

# INHERITING the EARTH

Lili Boulanger  
Reflets

Nadia Boulanger  
La mer est plus belle

Alma Mahler  
Stille stadt  
Laue sommernacht \*

Rhian Samuel  
Naming the flowers  
A perfect view  
My river runs to thee

Deborah Pritchard  
Beyond the Stars (USE commission)

Joanna Marsh  
Another Eden (USE commission)

Errollyn Wallen Rain  
On the Mountain  
Timeless

Interwoven poetry  
by David Neita

RUBY HUGHES soprano  
UNITED STRINGS OF EUROPE



# INTRODUCTION

JULIAN AZKOUL and RUBY HUGHES

Now more than ever feels like a time to reflect on nature, landscape and Earth.

What is our place in it? What does it mean to be custodians of this vast planet? And how have composers and songwriters through the ages drawn on nature to ignite their imagination and create music?

Nature and creativity are inseparable. One cannot survive without the other. Ruby Hughes and the United Strings of Europe present Inheriting the Earth - arrangements and commissions of 20th and 21st Century works by women composers that celebrate natural beauty and explore our role in safeguarding it. The programme includes music by living British composers: first recordings of songs by Welsh composer Rhian Samuel, commissions from Ivor Academy-winner Joanna Marsh and Deborah Pritchard, poetry contributions by renowned human rights Lawyer David Neita and new arrangements of songs by Errollyn Wallen.

Expanding the repertoire for voice and string orchestra, the project seeks to engage audiences with the challenges of preserving, nurturing and staying wholly connected to our natural world. Look at the instruments that grace the stage.

No-one can pretend that music has answers to the great loss of biodiversity we're witnessing, nor does it have the ability to solve climate change. But music can provide a space to re connect with our love of the natural world in our imaginations, allowing tempers to ease, minds to calm, thinking to resume and optimism to flourish.



# PRAISE FOR RUBY HUGHES and USE

"Ruby Hughes [...] presented her voice very much as a fine-spun instrumental line, woven around the string layers of the players"

★ ★ ★ ★ ★ *Plays to See*

"superbly executed"

*Stereophile Magazine*

"The two larger works make a very contrasted pair [...] Ruby Hughes and the United Strings provide a magical reimagining of [Golijov's Three Songs] for string orchestra [...] The United Strings' incisive playing makes the arrangement wholly convincing [...] a cracking disc"

*Gramophone Magazine*

"The pairing of soprano Ruby Hughes with the string orchestra makes for music of remarkable poignancy and grandeur, and *Renewal* stands out all the more for including a performance so resonant. [...] Hughes' haunting vocal conveys tenderness and despair and with maximum control. No moment on the recording is more powerful than this one, which is also perhaps the album's most intimate. The tone of the concluding part is consistent with the others, and Hughes again delivers a vocal of unerring pitch and shape. [...] performed with total commitment by the string orchestra, and the heights reached by Hughes in the Golijov performance are remarkable."

*Textura top 20 albums of 2022*

