

# SPRING WILL NOT WAIT

THE ESSENTIAL JOHN IRELAND: MUSIC OF 1913-1929

ALLAN ARMSTRONG, PIANO

## MARIGOLD: AN IMPRESSION

1. YOUTH'S SPRING-TRIBUTE (3:37)
2. PENUMBRA (4:36)
3. SPLEEN (3:26)

ADAM EWING, BARITONE

## FROM FOUR PRELUDES

4. PRELUDE NO. 2 OBSESSION (4:13)
5. PRELUDE NO. 3 THE HOLY BOY (3:19)

6. SPRING SORROW (1:51)
7. HAWTHORNE TIME (1:50)
8. THE HEART'S DESIRE (2:29)
9. THE TRELLIS (3:09)

CATHERINE COMPTON, SOPRANO

10. THE DARKENED VALLEY (4:00)

11. LOVE IS A SICKNESS FULL OF WOES (2:19)

CATHERINE COMPTON, SOPRANO

12. PRELUDE IN E-FLAT (5:47)

13. WHEN I AM DEAD MY DEAREST (2:02)

CATHERINE COMPTON, SOPRANO

## THREE SONGS

14. LOVE AND FRIENDSHIP (1:59)
15. FRIENDSHIP IN MISFORTUNE (2:33)
16. THE ONE HOPE (4:14)

CATHERINE COMPTON, SOPRANO

## WE'LL TO THE WOODS NO MORE

17. WE'LL TO THE WOODS NO MORE (2:38)
18. IN BOYHOOD (1:51)
19. SPRING WILL NOT WAIT (4:08)

ADAM EWING, BARITONE

20. FEBRUARY'S CHILD (5:52)

TOTAL RECORDING: 66:03



# Spring Will Not Wait

## The Essential John Ireland

### Music of 1913-1929

Allan Armstrong, Piano

Catherine Compton, Soprano

Adam Ewing, Baritone



## ABOUT THE COMPOSER

**John Ireland (1879-1962)** was born into a literary family. He was the youngest of five children, yet his childhood, of which he said very little, was quite solitary; he moved to London at 14 to study organ and composition. His parents died later that year and he played at music halls and church services to cover expenses. Ireland studied with Sir Charles Stanford and befriended Ralph Vaughan-Williams and Frank Bridge and attended the English premieres of Tchaikovsky's 6th Symphony, the Brahms Clarinet Quintet, and *Le sacre du printemps*. He had a great appreciation for Debussy, Ravel and Richard Strauss. However no one person influenced the composer's work more than Arthur George Miller, a chorister with whom Ireland shared a close relationship until Miller's marriage, which devastated Ireland. This recording project explores Ireland's music from the thrills of desire he experienced in 1913 to the last in a series of birthday tributes to Miller in 1929. The music is an exploration of Ireland's greatest loves, friendships, and supreme sacrifices for both.

## REFLECTIONS ON THIS RECORDING

My first piano teacher, composer Robert Helps (1929-2001) went through a series of obsessions with less-championed composers, and when I studied with him he was embroiled in the works of John Ireland. Helps played the U.S. premiere of the John Ireland *Legend for Piano and Orchestra*, but his focus was mainly the solo piano pieces and a few songs, such as "Love is Sickness Full of Woes." I was very intrigued by this music and also curious why it is not performed more often. Throughout my career as a vocal collaborative pianist, I too have been drawn to the less popular repertoire of composers like Kaikhosru Sorabji, Frank Bridge, and John Ireland more than the traditional canon of Vaughan-Williams, Finzi, and Quilter. Not only do I find the former to be more harmonically daring, but also deeply pianistically rewarding. John Ireland's intense blossoming of creativity just before World War I provides some of the most fulfilling and compositionally rich repertoire in the genre, and it is deserving of much more attention and play than it currently enjoys. This recording is the first to explore Ireland's 16-year creative spring that coincided with a period of extreme personal repression and loneliness. His "Spring" of self-denying love, of truth, of identity, and of prolific composition came at great personal cost, though his deepest desires found some fulfillment through his brilliant work. It has been an absolute honor to delve into Ireland's songs and piano music and continue exploring the work Bob Helps inspired in me.

