin. Since returning to live in New Zealand in 2003, he has performed throughout the country including tours for Chamber Music New Zealand and appearances as soloist with regional orchestras. He also enjoys occasional appearances with 'The Verlaines.' He has been on the staff of the Otago University Music Department since 2004.

# Contact us



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## Coming Up

### July

12<sup>th</sup> - THURSDAY

Art of the Fugue - Robert Costin – Piano

18<sup>th</sup> Jonathan Berkahn and Friends

25<sup>th</sup> 'Participants from the 2018 ASQ International Music Academy.'

26<sup>th</sup> THURSDAY

'Tutors from the 2018  
ASQ International Music Academy'

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*and all those who donate weekly*

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The only place you'll find reviews of these concerts (and almost all other classical music in Greater Wellington) is at [www.middle-c.org](http://www.middle-c.org)

Use it to find out what's coming up in classical music performance through the website's  
**Coming Events listings**