

David Griffiths - baritone

Composer and singer David Griffiths is Senior Lecturer at the University of Waikato. He has wide experience as a soloist in opera, oratorio and in recital and has made many recordings for Radio NZ Concert FM. He is a regular soloist with NBR Opera NZ. He features as baritone soloist on a number of CDs produced in New Zealand including works by David Farquhar and Douglas Lilburn and his choral music has been included on recordings by Tower Voices New Zealand, The National Youth Choir, Dorian Singers and Holy Trinity Cathedral Choir and American Choral ensembles. Five operas are included in his list of compositions. He is a member of New Zealand Association of Singing Teachers (NEWZATS) and the Composers Association of New Zealand (CANZ) and an examiner for NZMEB.

Christine Griffiths - piano

Studied piano at Auckland University with Janetta McStay and Bryan Sayer. She is well-known throughout NZ as a piano accompanist and together with husband David, has performed in recital in all the main cities of NZ as well as many provincial towns. David and Christine have also performed throughout USA, Taiwan, China and Australia. Christine is a national recording artist for Radio NZ and in 2009 produced a CD with David entitled 'Charms and Knots'.



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DIE SCHÖNE MÜLLERIN

Franz Schubert (1797 – 1828)

The Fair Maid of the mill

Ach Bächlein, liebes Bächlein Du meinst es so gut:

Ach Bächlein, aber weisst Du wie Liebe tut?

Ah stream, dear stream, you mean so well:

But do you know, stream, what love does?

In 1823 Schubert wrote Die schöne Müllerin, the first of his two great song cycles to poems by his contemporary, Wilhelm Müller (1794-1827). The sentiments of this now little-known writer inspired two undisputed masterworks of the lied repertoire, far-reaching and innovative in their cohesion and complement between voice and piano. The “Müllerin” songs portray the ardour of young love in the freshness of youth, the lover enraptured, the disillusioned.

The story is simple: in the verdant spring a young man follows a brook, his trusted friend and confidant, down into the valley to a mill. Here he takes up work and becomes enamoured with the miller's daughter, attracting her fickle attention for a while, until a huntsman appears on the scene to capture her admiration. The lad is finally consoled by the brook, which offers him final peace in the cool of its depths.

1. Das Wandern - Journeying

To journey is the miller's joy, to journey! We've learnt it from the water, that knows no rest, day or night; from the mill-wheels that never tire of turning – heavy that they are, they join in the merry dance. O journeying my joy! Master, Mistress, let me in peace go my way!

2. Wohin - Whither?

I heard a brook babbling from its rocky source, heading for the valley. What seized me I know not, but I too followed it downwards to the valley. Is this then my path? O brooklet, say to where. The babbling is the water nymphs, who sing and dance below. Let them sing, I follow cheerfully, for there are mill-wheels in every stream!

3. Halt! - Halt!

A mill I see among the alder trees, through the babbling and singing the roar of mill-wheels breaks through. Welcome, welcome sweet mill-song! The house, how cosy, the sun how bright it shines! O brooklet, is this what was meant?

4. Danksagung an den Bach - Thanksgiving to the brook

Is this what you meant, my babbling friend? To the miller's daughter, I've understood you! Has she sent you, or have you entranced me? I'm content, I now have work enough for my hands, and enough for my heart.

5. Am Feierabend - At evening after work

Would I'd a thousand arms to keep busy, drive the wheels with a roar, turn every mill-stone, so that the miller's daughter could see my worth! But feeble is my arm! Any lad can do as much as me! When work is over I sit in cool and quiet, and the master says to us all: 'I am pleased with what you've done.' The sweet maid says: 'Good night to everyone.'

6. Der Neugierge - The inquisitive one

I ask no flower, no star: they cannot tell me what I would fain hear. I'll ask the brooklet if my heart has lied. O brooklet of my love, how silent you are, just proffer one tiny word. 'Yes' is one such word, 'No'. By these two little words my whole world is bound.

7. Ungeduld - Impatience

On every tree I would like to cut, dig deep into every pebble, write on every scrap of paper: 'Yours is my heart forever!' I'd train a starling to sing it at her window, I'd breathe it to the morning winds, oh, that it shone from every flowery star, were borne to her by scent from near and far! I thought it must show in my eyes, it could be read from my mute lips, yet she sees none of this anxious pleading: 'Yours is my heart, forever!'

