

SONGS OF FAREWELL

R. Schumann

Gedichte der Königen Maria Stuart opus 135 (10')

Der Sennens abschied opus 79 (3')

Nachtlied opus 96 (3'30)

Requiem opus 90 (4')

Total 20'30

F. Schubert

Abschied D475 (5'30)

Abschied von Schwanengesang (4'30)

Doppelganger von Schwanengesang (4'30)

Der Tod und das mädchen (2'30)

Total 17'00

Britten

Since she whom I loved (3'30)

Crumb

The night in silence (3'30)

When lilacs last in the dooryard bloomed (1'25)

Come lovely and soothing death (7'40)

Total 12'35

Poulenc

Voyage (3'10)

Fleur (2'45)

Debussy

Colloques sentimental (4')

Duparc

Soupir (3'10)

Faure

Les berceaux (3'00)

Errollyn Wallen

Song cycle

10-15 minutes

Photo © Phil Sharp

RUBY HUGHES, SOPRANO
JULIUS DRAKE, PIANO



INTRODUCTION

Following the critical success of her most recent recording for the BIS label titled ***Echo***, internationally acclaimed soprano **Ruby Hughes** joins forces with master pianist **Julius Drake**, bringing their deeply personal and powerful recital program ***Songs of Farewell*** to international stages.

This concert offering is a richly curated exploration of parting, loss, and transformation - not as a singular moment, but as an evolving emotional landscape: sometimes mournful, sometimes radiant, and even seductive.

With a long and celebrated partnership that includes performances at **Carnegie Hall**, **Concertgebouw**, **Wigmore Hall**, and **the Louvre**, Hughes and Drake offer a unique synergy that brings these works vividly to life in performance.

At the heart of *Songs of Farewell* is an inspired juxtaposition of repertoire across time and language. Masterworks by **Schubert** and **Schumann** are placed alongside 20th- and 21st-century voices such as **Faure**, **Debussy**, **Britten**, **Ives** and **George Crumb**, and include an exciting new commission by composer and Master of the King's music **Errollyn Wallen CBE**.

Highlights include Crumb's hypnotic *Come Lovely and Soothing Death*, Britten's poignant *Since She Whom I Loved* and a world of poetic introspection from Schumann's *Nachtlied* to Wallen's bold new song settings.

This is a concert experience that resonates with today's audiences: a meditation on what it means to say goodbye - to people, to places, to eras - and how song can hold all the complexity of those emotions.

With Ruby's latest BIS recording already garnering attention, ***Songs of Farewell*** is an ideal program for a recital series, for festivals, and thematic programming on memory, transition, and renewal.

Artist links:



[Britten I wonder as I wander](#)



[Debussy Chanson de Bilitis](#)



[Ruby Hughes with Julius Drake: website audio files](#)

REVIEWS

“Ruby Hughes is increasingly proving to be a key singer of the 21st Century”

Klassic Music Magazine

“Hughes rises to the challenge with bombproof technical strength and control, plenty of firepower where needed, and a thrilling instinct for capturing the persona of this fearsome anti-heroine... They and Hughes also explore the rapturous soundworld of Mahler’s Rückert-Lieder with mesmerising poise and finesse: I’ve never heard the opening line of ‘Ich atmet’ sung more beautifully...”

Malcolm Hayes, 5* Record of the Month, BBC Music Magazine

“Hughes’s clean timbre and perfect intonation give the Rückert Lieder a new dimension ... she finds the romantic naiveties in them, suggesting the poignant tragedy of innocence ... The climax of ‘Um Mitternacht’ brought a lump to my throat.”

Rupert Christiansen, The Telegraph

“...it’s Hughes’s performance that carries the whole enterprise: vivid, powerful and superbly committed, bringing a real complexity and vulnerability to the character. She’s impressive in the couplings, too... in a sharply etched account of Mahler’s Rückert Lieder (with an especially fine ‘Um Mitternacht’) and a focused, uncompromising account of Berg’s Altenberg Lieder.”

Hugo Shirley, Editor’s choice, Gramophone Magazine

“Hughes’s big, vibrato-free sound was ideally matched ... and in Schumann’s ‘Liederkreis’ Hughes and her excellent accompanist Julius Drake brought this composer’s doom-laden world to passionate life.”

Michael Church, The Independent

“In all these, the peerless Drake brought out the wit and elegance of the piano writing, with such characterisation and dramatic detail as to complete a vivid aural picture.”

The Guardian

“The piano felt like a whole orchestra, descriptive and evocative; Drake’s magisterial command of tonal inflections allowing him to invest Schubert’s transitions from minor to major mode and major to minor with acute emotional point.”

Rian Evans, 5* The Guardian

“The pianist Julius Drake, a collaborator gifted with sensitive phrasing and insight.”

Joshua Barone, The New York Times

RUBY HUGHES & JULIUS DRAKE

