

344 In Flanders Field

Williams: Welcome to *Pritzker Military Presents* for this special presentation with the Chicago Symphony Orchestra of *In Flanders Fields: Songs of the Great War* to commemorate the centennial of the Armistice. I'm your host Jay Williams, and this program is coming to you from the Pritzker Military Museum and Library in downtown Chicago. It's sponsored by the Chicago Symphony Orchestra. Perhaps no conflict tapped as deeply into the cultural psyche across the globe as did the Great War. The horror and totality of the war had a terrible impact upon those who saw it firsthand as well as those who saw its aftermath. Individuals attempted to cope with it however they could, including through music. Before George Butterworth fought in the Great War, he wrote his *Six Songs from a Shropshire Lad* as an expression of his love for traditional English folksongs. Charles Edward Ives' powerful *In Flanders Fields* speaks to the American composer's sentiments about war, while composer and British Army member Ivor Gurney's *Ludlow and Teme* evokes the prewar simplicity of the English town of his youth. Music from Tin Pan Alley songwriters who were responsible for printing and selling much of the sheet music of the Great War close this program of extraordinary musical storytelling. In partnership with the Chicago Symphony Orchestra, this program is part of a larger series of events that will explore themes of peace and reflection with timeless works. These programs are presented with leadership support from Colonel Illinois Jennifer N. Pritzker, Illinois Army National Guard Retired, President and Founder of the Pritzker Military Museum and Library. Performing with us this evening are Mario Rojas, Christopher Kenney, and Shannon McGinnis. Mario Rojas is a tenor first year member of the Ryan Opera Center Ensemble at the Lyric Opera of Chicago where he made his debut in the 2018 production of *Rigoletto*. He will appear in the 2018/2019 season performances of *La boheme*, *La traviata*, and *Il trovatore*. Christopher Kenney is a baritone first year member of the Ryan Opera Center Ensemble at the Lyric Opera of Chicago where he will appear in the 2018/2019 season performances of *Cendrillon* and *La traviata* and will serve as an understudy in *La boheme*. Shannon McGinnis is a pianist, lecturer, and vocal coach at the Chicago College of Performing Arts at Roosevelt University. She is also a cofounder and director of education at the Collaborative Arts Institute of Chicago and works on the coaching staff of the Ryan Opera Center at the Lyric Opera of Chicago. In addition Dr. William Brooks will provide background commentary on how WWI shaped the music of the era. William Brooks is a professor of music at the University of York. He has published extensively on American music, including two chapters in the *Cambridge History of American Music*. A composer and performer as well as a scholar, his work concerns the interaction of vernacular and cultivated musical traditions. He is currently coediting a collection of essays *Over Here, Over There: Transatlantic Conversations on the Music of World War I*. Please join me in welcoming to the Pritzker Military Museum and Library William Brooks.

(Applause)

Brooks: Tonight I want to sketch the ways in which the war was a cultural, musical, and personal watershed for literally millions of people on both sides of the ocean. Our program tonight falls into two parts. In the first you will hear music by three composers of concert repertoire--Charles Ives, George Butterworth, and Ivor Gurney. In the second will be heard five popular songs from before and after the war. Ives, Butterworth, and Gurney collectively illustrate the extent to which people's lives were transformed by their personal experience in the war. All three of these composers were in or approaching the prime of their careers when the war started. By the end of the war, one was dead, and the health and creative vitality of the other two were shattered. Butterworth and Gurney were both English, and their song cycles both set poems taken from A.E. Housman's

