



Anna Prohaska, soprano
Julius Drake, piano

Sunday 7 July 2019 20:00
Hindsgavl Festival

FAURÉ Chanson d'Ève - Paradis
BERNSTEIN Silhouette
RAVEL Trois Beaux Oiseaux du Paradis
STRAVINSKY Pastorale
WOLF Die Spröde
WOLF Die Bekehrte
BRAHMS Salamander

DANIEL-LESUR Ce qu'Adam dit à Ève
DEBUSSY Apparition
MESSIAEN Bonjour toi, colombe verte
REIMANN Gib mir den Apfel
BRITTEN The Poison Tree (1935)
PFITZNER Röschen biss den Apfel ab
RAVEL Air de Feu
--- pause ---

IVES Evening
SCHUMANN Nun sank des Abends gold'ner
Schein
PURCELL Sleep, Adam, Sleep
CRUMB Approach, strong deliveress
SCHUBERT Auflösung

SCHUBERT Abendstern
WAGNER Im Treibhaus
SCHUMANN Warte, warte, wilder Schiffmann
EISLER Jeden Morgen mein Brot zu verdienen
EISLER Diese Stadt hat mich belehrt
MAHLER Das Irdische Leben
BRITTEN The Children
RACHMANINOFF A-oo!

Songs About Eve and the Garden of Eden
*(order of songs have changed after these notes
were written)*

Eve is the first women in the Bible. With her the story of innocence, love, desire, the Fall, pain and death is told for the first time. Eve is one of the most iconic figures in cultural history, and her actions and destiny have inspired artists of all kinds through centuries.

With her original compilation of songs from five centuries, the soprano Anna Prohaska has created a new musical version of Eve's story. From the innocent beginning to the eternal significance of the Fall for mankind.

Paradis is the first song from the song cycle *La chanson d'Ève* by the French composer Gabriel Fauré (1845-1924). Lerberghe's poem describes Eve's awakening and naïve perception on the world's first day. Everything shimmers of poetic nature, idyll and purity. The same atmosphere can be found in Ravel's *Trois beaux oiseaux du Paradis*, but the composer's own poem contains another kind of darkness. Ravel composed the song in the shadow of WW1 and describes the three birds of Paradise in the colours of the French flag, whose lovers go off to war. Darkness and demonic powers lie in wait.

The American Bernstein also wrote the text to *Silhouette* himself. It's a version of a Lebanese folk song: "It's the boys who are dancing beneath the olive tree's branches". The man, Adam, makes his entry in the story. And the woman, the shepherdess, is tempted by him in Hugo Wolf's composition of Goethe's poem *Die Spröde* and *Die Bekehrte*. We are in nature, and the atmosphere is underlined in *Pastorale* by Stravinsky – a vocalise, a song without words, carried by the pure sound of the woman's voice.

The first kiss and the final surrender are found in Mallarmé's poem *Apparation*, set to music by Debussy in 1884. And in the French modernist composer Daniel-Lesur's *Ce qu'Adam dit à Ève*, Eve finally gives in to the man's adoration. In his compatriot, Messiaen's *Bonjour toi, colombe verte* we encounter the perfect love. The voice of nature and man's feelings melt together in perfect unity.

In the song from 1961 by Aribert Reimann, we are inside the crucial drama in the Garden of Eden with the modernistic song *Gib mir den Apfel*. In 1965, Benjamin Britten composed William Blake's *A Poison Tree* which describes the suppressed feelings towards someone whom you love. Feelings which through indignation, thirst for revenge and human decline lead to murder.

In Hans Pfitzner's *Röschen biss den Apfel ab* Eve takes a bite of the forbidden apple, and at once the innocent woman experiences an emotional flood of tears. Madness breaks loose, and the flames of Hell light up when she throws a cold salamander into the fire in the expectation that it'll burn to death in Brahms' *Salamander*. But the animal, like a heated devil, begins to talk about love. Fire ends the first half of the concert with the aria *Air de Feu* from Ravel's opera *L'enfant et les sortilèges*.

