Echoes of Old England
Saturday, February 3, 2018 • 7:30 p.m.
First Free Methodist Church

Orchestra Seattle
Seattle Chamber Singers
Michael Wheatley, conductor

EDWARD ELGAR (1857–1934)
Sospiri, Op. 70

ARNOLD BAX (1883–1953)
November Woods

CAMILLE SAINT-SAËNS (1835–1921)
Violin Concerto No. 3 in B minor, Op. 61

III. Molto moderato e maestoso — Allegro non troppo

Shintaro Taneda, violin

— intermission —

RALPH VAUGHAN WILLIAMS (1872–1958)
Five Tudor Portraits

Ballad: The Tunning of Elinor Rumming
Intermezzo: Pretty Bess
Burlesca: Epitaph on John Jayberd of Diss
Romanza: Jane Scroop (Her Lament for Philip Sparrow)
Scherzo: Jolly Rutterkin

Kate Tombaugh, soprano
Barry Johnson, baritone

Please silence cell phones and other electronics, and refrain from the use of cameras and recording devices during the performance.

Special thanks to First Free Methodist Church and Ron Haight for all of their assistance in making OSSCS’s 48th season possible, and to Michael Moore and the Seattle Philharmonic (www.seattlephil.org) for the use of their celesta at this concert.

Refreshments will be available in the Fine Center during intermission.
About the Violin Soloist

Sixteen-year-old violinist Shintaro Taneda, winner of the 2017–2018 OSSCS Concerto Competition, has also won top honors at the 2016 MTNA Northwest senior string competition, WMEA State Solo and Ensemble Contest, SMTA Simon-Fiset Strings Competition and Performing Arts Festival of the Eastside’s concerto division. Shintaro has performed concerti with Seattle Festival Orchestra, Bainbridge Symphony and Cascade Symphony, and has also been a featured artist in Seattle Chamber Music Society’s Winter Festival, Port Angeles Musicale and the popular Ten Grands Concert at Benaroya Hall. An enthusiastic orchestral musician, Shintaro has played in the Aspen Music Festival Philharmonic Orchestra and the NAfME All-Northwest Orchestra. His summer activities have included the Aspen Music Festival, Center Stage Strings, Meadowmount School of Music, Dallas Conservatory’s Music in the Mountains, the Brian Lewis Young Artist Program and the Domaine Forget Music Academy. Shintaro currently studies with Simon James of the Coleman Violin Studio and with Midori Goto at the University of Southern California. He was previously a student of Shizuko Komeya and was a Dorothy Richard Starling Violin Scholarship recipient at the Pressley Violin Studio. He has participated in masterclasses with Rachel Barton Pine, David Perry, Noah Bendix-Balgley, Paul Kantor and Stephen Shipps, among others.

Program Notes

Edward Elgar
Sospiri, Op. 70

Edward William Elgar was born June 2, 1857, in Broadheath, Worcestershire, England, and died in Worcester on February 23, 1934. He composed this work for string orchestra (plus harp and optional harmonium or organ) during December 1913 and January 1914. Henry Wood conducted the New Queen’s Hall Orchestra in the first performance on August 15, 1914, in London.

On December 3, 1913, at a lunch with music publisher W.W. Elkin, Elgar agreed to compose two short pieces that would serve as companion pieces to his 1888 work Salut d’amour—in exchange for 100 guineas plus a royalty of three pence per copy sold. The contract also included a provision that amounted to Elgar’s first recording contract: “Two thirds of the net royalties received in respect of mechanical instrument reproduction to be paid to the Composer.”

Elgar composed the first of these pieces, Carissima, in short order. His second effort, Sospir d’amour (later retitled Sospiri, Italian for “sighs”), emerged as something more somber and profound than the “light music” Elkin had sought, so he offered it to another publisher in two versions: one for violin and piano, the other for string orchestra with harp and organ.