collection of verse *A Shropshire Lad*, first published in 1896, almost two decades before the World War but immediately after the Crimean War. Housman's mixture of themes--the bittersweet experience of time, a lingering nostalgia for England's rural past, and a muted cynicism about death and change--resonated powerfully with young English soldiers caught up in the war and indeed with composers trying to cope with its aftermath. George Butterworth, born in 1885--just a year before Housman's poems appeared--set six of these poems in 1911 when war was only a remote possibility. These are the songs we'll hear tonight. Butterworth enlisted early and was eventually promoted to lieutenant in the 15th battalion Durham Light Infantry. In July 1916 his troops entered the Battle of the Somme. Butterworth was slightly wounded, treated, and returned to the front. On August 4th in intense fighting, he led his troops in capturing a German trench known as Munster Alley. The Germans retaliated, and on the morning of August 5th Butterworth was shot through the head by an enemy sniper. His commanding officer Brigadier General Page Croft famously characterized him as--I'm quoting now--"a brilliant musician in times of peace and an equally brilliant soldier in times of stress." Ivor Gurney was born in 1890 and studied music from an early age. In 1911 he was awarded a scholarship to the Royal College of Music where he studied with major English figures like Ralph Vaughan Williams and Herbert Howells. He showed great promise as a poet as well as a composer, but he also showed great instability, and in 1913 a breakdown temporarily halted his studies. He was back at the Royal College when the war started, and six months later he joined many of his friends by enlisting in the Gloucestershire regiment. Initially he was exhilarated by the war, writing the poems that would be eventually published as *Severn and Somme*. Wounded in April 1917 he recovered quickly and returned to the front, now concentrating on writing songs like *In Flanders* and *By A Bierside*. Five months later he was gassed and sent back to Edinburgh. There he recovered enough to see his poems into print, but he also exhibited signs of acute depression. In March 1918 came a second, very severe breakdown. After a partial recovery he was granted a medical discharge with his condition attributed to shellshock. For the next four years Gurney's condition ranged between hugely creative and completely incapacitated. In 1919 he resumed his studies with Ralph Vaughan Williams, and inspired by his mentor's Housman cycle *On Wenlock Edge*, he created a similar set, *Ludlow and Teme*. Gurney remained erratically productive through 1921, but his condition deteriorated, and he spent his last fifteen years in psychiatric asylums. He died of tuberculosis on the day after Christmas 1937. The United States of course remained neutral for well over two years, entering the war only in 1917. Unlike Gurney and Butterworth, the American composer Charles Ives did not aspire to a career in music. Born in 1876, by day he was an insurance executive. His remarkable compositions were created in the evenings and on weekends. He was a Wilsonian progressive, and like his president he favored neutrality when the war started in 1914. But he was deeply affected by the sinking of the *Lusitania* in 1915, and his views about engagement slowly changed. By April 1917 he had fully accepted American involvement, and in the four months that followed the country's declaration of war he wrote a group of three war songs, two of them setting his own texts. *In Flanders Fields* sets the iconic poem by the Canadian military physician John McCrae, which had an extraordinary impact in the United States and Canada. Between 1917 and 1922 sixty-five settings--sixty-five settings or more--were composed by musicians ranging from complete amateurs to globetrotting professionals. Ives' piece was actually the second of these to be performed at, of all things, a banquet for insurance executives in late April of 1917. Heaven only knows what they thought. Ives was forty-three years old in 1917. He tried repeatedly to become an ambulance driver, but was turned down. So he threw himself into the war effort on the home front. He was central in steering the insurance industry's response to

the war. He raised money for the Liberty Loan Campaigns. He worked for the Red Cross, all while he was running a business, raising a family, and writing music. In October 1918 he collapsed, perhaps from a heart attack, perhaps from nervous exhaustion. He took many months to recover, and after that most of his newly limited energy went into revising and publishing his scores. His creative life had ended just a month before the Armistice. Please join with me now in welcoming Christopher Kenney and Shannon McGinnis.

(Applause)

[Loveliest of Trees]

The loveliest of trees, the cherry now
Is hung with bloom along the bough,
And stands about the woodland ride
Wearing white for Eastertide.

Now, of my threescore years and ten,
Twenty will not come again,
And take from seventy springs a score,
It only leaves me fifty more.

And since to look at things in bloom
Fifty springs is little room,
About the woodlands I will go
To see the cherry hung with snow.

[When I Was One-And-Twenty]

When I was one-and-twenty
I heard a wise man say,
"Give crowns and pounds and guineas
But not your heart away;
Give pearls away and rubies
But keep your fancy free."
But I was one-and-twenty,
No use to talk to me.

When I was one-and-twenty
I heard him say again,
"The heart out of the bosom
Was never given in vain;
'Tis paid with sighs a plenty
And sold for endless rue."
And I am two-and-twenty,
And oh, 'tis true, 'tis true,
'Tis true.

[Look Not In My Eyes]

Look not in my eyes, for fear
They mirror true the sight I see,
And there you find your face too clear
And love it and be lost like me.
One the long nights through must lie

Spent in star-defeated sighs,
But why should you as well as I
Perish? Gaze not in my eyes.

