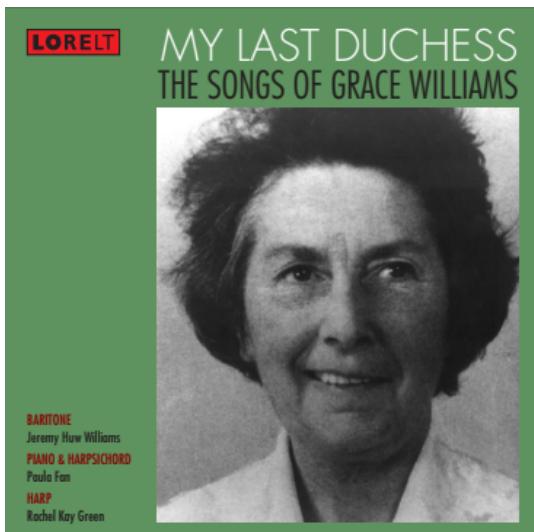


NEW RELEASE | OUT NOW

Lontano Records releases album of music by Welsh composer Grace Williams to commemorate 40th anniversary of her death



My Last Duchess : The Songs of Grace Williams

LOREL: LNT140

Jeremy Huw Williams Baritone
Paula Fan Piano and Harpsichord
Rachel Kay Green Harp

Odaline de la Martinez executive producer

See full track listing below

Lontano Records releases an album of welsh composer Grace Williams' vocal works, featuring baritone Jeremy Huw Williams.

Considered to be Wales' most notable female composer, Grace Williams (1906-1977) was a student of Vaughan Williams. Her most well known works include *Fantasia on Welsh Nursery Tunes* (1940) and *Penillion* (1955), which was written for the National Youth Orchestra. In 1949 she also became the first British woman to write the score for a feature film, with the British drama *Blue Scar*.

Though her instrumental work remains in the performance canon, her vast number of vocal works have been largely neglected. This CD features songs that span the entire duration of her compositional career – from *Slow fresh fount* (c.1925), a setting of words from Ben Jonson's *Cynthia's Revels*, to *My Last Duchess* (1974), a setting of Robert Browning's poem, written just three years before her death.

'To commemorate the 40th anniversary of Grace Williams's death, I was delighted to be asked to record the songs of this important 20th-century Welsh female composer, who grew up a few miles away from my own village. It has been a thrill to bring this long unperformed music to life again, and to work with the outstanding American musicians Paula Fan and Rachel Kay Green.'

Jeremy Huw Williams

This CD also features William's own arrangements of welsh traditional songs (such as *Jim Cro*, *Hushaby my pretty one*, and *Brecon*), while traditional folk melodies are also incorporated into her own music.

In 1992 Odaline de la Martinez founded Lontano Records (LORELT), which promotes the work of female composers, such as Grace Williams, contemporary composers and Latin American music. Lorelt has previously recorded Williams' short work *Hiraeth on Sea of Glass*, an album of harp music released in 1997.



Grace Williams with Sir Charles Groves

Track listing

My Last Duchess

Two 9th Century Welsh Poems

- 'Y Dref Wen' (The White Town)
- 'Eryr Pengwen' (Eagle of Pengwern)

Tarantella

Thou Art The One Truth

The Red Sun Rises

Four Mediaeval Welsh Poems

- 'Stafell Gynnydylan' (Cynddylan's Hall)
- 'Hwiangerdd' (Song to a Child)
- 'Boddi Maes Gwyddno' (The Drowning of Gwyddno's Plain)
- 'Claddu'r Barrd' (The Poet's Burial)

Two Welsh Folk Songs

- 'Jim Cro' (Jim Crow)
- 'Hwian hwi, Fy Mhentyn Tiws' (Hushaby my Pretty One)

Six Welsh Oxen Songs

- 'Llanilltud Fawr' (Llantwit Major)
- 'Aberhonddu' (Brecon)
- 'Margam'
- 'Ogwr' (Ogmore)
- 'Marthyr'
- 'Sain Tathan' (St Athan)

Margoton va t'à l'eau (Belinda went to the well)

Marfa Rhuddlan (The Red Marsh)

Hun Gwenllian (The Little Princess)

