

THE  
*Aldburgh*  
C O N N E C T I O N

THE TALE OF THE OSTRICH



WALTER HALL  
SUNDAY, MARCH 2, 2008  
2:30 p.m.

We wish to thank  
James and Connie MacDougall  
for sponsoring Joni Henson,  
as well as the floral arrangement on the stage,

Françoise Sutton  
for sponsoring Laura Tucker,

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and Jane Blackstone and Eleanor Burton,  
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We are performing  
on the Edith McConica Steinway

# THE TALE OF THE OSTRICH

JONI HENSON, soprano    LAURA TUCKER, mezzo

PHILLIP ADDIS, baritone

STEPHEN RALLS and BRUCE UBUKATA, piano



Strauss *m* 1. ostrich; 2. strife, struggle, combat; 3. bunch (of flowers), bouquet. [Langenscheidt's Pocket Dictionary, 1959] ostrich 1. a large African swift-running flightless bird, *Struthio camelus*, with long legs and two toes on each foot; 2. a person who refuses to accept facts (from the belief that ostriches bury their heads in the sand when pursued). [Concise Oxford Dictionary, 1990]



The last great composer of the German Romantic era, Richard Strauss (1864-1949), left a total of over two hundred songs, dating from 1870 to 1948. Beginning with a *Weihnachtslied* at the age of six, he wrote 42 separate numbers before 1883, when he judged he had a group of songs ready for publication - this was his Op. 10, which opens with one of the finest and best-known, *Zueignung*. A great spur to song composition was provided by his encounter with the soprano, Pauline de Ahna, who became his pupil in 1887 and his wife in 1894. The flow of *Lieder* continued until 1906, the year of *Die heilige drei Könige*, a fitting climax to the most prolific period. After this, Strauss devoted himself to the series of operatic masterpieces which set the seal on his renown: *Elektra* (1908), *Der Rosenkavalier* (1910), *Ariadne auf Naxos* (1912) and *Die Frau ohne Schatten* (1917).

Pauline had retired from the concert stage and it was not until 1918 that her husband again took up song composition, partly through his discovery of a new *Lieder* partner, Elisabeth Schumann. But the earlier exuberance of production was never renewed. Operas remained Strauss's priority and only 45 songs for voice and piano were henceforth produced, with seven for voice and orchestra, including the *Vier letzte Lieder* which crowned his *œuvre* in 1948.

Throughout his career, Strauss declared a complete lack of interest in political events - a stance which was to prove disastrous for his reputation. He viewed with misgivings the astonishing rise of the Nazi party after 1930 and had little sympathy for most of those whom Pauline Strauss called "the rabble who now rule". The future of German music was his preoccupation and he was persuaded in 1933 to assume the presidency of the *Reichsmusikkammer*. For a short period, he remained on friendly terms with Hitler, because of the latter's enthusiasm for the music of Wagner and Richard Strauss. It soon became clear, however, that compromise was impossible. Strauss's fall from favour was precipitated by the 1935 premiere of *Die schweigsame Frau*, his opera to a libretto by the Jewish Stefan Zweig, and that year he was forced to resign from the *Reichsmusikkammer*. His daughter-in-law was Jewish and the family began to feel the lash of discrimination. From 1941, they lived in Vienna under the protection of the Gauleiter Baldur von Schirach. At the war's end, Strauss moved to Switzerland; he returned to his home in Bavaria just four months before his death in 1949.



## SONGS OF LOVE

Breit über mein Haupt (*Adolf Friedrich von Schack*), Op.19/2  
(baritone)

The songs of Op. 19 are dedicated to Emilie Herzog, soprano with the Munich Opera, who undertook at Strauss's request to give advanced vocal lessons to Pauline de Ahna, his future wife.

*Spread over my head your black hair, incline to me your face, so that into my soul, so brightly and clearly, the light of your eyes will stream. I do not want the splendour of the sun above, nor the glittering crown of stars; I want only the night of your locks and the radiance of your gaze.*

All mein Gedanken (*Felix Dahn*), Op.21/1  
(mezzo)

*All my thoughts, my heart and mind, wander to where my sweetheart is. They follow their path despite wall and gate; they are held up by no bars and no ditches. They travel like the birds high in the sky, requiring no bridge over water and chasm; they find the town and find the house, find her window out of all the others, and they knock and call: Open up, let us in! we come from your sweetheart and greet you kindly. Open up, open up, let us in!*

Zueignung (*Hermann von Gilm*), Op.10/1  
(soprano)

*Dedication: Yes, dear soul, you know, away from you I'm in torment. Love makes the heart sick; be thanked!  
Once I, drinker of freedom, held high the amethyst goblet, and you blessed the drink; be thanked!  
And you exorcised the evils in it, until I, as never before, blessed, sank upon your heart; be thanked!*

Ich liebe dich (*Detlev von Liliencron*), Op.37/2  
(baritone)

The bravura of this song reminds us of the tone poem *Ein Heldenleben*, on which Strauss was working in the same year, 1898.

