



Artist Profile: Tressa Lambert

After winning the Sir Geraint Evans scholarship and studying opera performance at the Royal Welsh College of music and drama, Tressa gained her Masters degree and started her musical career.

Her singing and acting have taken her all over the world and in 1999 she represented Great Britain in the International Theatre Festival of Chung Chong South Korea.

She is an active solo performer and her platform work includes a vast repertoire of oratorio, opera, lieder, French song and English song.

Tressa is a respected singing teacher on the Isle of Wight and teaches privately at home in East Cowes, at Ryde school with Upper Chine, and at The Island Free School. She also takes master classes for soloists and choirs across the country.

Tressa plays an active part in the annual Isle of Wight Music, Dance and Drama Festival in Ryde, and continues to co-direct the Amy White Theatre pantomime every year.

Programme Notes:

Now Sleeps the Crimson Petal

Roger Cuthbert Quilter (1877 – 1953)

English composer, Roger Quilter, was known particularly for, and was one of the best composers of, English art songs (*the genre of songs usually written for one voice with piano accompaniment, and usually in the classical art music tradition*) of the transitional period between the era of the drawing room ballad and the rise to popularity of such composers as Ivor Novello and Noel Coward.

Quilter's songs, which number over a hundred, are the mainstay of the English art song tradition. Despite his German training, his style was "indisputably English".

Now Sleeps the Crimson Petal is a sonnet poem written by Alfred Tennyson. It was first published in 1847, in *The Princess: A Medley*.

The poem has been set to music several times, including a setting by Benjamin Britten.

It also appeared as a song in the 2004 film *Vanity Fair* (based on Thackeray's novel from 1848), sung by the character Becky Sharp.

Quilter's setting was composed in 1904 and, although short, is a masterpiece. The simple beauties of the accompaniment make a perfect fit with the exquisite vocal line.

Now sleeps the crimson petal, now the white;
Nor the waves the cypress in the palace walk;
Nor winks the gold fin in the porphyry font:
The firefly wakens: waken thou with me.

Now droops the milk-white peacock like a ghost,
And like a ghost she glimmers on to me.
Now lies the Earth all Danae to the stars,
And all thy heart lies open unto me.
Now slides the silent meteor on, and leaves
A shining furrow, as thy thoughts in me.

Now folds the lily all her sweetness up,
And slips into the bosom of the lake:
So fold thyself, my dearest, thou, and slip
Into my bosom and be lost in me.

Why Do I Love?

Cecil Armstrong Gibbs (1889 – 1960)

Armstrong Gibbs was a little-known, but prolific and versatile English Composer, Adjudicator and Conductor, who studied under Ralph Vaughan Williams and Herbert Howells, amongst others.

Gibbs exhibited musical talent and wide recognition in the early part of his life, but came to composition as a relative latecomer, not officially starting his career until his thirties.

He wrote music for the stage, sacred works, three symphonies and a substantial amount of chamber music, much of which remains unpublished.

He is best known for his choral music, in particular songs.

His reputation as a songwriter largely lies in his natural gift for text setting. He insisted on giving priority to the words over the music and had very clear musical ideas on what a song should be; short, possessing a dominant theme, and “creating an aura as music is able to heighten”

Gibbs was at his most prolific during the 30s and 40s. His setting of *Why Do I Love?* was written in 1937. The poem is by Ephelia and first published in 1679.

Why do I Love? go, ask the Glorious Sun
Why every day it round the world doth Run:
Ask Thames and Tyber, why they ebb and flow:
Ask Damask Roses why in June they blow:

Ask Ice and Hail, the reason, why they're Cold:
Decaying Beauties, why they will grow Old:
They'll tell thee, Fate, that every thing doth move,
Inforces them to this, and me to Love.

There is no Reason for our Love or Hate,
'Tis irresistible, as Death or Fate;
'Tis not his Face; I've sense enough to see,
That is not good, though doated on by me;

Nor is't his Tongue, that has this Conquest won;
For that at least is equall'd by my own:
His carriage can to none obliging be,
'Tis Rude, Afected, full of Vanity:

Strangely Ill natur'd, Peevish and Unkind,
Unconstant, False, to Jealousie inclin'd;
His Temper cou'd not have so great a Pow'r,
'Tis mutable, and changes every hour:

Thos vigorous Years that Women so Adore
Are past in him: he's twice my age and more;
And yet I love this false, this worthless Man,
With all the Passion that a Woman can;

Doat on his Imperfections, though I spy
Nothing to Love; I Love, and know not why.
Sure 'tis Decreed in the dark Book of Fate
That I shou'd Love, and he shou'd be ingrate.