



New Chamber Opera Studio

Lunchtime Recital Series

John Morshead, Baritone
Francois Cloete, Pianist

Schubert – Der wanderer

Fauré – Nocturne

Debussy – Trois Chansons de Bilitis

La Flûte de Pan

La Chevlure

Le tombeau des Naiades

Fauré – Au Cimitière

Schubert – Wanderers Nachtlied

The theme of 'journeying' begins with Schubert's *Der Wanderer*, where we meet our lost, homesick vagabond. He tells us that he comes from the mountains, the valley steams, the ocean roar. In Fauré's *Nocturne* from his *Deux Chansons pour Voix et Piano*, the journey continues through the grass and deep blue night, guided by 'charming stars'.

Then in Debussy's gorgeous *Trois Chansons de Bilitis*, we meet a young person who falls in love with a man in the woods. In *La Flûte de Pan*, the stunning piano part far outshines the vocal line with its bubbling quality. The second song of the cycle *La Chevelure* is a gradual crescendo to reflect more intimate, erotic details of their relationship. In *Le tombeau des Naiades*, the music is almost inverted, the shifting keys and tonalities endlessly twisting to emphasise the lostness of the journeyer. Exhausted by this romantic, almost violent encounter, we meet Pan who tells us that the Naiads and Satyrs have died to the cold of winter, which brings an outpouring of pain from the narrator. The song cycle ends with Pan looking over his shoulder, watching the world fade away as the piano glitters softly to the original motif of the song.

In Fauré's *Au Cimetière*, our traveller lingers in grief for the naiads and satyrs. Finally, the cycle is completed as we return to Schubert with *Wandrer's Nachtlied*. The second half of the recital becomes a reflection of the first half. But this reflection is more parallel than it is cyclical, because where we begin with *Der Wanderer* being lost, our traveller tells us to wait, and we too will soon be at peace.