Henry Wood led the premiere of Sospiri at the opening night of his Promenade Concerts in August 1914, barely two weeks after the onset of World War I. (Wood hastily revised the Proms schedule to expunge German works, with Richard Strauss’ Don Juan swapped out for Tchaikovsky’s Capriccio Italian on the opening-night program.) Two days later, Elgar volunteered as a special constable at the Hampstead police station to assist with the war effort. Reviewing the first performance, The Musical Times described Sospiri as “a sweet melancholy air, laid out and scored with masterly reticence and perfection of detail.”

Arnold Bax
November Woods

Arnold Edward Trevor Bax was born in Streatham (a suburb of London) on November 8, 1883, and died in Cork, Ireland, on October 3, 1953. He began work on this tone poem in 1914, completing it in November 1917. Hamilton Harty conducted the Hallé Orchestra of Manchester in the premiere on November 18, 1920. The score calls for 3 flutes, piccolo, 2 oboes, English horn, 3 clarinets, bass clarinet, 2 bassoons, contrabassoon, 4 horns, 3 trumpets, 3 trombones, tuba, timpani, cymbals, glockenspiel, 2 harps, celesta and strings.

A prolific composer in virtually every genre save opera, Arnold Bax is known largely for his seven symphonies and 18 tone poems, including The Garden of Fand, Tintagel, The Happy Forest and November Woods.

While on the surface November Woods may seem to be “an impression of the dank and stormy music of nature in the late autumn,” Bax cautioned that “the whole piece and its origins are connected with certain troublous experiences I was going through myself at the time, and the mood of the Buckinghamshire wood where the idea of this work came, seemed to sound a similar chord as it were. If there are sounds in the music which recall the screaming of the wind and the cracking of strained branches, I hope they may suggest deeper things at the same time. The middle part may be taken as a dream of happier days, such as sometimes come in the intervals of stress either physical or mental.”

The “certain troublous experiences” that inspired this tone poem related to Bax’s wife learning of his love affair with pianist Harriett Cohen. (Mrs. Bax refused a divorce and they remained unhappily married until her death in 1947, at which point Cohen discovered that Bax had been involved with yet another woman for over two decades.)

After leading the well-received world premiere in Manchester, Hamilton Harty (an early proponent of Bax’s music) presented the tone poem with the Royal Philharmonic the following month, but London critics were less enthusiastic. Nevertheless, Bax biographer Lewis Foreman considers it “the best of his nature poems.”

— Jeff Eldridge

Camille Saint-Saëns
Violin Concerto No. 3 in B minor, Op. 61

Saint-Saëns was born in Paris on October 9, 1835, and died in Algiers on December 16, 1921. He composed this concerto during March 1880 for Pablo de Sarasate, who premiered the work in Paris on January 2, 1881. In addition to solo violin, the score requires pairs of woodwinds (with one flute doubling piccolo), horns and trumpets, 3 trombones, timpani and strings.
Saint-Saëns composed his third violin concerto expressly for the Spanish virtuoso Pablo de Sarasate, to whom he had dedicated his Concerto No. 1 and the famous Introduction and Rondo Capriccioso some two decades earlier. The finale of Concerto No. 3 opens with the soloist playing a brief recitative before launching into an Allegro non troppo in B minor and $\frac{3}{4}$ time, which Hubbard William Harris described (in a 1904 Chicago Symphony program book) as “a long and elaborate movement of quasi-rhapsodical structure, developed from four distinct themes — the first three being stated by the solo instrument and the violins and violas in harmony (muted and pianissimo). In the recapitulation this fourth theme reappears in the trumpets and trombones fortissimo, embellished by figurations from the strings — to be carried on by the solo instrument, expressively accompanied by the strings and woodwinds; following which the movement comes to an end with a free coda.”

Ralph Vaughan Williams
Five Tudor Portraits

Ralph (pronounced “Rafe”) Vaughan Williams was born October 12, 1872, in Down Ampney, Gloucestershire, England, and died August 26, 1958, in London. He composed this five-movement choral-orchestral work on a commission from the Norwich Festival, conducting the first performance at St. Andrew’s Hall in Norwich on September 25, 1936, leading the London Philharmonic and the Norwich Festival Chorus. In addition to mezzo-soprano and baritone soloists and chorus, the score calls for 3 flutes (one doubling piccolo), 2 oboes (one doubling English horn), 2 clarinets, 2 bassoons, contrabassoon, 4 horns, 2 trumpets, 3 trombones, tuba, timpani, percussion, harp and strings.