A Grecian lad, as I hear tell,
One that many loved in vain,
Looked into a forest well
And never looked away again.
There, when the turf in springtime flowers,
With downward eye and gazes sad,
Stands amid the glancing showers
A jonquil, not a Grecian lad.

[Think No More, Lad]
Think no more, lad; laugh, be jolly;
Why should men make haste to die?
Empty heads and tongues a-talking
Make the rough road easy walking,
And the feather pate of folly
Bears the falling sky.

Oh, 'tis jesting, dancing, drinking
Spins the heavy world around.
If young hearts were not so clever,
Oh, they would be young forever;
Think no more; 'tis only thinking
Lays lads underground.

Think no more, lad; laugh, be jolly;
Why should men make haste to die?
Empty heads and tongues a-talking
Make the rough road easy walking,
And the feather pate of folly
Bears the falling sky.

[The Lads in Their Hundreds]
The lads in their hundreds to Ludlow come in for the fair,
There's men from the barn and the forge and the mill and the fold,
The lads for the girls and the lads for the liquor are there,
And there with the rest are the lads that will never be old.

There's chaps from the town and the field and the till and the cart,
And many to count are the stalwart, and many the brave,
And many the handsome of face and the handsome of heart,
And few that will carry their looks or their truth to the grave.

So now you may stare as you like and there's nothing to scan;
And brushing your elbows unguessed-at and not to be told
They carry back bright to the coiner the mintage of man,
The lads who will die in their glory and never be old.

[Is My Team Ploughing]
“Is my team ploughing,
That I was used to drive
And hear the harness jingle
When I was man alive?”

Ay, the horses trample,
The harness jingles now;
No change though you lie under
The land you used to plough.

“Is football playing
Along the river-shore,
With lads to chase the leather,
Now I stand up no more?”

Ay, the ball is flying,
The lads play heart and soul;
The goal stands up, the keeper
Stands up to keep the goal.

“Is my girl happy,
That I thought hard to leave,
And has she tired of weeping
As she lies down at eve?”

Ay, she lies down lightly,
She lies not down to weep:
Your girl is well contented.
Be still, my lad, and sleep.

“Is my friend hearty,
Now I am thin and pine,
And has he found to sleep in
A better bed than mine?”

Yes, lad, I lie easy,
I lie as lads would choose;
I cheer a dead man’s sweetheart,
Never ask me whose.

(Applause)

[In Flanders Fields]
In Flanders fields the poppies blow
Between the crosses, row on row,
That mark our place, and in the sky,
The larks still bravely singing, fly,
Scarce heard amidst the guns below.
We are the dead; short days ago
We lived, felt dawn, saw sunset glow,

Loved and were loved, and now we lie
In Flanders fields.

Take up our quarrel with the foe!
To you from falling hands we throw
The torch; be yours to hold it high!
If ye break faith with us who die
We shall not sleep, though [the] poppies grow
In Flanders fields.

(Applause)

[When Smoke Stood Up From Ludlow]
When smoke stood up from Ludlow,
And mist blew off from Teme,
And blithe afield to ploughing
Against the morning beam
I strode beside my team,

The blackbird in the coppice
Looked out to see me stride,
And hearkened as I whistled
The trampling team beside,
And fluted and replied:

“Lie down, lie down, young yeoman;
What use to rise and rise?
Rise man a thousand mornings
Yet down at last he lies,
And then the man is wise.”

I heard the tune he sang me,
And spied his yellow bill;
I picked a stone and aimed it
And threw it with a will:
Then the bird was still.

Then my soul within me
Took up the blackbird's strain,
And still beside the horses
Along the dewy lane
It sang the song again:

“Lie down, lie down, young yeoman;
The sun moves always west;
The road one treads to labour
Will lead one home to rest,
And that will be the best.”

[Far in a Western Brookland]
Far in a western brookland

That bred me long ago
The poplars stand and tremble
By pools I used to know.

There, in the windless night-time,
The wanderer halts and hears
My soul that lingers sighing
About the glimmering weirs.

He hears: long since forgotten
In fields where I was known,
Here I lie down in London
And turn to rest alone.

There, in the windless night-time
The wanderer, marvelling why,
Halts on the bridge to hearken
How soft the poplars sigh.

