**Leoni Hughes-King**

**Performance Information**

**Leoni Hughes-King** ***Time***

Countertenor and piano Duration 11’13”

*I. Time let me hail and climb II. Time let me play and be III. In the first, spinning place (Interlude) IV. Time held me green and dying*

**Will Prior** countertenor, **Will Harmer** piano

**Text**

**Excerpts from *Fern Hill***

Now as I was young and easy under the apple boughs  
About the lilting house and happy as the grass was green, The night above the dingle starry, Time let me hail and climb  
Golden in the heydays of his eyes,  
Honoured among wagons I was prince of the apple towns  
And once below a time I lordly had the trees and leaves  
Trail with daisies and barley Down the rivers of the windfall light.

And as I was green and carefree, famous among the barns  
About the happy yard and singing as the farm was home,  
In the sun that is young once only,  
Time let me play and be  
Golden in the mercy of his means,  
And green and golden I was huntsman and herdsman, the calves  
Sang to my horn, the foxes on the hills barked clear and cold,  
And the sabbath rang slowly  
In the pebbles of the holy streams.

---------------------------------------------------------------------------

Nothing I cared, in the lamb white days, that time would take me  
Up to the swallow thronged loft by the shadow of my hand,  
In the moon that is always rising,  
Nor that riding to sleep  
I should hear him fly with the high fields  
And wake to the farm forever fled from the childless land.  
Oh as I was young and easy in the mercy of his means,  
Time held me green and dying  
Though I sang in my chains like the sea.

*Dylan Thomas*

**Programme Note**

Dylan Thomas’s poem *Fern Hill* is at once a celebration and an elegy. It tells of fond nostalgia for his rural childhood, and anguish at its inevitable end. Time is personified as a guardian figure in this poem, yet in its inevitable passing it is also the cause of the protagonist’s angst. The three stanzas selected – the first, second and final – are those which contain a line describing the actions of ‘Time’. The ‘Time’ chord – B♭ - E♭- A♭ - D♭ appears in various forms throughout the piece.

The first movement is spirited and confident, the second carefree. The interlude *In the first, spinning place* represents the intermediate stanzas, and the passing of childhood as the winding of a music box, leading into the reflective final movement. The harmonic language of the work is a pastoral yet fresh modality. It moves fluidly between different modes and degrees of tonality, colouring the protagonist’s vivid daydreams.

**Biography**

Leoni is a composer and clarinettist currently studying music at New College, Oxford. Her interests include the work of Gerald Finzi and the musical identity of England. The landscapes she has lived in are the heart of her music.