Allan Armstrong, Boulder, Colorado, April 2016



Allan Armstrong  
piano



Catherine Compton  
soprano



Adam Ewing  
baritone

## Allan Armstrong, piano

Pianist and vocal coach Allan Armstrong is a staff accompanist at University of Texas Rio Grande Valley and the official accompanist of the Metropolitan Opera National Council auditions for the Colorado/Wyoming district and Rocky Mountain Region. He has served as the resident coach/accompanist for Opera Colorado in Denver. In 2015 Allan was the production coach for Britten's *The Turn of the Screw* at Newfoundland's Opera on the Avalon. Also in 2015 he was the rehearsal pianist and coach for Bartok's *Bluebeard's Castle* featuring bass-baritone Samuel Ramey at the Colorado Music Festival in Boulder. He was the pianist and coach for Sugar Creek Symphony and Song's production of *The Magic Flute* and returned for his 9th season with Sherrill Milnes' Savannah Voice Festival. From 2010-2014 Allan served as a pianist/coach with the International Vocal Arts Institute in Blacksburg, VA. Other recent credits include the world premiere performance of the abridged version of Lori Laitman's *The Scarlet Letter*; a gala concert for Opera Colorado with soprano Elizabeth Futral; and a concert tour of Japan. In 2010 he was a featured solo pianist in a recital of the complete piano works of Pulitzer prize winning composer David Del Tredici at NYU Steinhardt School and was awarded a residency at the Arrigo Pedrolla Conservatory in Vicenza, Italy.

## Catherine Compton, soprano

Soprano Catherine Compton holds a Bachelor of Music from Iowa State University and a Master of Music degree from the University of Colorado Boulder. A Fulbright scholar, she specializes in music of women composers and the songs of Fanny Mendelssohn Hensel. Performances include lieder recitals for the Mendelssohn Museum of Leipzig, concerts with the Leipzig Sinfonieorchester, Leipzig Bach Festival, Universität der Künste and the Haus der Kulturen der Welt in Berlin. Opera credits include Zerlina (*Don Giovanni*), Pamina (*Magic Flute*), Mother (*Amahl & the Night Visitors*), among others.

## Adam Ewing, baritone

Baritone Adam Ewing holds a Doctor of Musical Arts degree in vocal performance from the University of Colorado Boulder, where he studied with Patrick Mason. In addition to accompanying and teaching voice, Ewing has appeared as Sondheim (*Side by Side by Sondheim*), John Brooke (*Little Women*), Gianni Schicchi, and the Count (*Le nozze di Figaro*), among others. He also performs with Central City Opera's Education and Community Engagement ensemble. In addition to dramatic works, Ewing is an avid performer of art song. He sang with the Fall Island Vocal Arts Seminar where he studied with Stephanie Blythe and Alan Smith and studied at the Vancouver International Song Institute.

## TEXTS

### Marigold: An impression (1913)

#### Youth's Spring-Tribute

##### Dante Gabriel Rossetti

On this sweet bank your head  
thrice sweet and dear  
I lay, and spread your hair on either side,  
And see the newborn woodflowers  
bashful-eyed  
Look through the golden tresses  
here and there.  
On these debateable borders of the year  
Spring's foot half falters;  
scarce she yet may know  
The leafless blackthorn-blossom from the snow.  
And through her bowers  
the wind's way still is clear.

But April's sun strikes down the glades to-day;  
So shut your eyes upturned and feel my kiss  
Creep, as the Spring now thrills through  
every spray,  
Up your warm throat to your warm lips:  
for this is even the hour of Love's sworn  
suitservice,  
With whom cold hearts are counted castaway.

So shall the tongues of the sea's foam  
(Though many voices therewith come  
From drowned hope's home to cry to me),  
Bewail one hour the more, when sea  
And wind are one with memory.

#### Spleen (Ernest Dowson)

Around were all the roses red  
The ivy all around was black.

Dear, so thou only move thine head,  
Shall all mine old despairs awake!

Too blue, too tender was the sky,  
The air too soft, too green the sea.

#### Penumbra

##### Dante Gabriel Rossetti

I did not look upon her eyes,  
(Though scarcely seen, with no surprise,  
'Mid many eyes a single look),  
Because they should not gaze rebuke  
At night, from stars in sky and brook.

I did not take her by the hand  
(Though little was to understand  
From touch of hands all friends might take),  
Because it should not prove a flake  
Burnt in my palm to boil and ache.

I did not listen to her voice,  
(Though none had noted, where at choice  
All might rejoice in listening),  
Because no such a thing should cling  
In the wood's moan at evening.

They told me she was sad that day,  
(Though wherefore tell what love's soothsay,  
Sooner than they, did register?)  
And my heart leapt and wept to her,  
And yet I did not speak nor stir.

Always I fear, I know not why,  
Some lamentable flight from thee.

I am so tired of holly-sprays  
And weary of the bright box-tree,

Of all the endless country ways;  
Of everything alas! save thee

### Spring Sorrow

Rupert Brooke (1918)

All suddenly the wind comes soft,  
And Spring is here again;  
And the hawthorn quickens  
with buds of green  
And my heart with buds of pain.

My heart all Winter lay so numb,  
The earth so dead and froze,  
That I never thought the Spring would come,

Or my heart wake any more.

But Winter's broken and earth has woken  
And the small birds cry again.  
And the hawthorn hedge puts forth its buds,

And my heart puts forth its pain.

