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**Dame Gillian Weir** *Prince Consort Professor of Organ*  
**Margaret Phillips** *FRCO, GRSM, ARCM Professor in charge of organ*

**Thomas Trotter** *Visiting Professor of Organ*  
**Ian Curror** *FRCO (CHM), GRSM, ARCM*  
**Timothy Bond** *BMus, FRCO, ARCM, 20th century*  
**David Graham** *BMus, ARCM, ARCO Improvisation*

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Monday 16th July

Twilight Recital

**Mary Nelson**, soprano

**Lucy Wakeford**, harp

9.30pm

St Peter's Church, Oundle

**A Garland of English Song II**



**Three Aires**

These lyrical melodies, sensuous, poignant and witty by turns, gain fresh colour when allied to the lush sounds of the harp, as opposed to the harpsichord's more brittle timbre. Purcell's masterly setting of the English language, matched perhaps only by the skills of Benjamin Britten, gains almost a folk quality in the versions we hear tonight.

**Henry Purcell** (1659-1695)

**Fantasy for solo harp**

Sir Malcolm Arnold OBE was born in Northampton. He is recognised as one of the leading British composers of the 20th century and has composed orchestral and chamber music, operas and music for the ballet; he is also one of the century's finest composers for the cinema. His uncanny knack for exploiting the fullest possible resources of the instruments for which he writes is found in abundance in tonight's inspiring work.

**Malcolm Arnold** (b 1921)

**Transformations for solo harp**

Edmund Rubbra was also born in Northampton. After taking up the piano at the age of eight, he left school at 12 in order to work and pay for his music lessons. Composer pianist Cyril Scott helped to establish Rubbra's career, which included teaching appointments at Oxford University and at the Guildhall School. His individual voice, heard throughout a large folio of orchestral, instrumental and choral works, has a traditional English air. It was always allied to his reasoned and refined approach to tonality, notable for its reassuring sincerity during a period when many of his contemporaries were engaged in controversial musical experiment.

**Edmund Rubbra** (1901-1986)

**Tell me lovely shepherd**

**William Boyce** (1710-1779)  
arr. Elizabeth Poston

**The lark in the clear air**

**trad. Irish Air**

Boyce was a highly successful organist and composer in Georgian London. His prolific output included music for church, stage and the emerging classical symphony orchestra. The direct appeal of his songs contrasts pleasantly with the traditional simplicity of the Irish Air.

**Suite for Harp, Op 83** **Benjamin Britten** (1913-1976)

*Overture, Toccata, Nocturne, Fugue, Hymn (St Denio)*  
Britten's Suite is considered a landmark in harp composition. It was written for Ossian Ellis and premiered at the Aldeburgh Festival in 1969. Britten's choice of suite form reflects his predilection for multi-movement structures and his strong sense of identity with the English musical heritage of Purcell and Handel. Features typical of Britten's style include imaginative rhythms,

melodic lyricism, transparent textures and free use of dissonance, chromaticism, modal and whole-tone materials within the context of a clear tonal centre. Each of the five movements is distinctive in mood, from the stately Overture, through the airy Toccata, the reverie of the Nocturne, the playful Fugue to the majestic variations on a phrase from a Welsh hymn tune (St. Denio, *Immortal, Invisible God only wise*) which concludes the Suite.

**Songs from Eight Folk Song Arrangements for voice and harp** (1976)

**Benjamin Britten**

*David of the White Rock*

*Lemady*

*The False Knight on the Road*

*She's like the Swallow*

*Bonny at Morn*

*Bird Scarer's Song*

These songs, arranged in

1976, proved to be the

composer's last completed

vocal work. How

appropriate for this to be

so, as Britten nursed an

abiding love for the songs,

displaying as they do the

whole gambit of human

emotions in ways both

modest and direct. Even in

the early 1940s Britten was aware of the enthusiastic response that his arrangements generated. Writing in 1941 he states 'I have arranged a few British folk songs which have been a 'wow' whenever performed so far'.

**Mary Nelson**

Born in Northern Ireland, Mary Nelson studied at the Royal Academy of Music in London, where she graduated in 1997; she was selected in the same year for representation by Young Concert Artists Trust. In 1999 she was appointed a junior company principal with English National Opera. Mary has recently toured in Holland and Spain with The King's Consort.

**Lucy Wakeford**

At the age of 10 Lucy Wakeford was the youngest ever member of the National Youth Orchestra of Great Britain. Awarded the Walter Todd Bursary at the 1986 BBC Young Musicians Competition, she later went on to win first prize at the World Harp Festival Competition in Cardiff. As a concerto soloist Lucy has appeared with many orchestras, and also regularly gives concerts with the Belcea Quartet and the Haffner Wind Ensemble.