Englishman Ralph Vaughan Williams was a composer and conductor; player of violin, viola, piano and organ; teacher, writer and lecturer; and mentor to many younger musicians. He has been described as “one of the truly outstanding composers of his or any age. One who had all the techniques one could wish for; who could experiment with the best of them; who rejuvenated a nation’s musical life; who preserved its musical heritage; and who remained modest and unassuming throughout. This, of course, was part of his greatness.” In general, his compositions (including operas, film scores, ballet and stage music, song cycles, church music and nine symphonies) not only exude, somehow, the essence of “Englishness,” but also exhibit timeless, visionary qualities that continue to enrapture audiences everywhere.

Always deeply interested in the English choral tradition, Vaughan Williams conducted choirs at various music festivals and composed works for them. “I think they thought they’d get ‘O Praise the Lord,’” the composer noted in the case of the work on tonight’s program, “but I sent them the Five Tudor Portraits,” a work that shocked many of its first listeners. Vaughan Williams set poems by one John Skelton, a tutor to the future King Henry VIII when he was Duke of York, featuring brief, metrically uneven rhyming lines (“Skeltonic lines”) that, for Vaughan Williams, required the rollicking, “jazzy” treatment exemplified in the work’s opening portrait, including rather risqué verses that occasioned discomposure among some members of the audience at the premiere. During this rambunctiously racy first movement, according to Vaughan Williams’ second wife (and biographer), Ursula Vaughan Williams, “The elderly Countess of Albermarle sat in the front row getting pinker and pinker in the face and, when the pink turned to purple, Astra Desmond (the contralto soloist), thinking she was going to have a heart attack, was about to lean down from the platform and offer smelling salts. But before this aid could be given she rose to her feet, said ‘Disgusting!’ loudly and clearly, and marched out of the hall. When Ralph learned of the event afterward, he said it certainly showed that the choir’s diction was good, and added reflectively: “A pity she didn’t read the lines I didn’t set.”

The debut of Five Tudor Portraits earned wide critical acclaim, with a correspondent for The Musical Times noting that he had seldom seen an English audience “so relieved of concert-room inhibitions.” Since its highly successful premiere, however, performances of this musically excellent work have been rare due in part to its difficulty (the long fourth movement for women’s chorus and female soloist makes the suite off-putting to many amateur choirs) and the bawdy humor of its opening movement is not universally appreciated!

The suite begins with a Ballad, an exuberant, rhythmically and contrapuntally complex setting of the ribald verses of “The Tunning of Elinor Rumming” that describe Elinor and the goings-on at her hilltop alehouse. Shifting, ragged rhythms lead to a ruminative telling of the tale of “drunken Alice” by the solo mezzo-soprano and a variety of solo instruments.

In the ardent Intermezzo, “Pretty Bess,” the baritone soloist expresses yearning for his love, answered by the chorus. Tenors and basses, using a mixture of Latin and English, declare John Skelton’s disdain for a thoroughly abhorrent character in the ensuing raucous Burlesca, “Epitaph on John Jayberd of Diss.”

“Jane Scroop (Her Lament for Philip Sparrow),” a poignant Romanza for the mezzo-soprano soloist (Jane) and women’s voices (her friends), is a tender, sensitive, heart-trending requiem for a young girl’s pet sparrow, Philip, killed by Gib, her cat. The “Dies Irae” appears in the orchestra as the air is filled with the calls of the birds who participate in Philip’s cortége and funeral. Jane and her friends pray for the repose of Philip Sparrow’s soul and bid him “farewell for evermore.”

In total contrast to Jane Scroop’s lengthy lament, the brief, boisterous Scherzo, “Jolly Rutterkin,” employs exhilarating cross-rhythms and spirited exchanges between baritone soloist (Rutterkin, a dashing vagabond) and chorus. Rutterkin’s arrival in town causes a stir, and his vibrant musical portrait concludes an undeservedly little-known masterpiece overflowing with rhythmic vigor and shimmering instrumental and vocal color that powerfully conveys the passions of love and loss, and the joy and beauty that make life worth living.