*I love you: Four noble horses for our carriage, we live in the castle in proud comfort. The early brightness and lightning at night – everything that they shed light upon belongs to us.*

*Although you wander forsaken, an exile, through the world, I am with you in the streets in poverty and shame! Our hands will bleed, our feet will ache, the four walls will be without comfort, and no dog will know us.*

*If, fitted with silver, your coffin will stand at the altar, they shall bear me as well on the bier to you. And if, far away on the heath, you die in anguish, I shall draw my dagger from its sheath and follow you in death!*

## FAMILY CENTRED

Meinem Kinde (*Gustav Falke*), Op.37/3  
(mezzo)

This song was composed in February, 1897, when Pauline Strauss was expecting their son, Franz.

*To my child: You sleep, and I bend carefully over your little bed and bless you. Each gentle breath flies up to heaven, searching all around for some little star where love can pluck a lucky herb of pure, shining light and, winging down, lay it on your little white coverlet. You sleep, and I bend carefully over your little bed and bless you.*

Nachtgang (*Otto Julius Bierbaum*), Op.29/3  
(baritone)

*Night stroll: We walked through the silent, mild night, your arm in mine, your eyes in mine. The moon poured silver light upon your face, as though on gold rested your fair head. And you appeared to me an angel, gentle and great and overflowing with soul, holy and pure as the dear sun. And in my eyes swelled urgent warmth, as of impending tears. I held you tighter and kissed you, kissed you very softly. My soul wept.*

Die heiligen drei Könige (*Heinrich Heine*), Op.56/6  
(soprano)

Strauss dedicated this song to his mother. She was very devout, he was not; this was the only song with a religious text that he had written since his *Weihnachtslied* of 1870 - and he was never to write another. Moreover, this was the last solo song he wrote for a period of twelve years. It is best heard in its orchestral version, but we perform the accompaniment now as a piano duet. Nevertheless, we know that Strauss himself performed it with piano accompaniment in recital with Pauline in 1908.

*The three holy kings from the eastern land asked in every little village and town: Where is the way to Bethlehem, dear boys and girls? Neither young nor old knew it, so the kings sought further; they followed a golden star that shone beautifully and joyously.*

*The star stood standing over Joseph's house, and there within was the child; the baby ox bawled, the child cried, and the three holy kings sang.*

Ach, weh mir, unglückhaftem Mann (Dahn), Op.21/4  
(baritone)

*Alas, I am an unlucky man, to have neither money nor goods; otherwise I would quickly harness four white horses and lead them into a trot. I would adorn them with bells, so that you could hear them from afar; I would stick a large bouquet of roses on my left side. And when I came to your little house, I would snap my whip, and you would look out of your window: "What do you want?" you would ask. "What are you doing with this large bouquet of roses, and these white horses and carriage?" "It is you I want," I would cry; "Come out!" And then you would ask no more questions. "Now, Father, Mother, gaze at her and kiss her quickly in farewell, for I cannot wait much longer - my horses won't tolerate it." Alas, I am an unlucky man, to have neither money nor goods!*

Allerseelen (Gilm), Op.10/8  
(mezzo)

*All Souls' Day: Set on the table the fragrant mignonettes, bring in the last red asters, and let us speak again of love, as once we did in May. Give me your hand, so that I can press it secretly; and if someone sees us, it's all the same to me. Just give me your sweet gaze, as once you did in May. Flowers adorn today each grave, sending off their fragrances; one day in the year are the dead free. Come close to my heart, so that I can have you again, as once I did in May.*

Befreit (*Richard Dehmel*), Op.39/4  
(soprano)

*Freed: You will not weep. Gently you will smile, and as before a journey, I will return your gaze and your kiss. Our dear four walls, you have prepared them; I have now widened them for you into the world. O joy!*

*Then you will warmly seize my hands and you will leave me your soul, leave me behind for our children. You have given me your entire life; I will give it to them again. O joy!*

*It will be very soon, we both know; we have freed each other from sorrow; so I return you to the world! You will then appear to me only in dreams, and bless me and weep with me. O joy!*



# INTERMISSION

during which tea will be served in the Torel Room  
with the kind assistance of students  
of the Opera Division, Faculty of Music



## THE VIEW FROM THE SUMMIT

Heimliche Aufforderung (*John Henry Mackay*), Op.27/3  
(baritone)

The poet was Scottish-born, but lived in Germany from childhood. The Op.27 set of songs was a wedding gift from Richard to Pauline.

