



Photo: Sebastian Charlesworth

Nico de Villiers

Do Not Go My Love

‘A Song with Eloquence’

- Christopher Glynn

This year marks the centenary of the publication of Richard Hageman’s 1917 setting of the Nobel laureate Rabindranath Tagore's poem 'Do not go, my love, without asking my leave' from his 1913 collection, *The Gardener*.

In a series of interviews pianist Nico de Villiers — Richard Hageman scholar and director of the Richard Hageman Society — explores various performers’ impressions of Hageman’s most famous art song. In this interview, British pianist **Christopher Glynn** shares his thoughts on Hageman’s songs.

NICO DE VILLIERS: *You performed ‘Do Not Go, My Love’ in 2008 with soprano Elizabeth Bailey at the Queen Elizabeth Competition in Belgium. Was this your first introduction to Richard Hageman or have you known his work before?*

CHRISTOPHER GLYNN: It was my first introduction to this song, though I knew some other Hageman songs before.

NdV: *What were your initial impressions of ‘Do Not Go, My Love’ when you heard it for the first time (either through playing it yourself, or listening to a recording)?*

CG: I thought it was a beautiful song and I remember thinking how much Elizabeth made it her own, and created a special moment in the hall when she performed it.

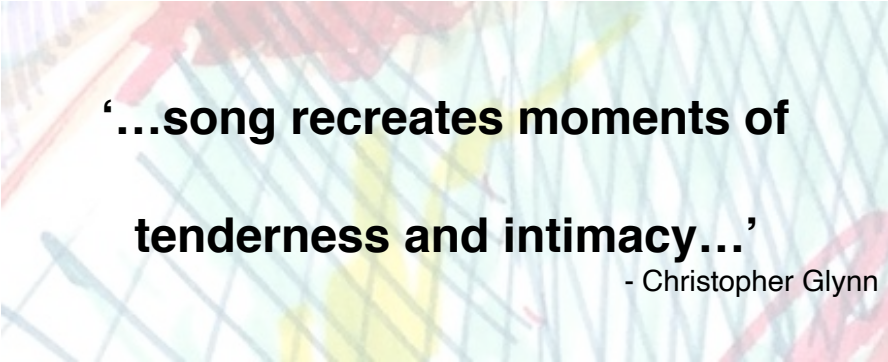
NdV: *What is your approach in preparing a song that is completely new to you?*

CG: I try if at all possible to read and get to know the poem first.



Photo: Collette Band

Christopher Glynn



**‘...song recreates moments of
tenderness and intimacy...’**

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NdV: *How has your interpretation of ‘Do Not Go, My Love’ evolved since you first became acquainted with the song?*

CG: My interpretation

evolved through playing it with other people. It is always interesting to think who the poem is addressed to – a child, a lover...? It leaves space for different ideas.

NdV: *Are there specific recordings by other artists of ‘Do Not Go, My Love’ that inspire you?*

CG: I don’t remember hearing any recordings, but I also enjoyed performing the song with the tenor Robin Tritschler, who loves Hageman and introduced me to many more of his songs.

NdV: *In addition to ‘Do Not Go, My Love’ you performed four other songs by Richard Hageman for a BBC3 Lunchtime recital in March 2016. What draws you to Richard Hageman’s songs?*

CG: They have warmth and eloquence, and are wonderfully well-written for both piano and voice. They seem to me to capture some of the lush, evocative quality of Hollywood film/ musical scores.

NdV: *A certain section of American art songs from the early part of the twentieth century are often labelled as sentimental or old-fashioned. However, these are the songs that are often included by young singers – especially in the US – in their recitals at undergraduate or graduate level. In 2017, the centenary publication year of ‘Do Not Go, My Love’, what would you say is this song’s relevance – indeed that of Hageman – in the twenty-first century?*

CG: One of the things that song does best is recreate moments of tenderness and intimacy. Perhaps there are elements in the music – as there are with Rachmaninov, Puccini, Korngold, and others of that time – that could become sugary and ‘sentimental’ in the wrong hands? But I don’t think it needs to be, and a good performance of this song can genuinely move an audience. ■

Christopher Glynn is a Grammy award-winning pianist and accompanist working with leading singers, musicians and ensembles throughout the world. He is the Artistic Director of the Ryedale Festival, programming around 60 events each year in the many beautiful and historic venues of Ryedale, North Yorkshire. www.cglynn.com