8. Morgengruss - Morning Greeting

Good morning, fair milleress! Why do you turn your head away, as if something were amiss? Does my gaze upset you so? Oh, let me stand far away, and watch your dear window, see your blonde head come out. Oh you little flowers, drunk with sleep, do you fear the sun, close and weep for her quiet bliss? Shake off the dreams and waken to God's bright morning! From my heart's depths love calls pain and sorrow away.

9. Des Müllers Blumen - The miller's flowers

By the brook many small flowers stand, gazing out of eyes so blue. They must be mine, as bright blue shines from my beloved's eyes. I'll plant them below her window, and when she lays her head low in slumber they'll tell of my love. In her dreams, whisper 'Forget-me-not, forget-me-

not!' When she opens the shutters, dew will be in your tiny eyes – that shall be the tears I weep upon you.

10. Tränenregen - Rain of tears

We sat so close under the alders, gazing into the brook. I beheld no moon above, no stars, only her image, her eyes alone. The sky shone in the brook, and wanted to drag me into its depths. The brook called, 'Friend, follow me!' My eyes brimmed, the sky darkened. She said 'Rain is nigh, so goodbye!'

11. Mein! - Mine!

Brook, cease your babbling, mill wheels stop your roar, birds great and small be silent! Let only one lay resound: 'She is mine, is mine!' Spring, have you no more flowers? Sun, can you not shine more brightly? Then I must be all along, with that blissful word 'Mine'.

12. Pause - Pause

My lute I've hung on the wall, twined with a green ribbon. My heart is too full to sing, the burden of my joy too great for earthly sound to contain it! Rest now, dear lute, and if a breeze wafts across your strings, or a bee brushes you, I shall feel but drear. Why have I let so long a ribbon hand, it flies sighing around the strings. Is it an echo of my love's torment?

13. Mit dem grünen Lautenbände - To accompany the green lute-ribbon

'A pity this fine green ribbon should fade on the wall – I like green so much', said my love to me today. I untie this and send it to you, for our love is evergreen. When the ribbon binds your hair, I'll know where hope lives and love reigns!

14. Der Jäger - The hunter

What does the hunter seek by the stream? Keep to your own preserve, there's no game here for you! Only one tame fawn lives here, for me! Leave your yelping hounds at home, leave off hooting and tooting your horn! Stay in the woods, leave mills and millers in peace.

15. Eifersucht und Stolz - Jealousy and Pride

Where do you course, brook, so fast and wild? After bold hunter, in anger? Turn back, and firs scold the milleress, so fickle! Did you see her last night by the gate, looking towards the road? When a hunter comes back from the kill, no nice girl pokes her head over the window-sill! Tell her he's with me, cutting reed-pipes, piping dances to children. Tell her that, tell her!

16. Die liebe Farbe - The beloved colour

I'll clothe myself in green, in weeping willow. My love does so like green. I'll seek a grove of cypresses, a heath of green rosemary. She so loves the hunt, up, away! The game I hunt is death, dig me a grave in the grass, cover me with green turf. My love so likes the green!

17. Die böse Farbe - The hateful colour

I'd gladly go into the wide world, if only it were not so green out there in wood and field! I would like to pluck the leaves from every twig, weep the grass a deathly white. Green, you evil colour, why do you stare, so proud, so gloating? When a horn sounds in the wood, hark, her window clicks, but not for me does she look out. Unwind the green ribbon from your brow, farewell, farewell!

18. Trockne Blumen - Dry flowers

You tiny flowers, all that she gave me, shall lie with me in the grave. Why do you look so sadly at me, as if you knew my fate? Tears will not bring the green of May, or make dead love bloom. Spring will come, and blossoms anew, but my tiny flowers will lie with me in the grave. When she wanders by the mound, appear flowers, appear! May is come, the winter is past!

19. Der Müller und der Bach - The miller and the brook

Miller: Where in love a true love wastes away, there lilies wilt: angels close their eyes, sob and sing the soul to rest.

Brook: Whenever love breaks free from sorrow, a tiny new star shines. Fadeless roses spring from the thorn, angels descend to earth each morn.

Miller: Ah, brook, you mean so well, but know you really what love can do? Down there is cool peace, ah, dear brook, sing on.

20. Des Baches Wiegenlied - The brook's lullaby

Sleep well, close your eyes, wanderer so weary, you are home. Constancy is here, with me shall you lie. I will bed you cool on a soft pillow, rock you to sleep. When a hunting horn brays, about you I'll rush and roar. Wicked maid, away from the mill-path, lest your shadow wake him. Good night, sleep out your joy, your sorrow, the moon is rising, the mist is yielding. Heaven is up above, so far!