The second part of the concert begins with the aria *Nun sank des Abends gold'ner Schein* from Schumann's oratorio *Das Paradies und die Peri*, in which a female character tries to return to the Paradise from where she has been banned.

The American Charles Ives' miniature *Evening* with text from John Milton's *Paradise Lost*, simulates the evening song of the nightingale with an underlying atmosphere of destruction.

Purcell's *Sleep, Adam, Sleep* is Eve's lullaby to her husband, Adam. Because when he awakes, misery is a reality.

In George Crumb's brutal *Approach, strong Deliveress*, Eve sings about this misery, and her only wish of dying.

In *Im Treibhaus* she compares her own destiny to the exotic trees growing in the heat of the greenhouse. Darkness and solitude come to her as they come to them.

Heinrich Heine's *Warte, warte, wilder Schiffmann* is Adam's bitter reproach of the woman, Eve's deed in the Garden of Eden. The apple is the cause of evil in the world. Eve destroyed God's order. The sarcasm is brilliantly underlined by Schumann's music.

Bertold Brecht's poems with music by Hanns Eisler *Jeden Morgen mein Brot zu verdienen* and *Diese Stadt hat mich belehrt* tell the story about a woman in a modern town, which for most people is like hell.

Mahler's *Das irdische Leben* describes the same kind of hell on earth. A child begs its mother for bread: "Give me some bread or I shall die". The mother is powerless. That the children are the true victims of the Fall, is underlined in Britten's *The Children*. And the paradox between life and death, love and hate, purity and guilt, man and woman is finally expressed in Rachmaninov's *A-OO!*

Text: Mathias Hammer

English translation: Susanne Lange

Anna Prohaska and Julius Drake

You have to be able to crawl before you can walk, and apparently you have to be single before you can become a pair – at least in order to become a sublime unity of song and piano.

At least that's how it all began with tonight's singer and pianist. Anna Prohaska comes from a musical dynasty and both her parents are professional singers. One should think that this was the ideal musical cradle for a young girl with a talent for singing. But no, quite unacceptable for a teenager with her own mind.

Anna had art historians in her family too, and for some time art history was the path she also wanted to follow. But at the age of 14-15, Anna met her mentor, the conductor Eberhard Kloke, and found her right place at last. As a singer, and with the help and support and musical advice of somebody not in her family, she learnt that there's a musical world outside the operatic universe which was so dominant at home.

When Julius Drake was a teenager, he spent them quite on his own, musically speaking. Of course he had a teacher, and before he turned 18, young Drake could play all of Beethoven's piano sonatas by heart – but he had never played any chamber music – or together with anybody else. What an almost grotesque starting point for someone who very soon found his life project: making music together with other musicians and showing himself to be one of the true masters.

Anna Prohaska's life also soon took a new turn. Having revolted against her own family of opera enthusiasts, she now suddenly found herself in the midst of a new, gigantic opera family. As a very young singer she was engaged at the Staatsoper in Berlin and immediately went on a big tour to Japan with 500 people. Since then the Staatsoper has become her musical home; this is where she knows everybody and always looks forward to returning to.

Julius Drake experienced something even wilder. He played with another person, a clarinet player. Drake was 18 years old and was in his first week at the conservatory – suddenly everything was changed. He knew at once that this was what he wanted to do: not play alone but together with other musicians. And the emotion was so intense that things turned upside down in the most delightful manner: He wasn't a chamber musician, handicapped by a musical childhood as a soloist, but he had a head start because he now already knew what he wanted to do and could concentrate fully on that. And already three years later Julius Drake began his remarkable career as a professional accompanist.

The baritone, Gerald Finley has compared working with Julius Drake as "the act of creating a most enjoyable dinner with a fellow chef". It's been a long time wish for us at Hindsgavl Festival to see, hear and taste the musical culinary skills of Anna Prohaska and Julius Drake. Tonight's menu is already whetting our appetite.

*Text: Ulrik Damgaard Andersen
English translation: Susanne Lange*