[’Tis Time, I Think, By Wenlock Town]
’Tis time, I think, by Wenlock town
The golden broom should blow;
The hawthorn sprinkled up and down
Should charge the land with snow.

Spring will not wait the loiterer’s time
Who keeps so long away;
So others wear the broom and climb
The hedgerows heaped with may.

Oh tarnish late on Wenlock Edge,
Gold that I never see;
Lie long, high snowdrifts in the hedge
That will not shine on me.

[Ludlow Fair]
The lads in their hundreds to Ludlow come in for the fair,
There’s men from the barn and the forge and the mill and the fold,
The lads for the girls and the lads for the liquor are there,
And there with the rest are the lads that will never be old.

There’s chaps from the town and the field and the till and the cart,
And many to count are the stalwart, and many the brave,
And many the handsome of face and the handsome of heart,
And few that will carry their looks or their truth to the grave.

I wish one could know them, I wish there were tokens to tell
The fortunate fellows that now you can never discern;
And then one could talk with them friendly and wish them farewell
And watch them depart on the way that they will not return.

For then you may stare as you like and there's nothing to scan;
And brushing your elbow unguessed-at and not to be told
They carry back bright to the coiner the mintage of man,
The lads that will die in their glory and never be old.

[On the Idle Hill of Summer]
On the idle hill of summer,
Sleepy with the flow of streams,
Far I hear the steady drummer
Drumming like a noise in dreams.

Far and near and low and louder,
On the roads of earth go by,
Dear to friends and food for powder,
Soldiers marching, all to die.

East and west on fields forgotten
Bleach the bones of comrades slain,
Lovely lads and dead and rotten;
None that go return again.

Far the calling bugles hollo,
High the screaming fife replies,
Gay the files of scarlet follow:
Woman bore me, I will rise.

[When I Was One-And-Twenty]
When I was one-and-twenty I heard a wise man say,
"Give crowns and pounds and guineas
But not your heart away;
Give pearls away and rubies
But keep your fancy free."
But I was one-and-twenty,
No use to talk to me.
No use to talk to me.

When I was one-and-twenty
I heard him say again,
"The heart out of the bosom
Was never given in vain;
'Tis paid with sighs a plenty
And sold for endless rue."
And I am two-and-twenty,
And oh, 'tis true, 'tis true.
And oh, 'tis true, 'tis true.

[The Lent Lily]
'Tis spring; come out to ramble
The hilly brakes around,
For under thorn and bramble
About the hollow ground

The primroses are found.

And there's the windflower chilly
With all the winds at play,
And there's the Lenten lily
That has not long to stay
And dies on Easter Day.

And since till girls go maying
You find the primrose still,
And find the windflower playing
With every wind at will,
But not the daffodil.

Bring baskets now, and sally
Upon the spring's array,
And bear from hill and valley
The daffodil away
That dies on Easter Day.

(Applause)

Brooks: So the war changed forever creative individuals like Gurney, Butterworth, and Ives. And it also changed millions of less-celebrated people throughout the world. And it radically transformed entire genres of music, most notably perhaps popular song. So the second part of our program offers a brief introduction to popular styles before and after the war. In March 1917, just three weeks before the United States entered the war, Victor released the first recordings that were marketed explicitly as jazz. These discs by the falsely named Original Dixieland Jazz Band not only introduced a new style of music but altered forever its mode of dissemination. For jazz had to be heard to be experienced. It could not be captured in notation. A watershed had been reached. Hereafter music would be distributed through broadcasts and recordings. The sheet music industry would wither and die. Agency and economic power would pass from composers and publishers to performers. The soldiers in France began to ask for gramophones and disks, not printed music and pianos. As you listen to this second set try to imagine the impact of Europe's band and of the first jazz recordings. Those were as much a part of the country's war experience as were the Lusitania, the Argonne Offensive, the Treaty of Versailles. Bear that in mind.

[Five Foot Two, Eyes of Blue (Has Anybody Seen My Girl?)]

I just saw a lunatic, [lunatic, lunatic]
Gee! He hollered and cried.
Like a monkey on a stick, [on a stick, on a stick]
He was fit to be tied.
Laughed so hard I thought I would cave in,
When I heard that silly daffy-dilly-ravin':

Five foot two, eyes of blue
But oh, what those five foot could do
Has anybody seen my girl?

