**Amelia Clarkson**

**Performance Information**

**Amelia Clarkson *Through His Gaze***

Three songs for tenor and harp 11’ 21”

*1. To a young girl 2. A crazed girl 3. He tells of a valley*

**Bradley Smith** tenor, **Oliver Wass** harp

Recorded at the 2020 Presteigne Festival’s Presteigne Digital, originally broadcast in August 2020.

**Text**

**To a Young Girl** *The Wild Swans at Coole (1919)*

My dear, my dear, I know More than another What makes your heart beat so; Not even your own mother Can know it as I know, Who broke my heart for her When the wild thought That she denies And has forgot, Set all her blood astir And glittered in her eyes.

**A Crazed Girl** *Last Poems (1938-39)*

That crazed girl improvising her music. Her poetry, dancing upon the shore, Her soul in division from itself Climbing, falling She knew not where, Hiding amid the cargo of a steamship, Her knee-cap broken, that girl I declare A beautiful lofty thing, or a thing Heroically lost, heroically found. No matter what disaster occurred She stood in desperate music wound, Wound, wound, and she made in her triumph Where the bales and the baskets lay No common intelligible sound But sang, 'O sea-starved, hungry sea.'

**He Tells of a Valley Full of Lovers** *The Wind Among the Reeds (1899)*

I dreamed that I stood in a valley, and amid sighs, For happy lovers passed two by two where I stood; And I dreamed my lost love came stealthily out of the wood With her cloud-pale eyelids falling on dream-dimmed eyes: I cried in my dream, *O women, bid the young men lay Their heads on your knees, and drown their eyes with your hair, For remembering hers they will find no other face fair Till all the valleys of the world have been withered away*

 *William Butler Yeats (1865-1939)*

**Programme Note**

*Through His Gaze* is a deconstruction of three poems by William Butler Yeats, exploring the male speaker’s simultaneous adoration, objectification and resentment of women. I composed the vocal part specifically for Bradley Smith who has a very light, charming and lyrical tone to create a vocal character which is both endearingly melancholic and laden with youthful angst. The harp morphs between representing the unravelling beauty and unattainability of the women whilst capturing a sentiment unique to adolescent frustration, using post-modal harmonies in my approach, as the speaker imposes his own narrative on his portrayal of these female characters. The piece was commissioned by the 2020 Presteigne Festival.

**Biography**

Amelia Clarkson is a composer for stage and concert hall from Northern Ireland. Recent works includes a commission from the Central Band of the Royal Air Force and song-set *Through His Gaze* for the 2020 Presteigne Festival. In February 2021, Amelia received the National Concert Hall of Ireland and Sounding the Feminists ‘Mid-Career/Emerging Commissioning Award’, for which she will be writing a new piece titled *I AM LEDA*. Amelia's artistic practice is supported by the Arts Council of Northern Ireland.

Amelia completed her masters with distinction at Trinity Laban Conservatoire of Music and Dance as a Trinity College London Scholar and with the support of the RVW Trust. Whilst there, she received the Musician’s Company Silver Medal, joining their Yeomen Young Artists Programme.