*Secret Invitation: Raise the sparkling cup to your lips, drink your heart's fill at the joyous feast. And when you raise it, so wink secretly at me, then I'll smile and drink quietly, like you . . . And quietly as I, look around at the crowd of drunken revellers – don't think too ill of them. No, lift the twinkling cup, filled with wine, and let them be happy at the noisy meal.*

*But when you've savoured the meal, your thirst quenched, then quit the loud throng's joyful fest, and wander out into the garden, to the rosebush – there shall I await you, as often of old. And before you know it shall I sink upon your breast, and drink your kisses, as so often before, and twine the rose's splendour into your hair. Oh, come, you wondrous, longed-for night!*

Gefunden (Johann Wolfgang von Goethe), Op. 56/1  
(mezzo)

In 1903, Strauss was awarded an honorary doctorate by the University of Heidelberg. On the day of the ceremony, he dedicated this song to his wife, no doubt remembering that Goethe had written the poem for his own wife on their silver wedding.

*Found: I walked in the woods just as I pleased, and sought for nothing, that was my wish. In the shadow I saw a flower standing, shining like a star, like a bright little eye. I wanted to pick it, then up it spoke: "Must I be picked only to fade?" I dug it up with all its roots, took it to the garden near the pretty house. And there I planted it in the quiet place; now it flourishes and blooms continually.*

Das Bächlein (anon.)  
(soprano)

When this song was first published, its text was ascribed to Goethe, but no-one has ever succeeded in tracing it in the poet's complete works. The song was dedicated to "Herrn Reichsminister Dr Joseph Goebbels, December 1933" on the occasion of Strauss's appointment to the *Reichsmusikkammer* – the last section repeats the lines (ostensibly referring to the stream): "Der will mein Führer sein!" When a complete edition of his songs was planned, Strauss fervently requested that the dedication be suppressed.

*You little brook, clear and silver-bright, you always hurry past, I stand on the bank, ponder and ponder: Where do you come from, whither go?*

*I come from a womb of dark rocks, my course passes over flowers and moss. My surface gently reflects the happy face of blue heaven. This gives me my gay, childlike mood; it drives me onward, whither I know not. He who summoned me from the stone will, I think, be my guide.*

Rosenkavalier-Walzer, arranged by Otto Singer  
(piano duet)

## HORIZONS CLOSING

Blick vom oberen Belvedere (Josef Weinheber)  
(soprano)

The poet was a supporter of the Nazi regime in Vienna who committed suicide in 1945. In 1935, he had published a collection entitled *Wien wörtlich*, describing scenes of contemporary Viennese life. This poem takes its title from a picture painted by Carl Moll in 1895, showing the famous view from the palace of the Upper Belvedere - next to which Strauss had his spacious villa. The song dates from 1942 and was dedicated to the composer's soprano of choice in his later years, Viorica Ursuleac, who created the title role in *Arabella* and the Countess in *Capriccio*.

*View from the Upper Belvedere: What abundance is here! Affected, beautiful spirit, transmuted into the grandest panorama: to right and left, the domes mark out the distant view. Ah, how that age had the power to change crude, elemental things into art! Earthly laws took hold of life, restricting and at the same time broadening it. Do not ladies in hooped skirts go to and fro on the terraces, gently courted by self-assured, stiff cavaliers? No, the gardens are conjuring up a lovely illusion. The laughter and loving on these lawns has utterly faded away, pallid and wistful, only beauty has remained.*

Im Sonnenschein (Friedrich Rückert)  
(baritone)

*In the sunshine: Let me tarry here one more hour in the sunshine, sharing the pleasure and sadness of life with the flowers in the sunshine! Spring came and wrote on the rose petals a dreamy poem about Paradise; I read the golden lines in the sunshine. Summer came to consume the earth with divine fire, and I saw the roses drooping their stems in the sunshine. Autumn came to call life home; I saw it approach and hurry away with roses in its hand in the sunshine.*

*I greet you, all images of life! The ones I saw here tarrying about me, hurry past in the sunshine. I greet you, travellers of life! – those who wandered without me and those who wandered with me for a little while in the sunshine.*

*I look back and see the blooming valleys undulating so gently, and the mountain that I once scaled with such difficulty, now sheer in the sunshine. I go now; let the sweet weariness of life rest now, and let the pleasure and sadness of the earth heal now in the sunshine.*

Mein Herz ist stumm (Schack), Op. 19/6  
(mezzo)

This setting of a poem describing the pain of growing old was composed, astonishingly, a full sixty years before Strauss's last songs, which evoke a much more accepting, even nostalgic, mood.