Turned up nose, turned down hose
Never had no other beaus
Has anybody seen my girl?

Now if you run into a
Five foot two, covered with fur
Diamond rings and all those things
Betcha' life it isn't her
But could she love, could she woo?
Could she, could she, could she coo?
Has anybody seen my girl?

Love made him a lunatic, [lunatic, lunatic]
Gee! He hollered and cried. [How he cried!]
Like a monkey on a stick, [on a stick, on a stick],
He was fit to be tied.
When we asked him for his wife's description,
He just answered all of us with this conniption:

Five foot two, eyes of blue
But oh, what those five foot could do
Has anybody seen my girl? [Have you seen her?]
Turned up nose, turned down hose
Never had no other beaus
Has anybody seen my girl?

Now if you run into a
Five foot two, covered with fur
Diamond rings and all those things
Betcha' life, Jack, now that ain't her.
But could she love, could she woo?
Could she, could she, could she coo?
Has anybody seen my girl?

Has anybody seen, has anybody seen
Has anybody seen my girl?

(Applause)

[Let Me Call You Sweetheart]
I am dreaming, Dear, of you, day by day
Dreaming when the skies are blue, When they're gray
When the silv'ry moonlight gleams, Still I wander on in dreams
In a land of love, it seems, Just with you

Let me call you "Sweetheart," I'm in love with you
Let me hear you whisper that you love me too
Keep the love-light glowing in your eyes so true
Let me call you "Sweetheart," I'm in love with you

Longing for you all the while, More and more;

Longing for the sunny smile, I adore
Birds are singing far and near, Roses blooming ev'rywhere
In a land of love, it seems, Just with you

Let me call you "Sweetheart," I'm in love with you
Let me hear you whisper that you love me too
In the love-light glowing in your eyes so true
Let me call you "Sweetheart," I'm in love with you

(Applause)

[The Man Who Broke the Bank at Monte Carlo]
I've just got here, to Paris, from the sunny southern shore;
We to Monte Carlo went, just to raise our winter's rent.
Dame Fortune smiled upon us as she'd never done before,
Now We've now such lots of money, We're the gents.
Now, We've now such lots of money, We're the gents.

As we walk along the Bois de Boulogne
With an independent air
You can hear the girls declare
"He must be a Millionaire."
You can hear them sigh and wish to die,
You can see them wink the other eye
At the man who broke the bank at Monte Carlo.

I stayed indoors 'til after lunch, and then my daily walk
To the great Triumphal Arch is one grand triumphal march,
Observed by each observer with the keenness of a hawk,
I'm a mass of money, linen, silk, and starch—
I'm a mass of money, linen, silk and starch.

As we walk along the Bois de Boulogne
With an independent air
You can hear the girls declare
"He must be a Millionaire."
You can hear them sigh and wish to die,
You can see them wink the other eye
At the man who broke the bank at Monte Carlo.
At the man who broke the bank at Monte Carlo.

(Applause)

Brooks: World War I was billed as the war to end all wars. Well, we know how that turned out. A war came next, and a war after that, and another, and another, and on into the future. But the First World War did end many things. It ended lives by the millions, and it destroyed others. Tonight you've heard three composers who were silenced by the war, and they were not alone. And those who survived the war and their cultures were changed forever. Warfare itself was transformed. Exit the cavalry, enter tanks and airplanes. Boundaries shifted, empires were dissolved, people displaced. Cities, monuments, entire histories were destroyed. The Armistice: that moment when hope

reentered the hearts of so many people. Words will fail us; music will fail us. We will mark that moment, that rebirth of hope with silence, with a momentary pause in our haste, in our plans, and our futures. At that moment, it will only be now, as it was in 1918. To free ourselves from the river of history, we must step out of the stream, else we are borne along willy-nilly to a great unknown. Music cannot do that for us, but it can offer a hand as we try to scramble up the bank. I hope you've enjoyed tonight's program. Thank you.

(Applause)

Williams: Thank you to Mario Rojas, Christopher Kenney, Shannon McGinnis, and William Brooks for their outstanding performances and presentation. We thank the Chicago Symphony Orchestra for sponsoring this program. To learn more about the Pritzker Military Museum and Library, visit us in person or online at PritzkerMilitary.org. Thank you, and please join us next time on *Pritzker Military Presents*.