— Lorelette Knowles
The Tunning of Elinor Rumming

Tell you I will, If that ye will A-while be still, Of a comely jill That dwell on a hill: She is somewhat sage And well worn in age: For her visage It would assuage A man's courage. Droopy and drowsy, Scurvy and lowsly, Her face all bowsy, Comely crinkled, Wondrously wrinkled Writhen in wondrous wise With clothes upon her head When she doth her array Vocal Texts And yet she will jet A man would have pity And so doth it appear, And gray russet rocket, Like as they were with buckles Together made fast. Her youth is far past! And yet she will jet Like a jollivet, In her furred flocket, And gray russet rocket, With simper and cocket. Her hood of Lincoln green It has been hers, I ween, More than forty year; And so doth it appear, For the green bare threadés Look like serene weedés, Withered like hay, The wool worn away. And yet, I dare say She thinketh herself gay Upon the holiday When she doth her array And girdeth on her geets Stitched and pranked with pleats; Her kirtle, Bristol-red, With clothes upon her head That weigh a sow of lead, Writhe in wondrous wise After the Saracen's guise, With a whom-wham Knit with a trim-tram Upon her brain-pan; Like an Egyptian Cappéd about, When she goeth out. And this comely dame, I understand, her name Is Elinor Rumming, At home in her wonning; As and men say She dwelt in Surrey In a certain stead Beside Leatherhead. She is a tunnish gib, The devil and she be sib. But to make up my tale She breweth nappy ale, And maketh thereof pot-sale To travellers, to tinkers, To sweaters, to swinkers, And all good ale-drinkers, That will nothing spare But drink till they stare And bring themselves bare, With 'Now away the mare! And let us slay care.' As wise as an hare! Come who so will To Elinor on the hill With 'Fill the cup, fill!' And sit there by still, Early and late. Thither cometh Kate, Cisy, and Sare, With their legs bare, They run in all haste, Unbraced and unladen; With their heelés daggéd, Their kirtles all jaggéd, Their smocks all to-raggéd, With titters and tatters, Bring dishes and platters, With all their might running To Elinor Rumming To have of her tunning, She lendeth them on the same, And thus beginneth the game. Some wenches come unladen Some housewives come unbraced Some be flybitten, Some skewed as a kitten; Some have no hair-lace, Their locks about their face Such a rude sort To Elinor resort From tide to tide. Abide, abide! And to you shall be told How her ale is sold To Maud and to Mold. Some have no money That thither comé For their ale to pay. That is a shrewd array! Elinor swore, 'Nay, Ye shall not bear away Mine ale for nought, By him that me bought!' With 'Hey, dog, hey! Have these hogs away!' With 'Get me a staffé The swine eat my draffé! Strike the hogs with a club, They have drunk up my swilling-tub.' Then thither came drunken Alice, And she was full of talés, Of tidings in Walés, And of Saint James in Galés, And of the Portingalés, With 'Lo, Gossip, I wis, Thus and thus it is: There hath been great war Between Temple Bar And the Cross in Cheap, And there came an heap Of mill-stones in a rout.' She speaketh this in her snout, Snivelling in her nose As though she had the pose. 'Lo, here is an old tippet, An ye will give me a sippet Of your stale ale, God send you good sale!' 'This ale,' said she, 'is nappy; Let us suppé and soppy And not spill a droppy, For, so may I hoppy, It cooloth well my cruppy'. Then began she to weep And forthwith fell asleep. ('With Hey! and with Ho! Sit we down a-row, And drink till we blow.) My daisy delectable. My primrose commendable, My proper Bess. My heart it is with thee. My heart it is with thee. My heart it is with thee.
Epitaph on John Jayberd of Diss
Sequitur trigintale
Tale quale rationale,
Licet parum curiale,
Tamen satis est formale,
Quod petis, hic sit quis?
Que mendax que, fuisse
Obiit sanctus iste pater
Adieu, Jayberd, adieu,
Auras, turbare sodales
Anno Domini Millesimo Quingen-
Carpens vitales
Resident in nemine quales;
Cui male lingua loquax
Clerk cleribus estque vocatus.
Clerk obiit vere,
Cantemus festa Joannis:
Clerc cleribus nuncupatur.
Cujusdam multinominis,
Rumpopulorum
Per omnia Secula seculorum!