*My heart is dumb, my heart is cold, frozen in the winter's ice; sometimes, but only in its depths, it seethes, trembles, and stirs quietly. Then it is as if a gentle dew has melted through the cover of frost; through green woods and blooming meadows the brook murmurs anew. And the sound of horns, carried from leaf to leaf by the spring wind, echoes from the gulches faintly in my ears, like a shout from happier days. Yet the aging heart will grow young no more; the echo of a dying sound fades into the distance and once again everything lies frozen.*

Ruhe, meine Seele! (Karl Henckell), Op. 27/1  
(soprano)

Though dating from much earlier – indeed, from the Strausses' wedding year – this song was orchestrated in 1948. The composer obviously felt the significance of the text in his final years.

*Not a breeze is stirring lightly, the wood lies slumbering gently; through the dark cover of leaves steals bright sunshine.*

*Rest, rest, my soul, your storms were wild, you have raged and trembled like the surf when it breaks.*

*These times are momentous, bringing torment to heart and mind; rest, rest, my soul, and forget what is threatening you!*

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We were very proud to receive the news of a Juno nomination for our cd, "Schubert among friends", featuring **Gillian Keith, Michael Schade, Colin Ainsworth** and **Gerald Finley, with Stephen Ralls and Bruce Ubukata**. Keep your fingers crossed for the final decision on April 6! The disc has been doing very well in press notices and is available for sale during today's intermission or through our website, [www.aldeburghconnection.org](http://www.aldeburghconnection.org).

Don't miss this: The second of our two recitals in the Glenn Gould Studio takes place at 8 pm on Wednesday, April 9. This will be a red-letter day for two of Canada's finest singers, soprano **Nathalie Paulin** and mezzo **Anita Krause**, who have long been keen to perform together in recital and are excited by this opportunity. Their enticing programme includes music by Brahms, Debussy, Poulenc and Robert Fleming.

And join us for our next concert, *Ancestral Voices*, the last concert of the season, on April 27, when we will be joined by **Laura Albino**, **Norine Burgess** and **Michael Barrett**, as we look at the fascinating world of Adelaide Sartoris, who sang the first English performance of *Norma*. Our programme is dedicated to the memory of our friend, Victoria Woods, her great-granddaughter.



Box office revenues cover only a portion of our operating budget; grants, corporate funding and individual donations are needed for the balance. Audience members are asked to consider joining one of our supporting categories: **Benefactor** (\$1,000 or more), **Champion** (\$500 or more), **Patron** (\$200 or more), **Supporter** (\$100 or more) and **Friend** (\$50 or more). Donations may be made by cheque or VISA, and may be made in instalments, if you prefer. You will receive information on our activities, and all donations will be acknowledged with a receipt for income tax purposes. Private donors may also act as sponsors for an entire concert, an artist, a special commission, or the intermission tea; however, other donations and suggestions for corporate sponsorship are also very welcome. Your support is vital in helping to ensure the continuation of these concerts.



We gratefully acknowledge the assistance of the following in presenting today's concert:

- James and Connie MacDougall
- Françoise Sutton
- David and Patricia Stone
- Eleanor Burton
- Jane Blackstone
- The Ontario Arts Council
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Aldeburgh is the small town on the east coast of England where Benjamin Britten, Peter Pears and Eric Crozier founded the Festival of Music which flourishes to this day. Artistic directors Stephen Ralls and Bruce Ubukata have visited and worked there for many summers, as has a large number of the singers appearing with The Aldeburgh Connection.

Soprano **Joni Henson** is quickly becoming one of Canada's most thrilling young performers. Recent successes on the opera stage include Fiordiligi in Mozart's *Così fan Tutte* and Guttrune in Wagner's *Götterdämmerung* for the Canadian Opera Company's inaugural season at the Four Seasons Centre for the Performing Arts. For Toronto's Opera in Concert she was Marietta / Marie in Korngold's *Die tote Stadt*. Ms. Henson's 2007-2008 season includes Desdemona in Verdi's *Otello* with the Chautauqua Symphony Orchestra, Elisabeth in Verdi's *Don Carlos* with the COC and concerts with the Aldeburgh Connection and Off Centre Music Salon.