Bugeilio'r Gwenith Gwyn (Watching the Wheat)
Dafydd y Garreg Wen (David of the White Rock)
Y Bore Glas (The Early Dawn)
Yr Eneth Ffein Ddu (The Lovely Dark Maid)
Cariad Cyntaf (First Love)
Hiraeth (Longing)
Y Gwydd (The Loom)

Jeremy Huw Williams

The Welsh baritone Jeremy Huw Williams studied at St John's College, Cambridge, at the National Opera Studio, and with April Cantelo. He made his debut with Welsh National Opera at Guglielmo (*Così fan tutti*) and has since appeared in more than sixty operatic roles. He has given performances at major venues in North and South America, Australia, China, Hong Kong and most European Countries.

He has given recitals at the Wigmore Hall and Purcell Room, and at many major music festivals. He is renowned as a fine exponent of contemporary music, having commissioned much new music and given premieres of works by Alun Hoddinott, William Mathias, John Tavener, Michael Berkeley, Paul Mealor, Julian Phillips, Richard Causton, Mark Bowden, and Huw Watkins. He frequently records for BBC Radio 3, and has made many commercial recordings, including ten solo discs of songs.

He was awarded an Honorary Fellowship by Glyndwr University in 2009 for services to music in Wales, and received the Honorary Degree of Doctor of Music from the University of Aberdeen in 2011.

Paula Fan

Pianist Paula Fan has performed on five continents as soloist and chamber musician, recorded over twenty commercial albums, and has broadcast for the BBC, NPR, Radio Television China, and international stations from Bosnia and Australia. As one of the first recipients of the doctorate in Collaborative Piano, she has lectured on the subject worldwide. She has taught at the University of Arizona as its only Regents' Professor from the Fine Arts, and as Visiting Professor at the Eastman School of Music. She was also Principle Keyboardist with the Tucson Symphony Orchestra for more than thirty seasons.

As both performer and teacher, one of her greatest interests has been building bridges between classical music and audiences of all ages and backgrounds, as well as between disciplines. In collaboration with the Arizona Research Institute for Solar Energy, she was co-founder of the Solar Storytellers, a piano trio playing electric instruments powered by gold card with a solar panel for a roof, which performed on the National Mall in Washington DC, at the Aspen Science Center, and in Arizona. She now serves as the first Senior Fellow at the University of Arizona's Confluencenter for Creative Inquiry and continues to tour internationally as pianist and lecturer.

Rachel Kay Green

American harpist Rachel Kay Green has earned praise throughout the world. She has been the first prize winner in many competitions, including the Golden Era of Romantic Music International Competition, the American Fine Arts Festival Russian Music Competition, the Angie Southard Competition, the ENKOR International Music Competition and was the top prize winner at the Fourth International Harp Competition in Mexico. Rachel has toured extensively, giving solo recitals in Hong Kong, at the Rio Harp Festival in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, in New York's Carnegie Hall, and throughout the United States. She has performed for the American Musicological Society and as first harpist for the Summer Opera Program at the International Lyric Academy in Italy. As a concert soloist, she has appeared with the Tucson Symphony Orchestra, the University of Northern Colorado Symphony Orchestra and the Arapahoe Philharmonic.

Rachel received her Doctor of Musical Arts and Master of Music degrees at the University of Arizona, studying under Dr. Carroll McLaughlin. She holds a Bachelor of Music degree from the University of Northern Colorado, where she completed a double emphasis in harp performance and piano performance.

LORELT (LONTANO RECORDS LTD)

Always at the forefront of music innovation Lontano was one of the first ensembles to form its own record company when in 1992 it established the LORELT label. Now with a catalogue of 40 discs, LORELT features soloists as well as other ensembles and is noted for its archive of important and often neglected compositions. In 2006, a part of Lontano's 30th Anniversary Celebrations, LORELT became the first independent UK label to include MP3 Downloads from their website.

LORELT has recently released CDs of music by Peter Child, Odaline de la Martinez and Mihailo Trandafilovski. This was followed by a CD of orchestral works by Elizabeth Maconchy, Piano Music by Philip Hammond, A Place in the Sky for solo clarinet, Marlos Nobre Piano Music, London New Voices, Dances with Bears – chamber music by Rob Keeley, a CD of music by Ernesto Nazareth with Clelia Iruzun solo piano and now Songs by Grace Williams.

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