[Free Translation]
Here follows a trental,
More or less reasonable,
Hardly fitting for the Church,
But formal enough,
For John the Clerk,
A certain of many names
Who was called John Jayberd.
He was called clerk by the clergy.
This holy father died
In the year of our Lord 1506.
In the parish of Diss
There was not his like;
A man renowned for malice,
Double-hearted, double-tongued,
Worn out by old age,
Suspected of all,
Loved by none.
He is buried
Sing we songs in our cups
To celebrate John.
The clerk is truly dead
And given the name of Jayberd.
Born among the people of Diss
And called clerk by the clergy.
Never was he wont
Truly to bewail his sins.
His evil tongue
Was loquacious and lying.
Such morals as his
Were never before in anyone.
When he breathed the vital
Air he disturbed his companions
And his fellow citizens as if
He were an ass, a mule or a bull.
Do you ask who this is?
John Jayberd, inhabitant of Diss
With whom while he lived
Were associated quarrels, violence and strife.
Now here he lie

Pray brethren

Jane Scoop
Placebo! Who is there, who?
Dilexi! Dame Margery?
Fa, re, mi, mi, Wherefore and why?
For the soul of Philip Sparrow,
That was, late, slain at Carrow
Among the Nuns Black.
For that sweet soul's sake,
And for all sparrows' souls
Set in our bead-rolls.
When I remember again
How my Philip was slain,
Never half the pain
Was between you twain,
Pyramus and Thisbe,
As then befell to me:
I wept and I wailed,
The tears down hailed,
But nothing it availed
To call Philip again,
Whom Gib, our cat, hath slain.
Vengeance I ask and cry,
By way of exclamation,
On all the whole nation
Of cattés wild and tame:
God send them sorrow and shame!
That cat specially
That slew so cruelly
My little pretty sparrow
That I brought up at Carrow!
O cat of churlish kind,
The fiend was in thy mind
So traitorously my bird to kill
That never owed thee evil will!
It had a velvet cap,
And would sit upon my lap,
And seek after small worms,
And sometime
whitebread-crumbes;
And many times and oft,
Between my breastes soft
It would lie and rest;
It was proper and prest!
Sometimes he would gasp
When he saw a wisp;
A fly, or a gnat,
He would fly at that;
And prettily he would pant
When he saw an ant!
Lord how he would pry
After a butterfly!
Lord, how he would hop
After the grasshop!
And when I said, 'Phip, Phip!'
Then he would leap and skip,
And take me by the lip.
Alas! it will me slo
That Philip is gone me fro!
For Philip Sparrow's soul,
Set in our bead-roll,
Let us now whisper
A Paster noster.

Lauda, anima mea, Dominum!
To weep with me, look that ye come,
All manner of birds in your kind;
See none be left behind.

To mourning look that ye fall
With dolorous songs funeral,
Some to sing, and some to say,
Some to weep, and some to pray,
Every bird in his lay.
The goldfinch, the wagtail;
The jangling jay to rail,
The flecked pie to chatter
Of this dolorous matter;
And Robin Redbreast,
He shall be the priest
The requiem mass to sing,
Softly warbling,
With help of the reed sparrow,
And the chattering swallow,
This hearse for to hallow;
The lark with his long toe;
The spinkie, and the martinet also;
The fieldfare, and snipe
The crow and the kite;
The raven called Rolphe,
His plain song to sol-fa;
The partridge, the quail;
The plover with us to wail;
The lusty chanting nightingale;
The popinjay to tell her tale,
That tothet off in a glass,
Shall read the Gospel at mass;
The mavis with her whistle
Shall read there the Epistle.
Our chanters shall be the cuckoo,
The culver, the stockdoo,
With 'peewit' the lapwing,
The Versicles shall sing.