### Hawthorn Time

A.E. Housman (1918)

'Tis time, I think, by Wenlock town  
The golden broom should blow;  
The hawthorn sprinkled up and down  
Should charge the land with snow.  
Spring will not wait the loiterer's time  
Who keeps so long away;  
So others wear the broom and climb  
The hedgerows heaped with may.  
Oh tarnish late on Wenlock Edge,  
Gold that I never see;  
Lie long, high snowdrifts in the hedge  
That will not shower on me.

### Love is a Sickness full of Woes (Anonymous) (1921)

Love is a sickness full of woes,  
All remedies refusing;  
A plant that with most cutting grows,  
Most barren with best using,  
Why so?  
More we enjoy it, more it dies;  
If not enjoy'd, it sighing cries -- Heigh Ho!

### The Heart's Desire

A.E. Housman (1919)

The boys are up the woods with day  
To fetch the daffodils away,  
And home at noonday from the hills  
They bring no dearth of daffodils.  
Afield for palms the girls repair,  
And sure enough the palms are there,  
And each will find by hedge or pond  
Her waving silver-tufted wand.  
In farm and field through all the shire  
The eye beholds the heart's desire;  
Ah, let not only mine be vain,  
For lovers should be loved again.

### The Trellis

Aldous Huxley (1920)

Thick-flowered is the trellis  
That hides our joys  
From prying eyes of malice  
And all annoy,  
And we lie rosily bowered.  
Through the long afternoons  
And evenings endlessly  
Drawn out, when summer swoons  
In perfume windlessly,  
Sounds our light laughter.  
With whispered words between  
And silent kisses.  
None but the flowers have seen  
Our white caresses -  
Flowers and the bright-eyed birds.

Love is a torment of the mind,  
A tempest everlasting;  
And Jove hath made it of a kind  
Not well, nor full, nor fasting.  
Why so?  
More we enjoy it, more it dies;  
If not enjoy'd, it sighing cries --Heigh Ho!

### When I am dead my dearest (Christina Rossetti)

When I am dead, my dearest,  
Sing no sad songs for me;  
Plant thou no roses at my head,  
Nor shady cypress tree:  
Be the green grass above me  
With showers and dewdrops wet;  
And if thou wilt, remember,  
And if thou wilt, forget.  
I shall not see the shadows,  
I shall not feel the rain;  
I shall not hear the nightingale  
Sing on, as if in pain:  
And dreaming through the twilight  
That doth not rise nor set,  
Haply I may remember,  
And haply may forget.

### Three Songs (1926)

Love and Friendship (Emily Brontë)

Love is like the wild rose-briar, Friendship like the  
holly-tree - The holly is dark when the rose-briar  
blooms, But which will bloom most constantly?  
The wild rose-briar is sweet in spring, It's  
summer blossoms scent the air. Yet wait till  
winter comes again And who will call the wild-  
briar fair? Then scorn the silly rose-wreath now  
And deck thee with the holly's sheen,  
That when December blights thy brow  
He still may leave thy garland green.

### We'll to the Woods No More (A.E. Housman) (1927)

We'll to the Woods No More

We'll to the Woods no more  
The laurels all are cut,  
The bowers are bare of bay  
That once the Muses wore.  
The year draws in the day  
And soon will evening shut:  
The laurels all are cut  
We'll to the woods no more.  
Oh, we'll no more, no more  
To the leafy woods away,  
To the high wild woods of laurel  
And the bowers of bay no more.

In Boyhood

When I would muse in boyhood I sought them far and found them,  
The wild green woods among, The sure, the straight, the brave,  
And nurse resolves and fancies The hearts I lost my own to,  
Because the world was young, The souls I could not save.

It was not foes to conquer,  
Nor sweethearts to be kind,  
But it was friends to die for  
That I would seek and find.

They braced their  
belts about them,  
They crossed in ships the sea,  
They sought and found  
six feet of ground,  
And there they died for me.

### Friendship in misfortune (Anonymous)

Give me the depth of love that springs  
From friendship in misfortune grown,  
As ivy to the ruin clings,  
When every other hope has flown.  
Give me that fond confiding love --  
That naught but death itself can blight;  
A flame that slander cannot move,  
But burns in darkness doubly bright.

### The One Hope (Dante Gabriel Rossetti)

When vain desire at last and vain regret  
Go hand in hand to death, and all is vain,  
What shall assuage the unforgotten pain  
And teach the forgetful to forget?  
Shall Peace be still a sunk stream long unmet,  
Or may the soul at once in a green plain  
Stoop through the spray of some  
sweet life-fountain  
And cull the dew-drenched flowering amulet?  
Ah! when the wan soul in that golden air  
Peers the scripted petals softly blown  
Beers breathless for the gift of grace unknown, -  
Ah! let none other alien spell so'er  
But only the one Hope's one name be there,  
Not less nor more, but even that word alone.