Ms. Henson earned her Bachelor in Vocal Performance from the University of Toronto. She also received her Opera Diploma from the University of Toronto's Opera Division. While at the Opera School she performed the roles of Fiordiligi in *Così fan Tutte* and the title role in Handel's *Alcina*. Further roles include Nedda in Leoncavallo's *Pagliacci*, Mrs. Ford in Nicolai's *Merry Wives of Windsor* and Female Chorus in Britten's *The Rape Of Lucretia*. In 2003 Ms. Henson was awarded the Opera Grand Prize at the XVth Concours International de Chant de Verviers in Belgium. She also received the First Place Opera and French Melodie Awards at the Concours International de Chant de Marmande in France. In 2006 Ms. Henson was a semi-finalist in the Metropolitan National Council Auditions. Ms. Henson attended the esteemed Music Academy of the West in Santa Barbara, California where she studied with Marilyn Horne. In excerpts, she was seen there as Vitellia in Mozart's *La clemenza Di Tito*, Violetta in Verdi's *La traviata* and Donna Anna in *Don Giovanni*. She was honoured to receive Encouragement Awards in the Marilyn Horne Foundation Vocal Competition.

Ms. Henson is a former member of the Canadian Opera Company's Ensemble Studio. She debuted with the company as Alisa in Donizetti's *Lucia di Lammermoor* and other roles with the company include Lady Billows in *Albert Herring*, Inez in *Il trovatore*, First Lady in *The Magic Flute*. In June of 2007 she starred with other young Canadian opera singers in "Luna", a gala concert which highlighted the inaugural Luminato Festival in Toronto.

Mezzo-soprano **Laura Tucker** has performed at major opera houses across North America, including Boston Lyric Opera, Seattle

Opera, Portland Opera, the Opera Company of Philadelphia, New York City Opera, the Opera Festival of New Jersey, the Spoleto Festival and the Canadian Opera Company. Operatic roles include Romeo in *I Capuletti ed i Montecchi*, Marguerite in *La damnation de Faust*, Dido in *Les Troyens*, Seymour in *Anna Bolena*, Sarah in *Roberto Devereux*, Elisabetta in *Maria Stuarda*, the title role in *Ariodante*, Amastre in *Serse*, Ottavia in *L'incoronazione di Poppea*, Charlotte in *Werther*, Sesto/Annio in *La clemenza di Tito*, Idamante in *Idomeneo*, Dorabella in *Così fan tutte*, Donna Elvira in *Don Giovanni*, Cherubino in *Le nozze di Figaro*, Komponist in *Ariadne auf Naxos*, Oktavian in *Der Rosenkavalier* and the title role in the American debut of Tan Dun's *Marco Polo*.

She has also been active in recital and on the concert stage with appearances at Carnegie Hall, Avery Fisher Hall, the Ravinia Festival and the Mostly Mozart Festival. Ms Tucker can also be heard as the Sorceress in *Dido and Aeneas* with the Boston Baroque (Telarc) and on Michael Cohen's *I Remember* (Newport Classics).

Canadian baritone **Phillip Addis** has performed with many opera companies including L'Opéra de Montréal, Pacific Opera Victoria, Edmonton Opera and Cincinnati Opera. He performs a wide variety of repertoire including the title role in *Don Giovanni*, Tarquinius in *The Rape Of Lucretia*, and Taddeo in *L'italiana in Algeri*, as well as featured roles in such operas as *Madama Butterfly*, *Rigoletto*, *Die Zauberflöte*, *La bohème*, *Die lustige Witwe*, *Agrippina*, *Carmen*, and *Hänsel und Gretel*. Also a prodigious concert performer, he has appeared with the Edmonton Symphony, the New Brunswick Symphony, the Ottawa Symphony Orchestra, I Musici, and the Quebec Symphony.

Mr. Addis won First Prize in the 2004 Orchestre Symphonique de Montreal Standard Life Competition. In that same competition he was also awarded seven other prizes including the SOCAN scholarship for the best performance of a Canadian work. In March 2006 he received the George London Foundation Encouragement award for a Canadian singer and at the 2005 Montreal International Music Competition, he received the Joseph Rouleau award. Additionally, he was the First Prize Winner of Orchestre Symphonique de Quebec's Canadian Concerto Competition. Upcoming engagements include his European debut with performances of Julien in *La Colombe* in Marseilles.

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