The swan of Mæander,
The goose and the gander,
The duck and the drake,
Shall watch at this wake;
The owl that is so foul,
Must help us to howl;
The heron so gaunt,
And the cormorant,
With the pheasant,
And the gaggling gant,
The dainty curlew,
The turtle most true.
The peacock so proud,
Because his voice is loud,
And hath a glorious tail,
He shall sing the Grail.
The bird of Araby
That potentially
May never die,
A phoenix it is
This hearse that must bless

Pray brethren
With aromatic gums
That cost great sums,
The way of thurification
To make a fumigation,
Sweet of reflare,
And redolent of air,
This corse for to 'cense
With great reverence,
As patriarch or pope
In a black cope.

While he 'censeth the hearse,
He shall sing the verse,
Libera me, Domine!

Requiem aeternum dona eis, Domine!
I pray God, Philip
to Heaven may fly!
Domine, exaudi orationem meam!

Jolly Rutterkin
Hoyda, Jolly Rutterkin, hoyda!
Like a rutter hoyda.
Rutterkin is come unto our town
In a cloak without coat or gown,
Save a ragged hood to cover his crown,
Like a rutter hoyda.
Rutterkin can speak no English,
His tongue runneth all on buttered fish,
Besmeared with grease about his dish,
Like a rutter hoyda.
Rutterkin shall bring you all good luck,
A stoup of beer up at a pluck,
Till his brain be as wise as a duck,
Like a rutter hoyda.

What now, let see,
Who looketh on me
Well round about,
How gay and how stout
That I can wear
Courtly my gear.

My hair brusheth
So pleasantly,
My robe rusheth
So rustlingly,
Meseem I fly,
I am so light
To dance delight.

Properly dressed,
All point devise,
My person pressed
Beyond all size
Of the new guise,
To rush it out
In every rout.
Beyond measure
Me sleeve is wide,
All of pleasure
My hose strait tied,
Rich to behold,
Glittering in gold.

—John Skelton

Soprano
Barb Anderson
Ann Bridges
Sue Cobb
Abigail Owens Cooper
Cinda Freece
Peggy Kurtz §
Kathleen Sankey
Nancy Shasteen

Alto
Sharon Agnew
Cheryl Blackburn
Deanna Fryhle
Rose Fujinaka
Pamela Ivezic
Ellen Kaisse
Jan Kinney
Theodora Letz
Lila Woodruff May
Laurie Medill §

Tenor
Ralph Cobb
Jon Lange §
Tom Nesbitt
David Zapolsky

Bass
Timothy Braun
Andrew Danilchik
Stephen Keeler
Dennis Moore
Byron Olivier
Glenn Ramsdell
Steven Tachell
Skip Viau
Richard Wyckoff §

Violin
Susan Beals
Lauren Daugherty
Dean Drescher
Whitney Forck
Alexander Hawker
Margaret Hendrickson
Jason Hershey
Manchung Ho
Maria Hunt
Stephanie Keane
Brendan Laz 

Flute
Kate Johnson
Shari Muller-Ho *
Elana Sabovic-Matt

Oboe
Lindsay Hogan
Linda Rice*

English Horn
David Barnes

Clarinet
Steven Noffsinger *
Chris Peterson
Kristin Schneider

Bass Clarinet
Cynthia Ely

Bassoon
Aaron Chang
Jeff Eldridge *

Contrabassoon
Michel Jolivet

French Horn
Barney Blough
Laurie Heidt *

Trumpet
Rabi Lahiri
Sarah Weinberger
Janet Young *

Trombone
Cuauhtemoc Escobedo *
Chad Kirby
Jim Hattori

Tuba
David Brewer

Timpani
Dan Oie

Percussion
Ginny Bear
Lacey Brown
Kathie Flood

Keyboard
Paul Tegels

Harp
Catherine Case
Bethany Man *

§ section leader
* principal
** concertmaster