

## What's Next?

**December: Nordlys, Music of Scandinavian Composers** ~ On Friday and Sunday, December 21 and 23 at 2 pm the Rawson Duo will present their sixth annual *Nordlys* (Northern Lights) concert showcasing works by Scandinavian composers from the early nineteenth hundreds along with Sandy's sumptuous Nordic reception. Sibelius? Christian Sinding? Tor Aulin? Others? Complete details soon to be announced; reservations are now being taken.

**Beyond that?** . . . as the fancy strikes (check those emails and website)

**Reservations:** Seating is limited and arranged through advanced paid reservation, \$25 (unless otherwise noted). Contact Alan or Sandy Rawson, email [rawsonduo@gmail.com](mailto:rawsonduo@gmail.com) or call 379-3449. Notice of event details, dates and times when scheduled will be sent via email or ground mail upon request. Be sure to be on the Rawsons' mailing list. For more information, visit:

[www.rawsonduo.com](http://www.rawsonduo.com)

### Web Sites and items related to today's program

[www.openlibrary.org](http://www.openlibrary.org) ~ a vast collection of digital books including 74 volumes of prose and poetry by W.B. Yeats and 6 by Arnold Bax, 5 under his pen name, Dermot O'Byrne.

**Arnold Bax, Farewell My Youth** ~ autobiography originally published in 1943, reprinted in 1970 by Greenwood Press, Publishers, Westport, Connecticut (the Seattle Public Library has a copy).

[www.musicweb-international.com/bax](http://www.musicweb-international.com/bax) ~ the Arnold Bax website

[www.youtube.com](http://www.youtube.com) ~ a great resource for rare recordings including numerous works by Bax as well as solo performances of Harriet Cohen

### HANGING OUT AT THE RAWSONS (take a look around)



**collage extraordinaire** (all new works created this past summer) ~ Harold Nelson has had a lifelong passion for art, particularly photo images and collage. It sustained him through years of working in the federal bureaucracy with his last sixteen in Washington DC. He started using his current collage technique in 2004, two years before retirement from his first career and his move from Virginia to Port Townsend. His art is shown frequently at the Northwind Arts Center and other local venues.

[www.hnelsonart.com](http://www.hnelsonart.com)

new feature: **Zee View of the Month** ~ photography by Allan Bruce Zee  
"The Old Mill Stream"

"We were hiking upstream from the Chittendon Mill in Jericho, Vermont in the late afternoon on a splendid fall day. Our side of the stream was already in shadow, the trees across the way were lit up by the last rays of sunlight, casting their reflections. So this image is literally both 'The Old Mill Stream' and a water color."

[www.allanbrucezee.com](http://www.allanbrucezee.com)



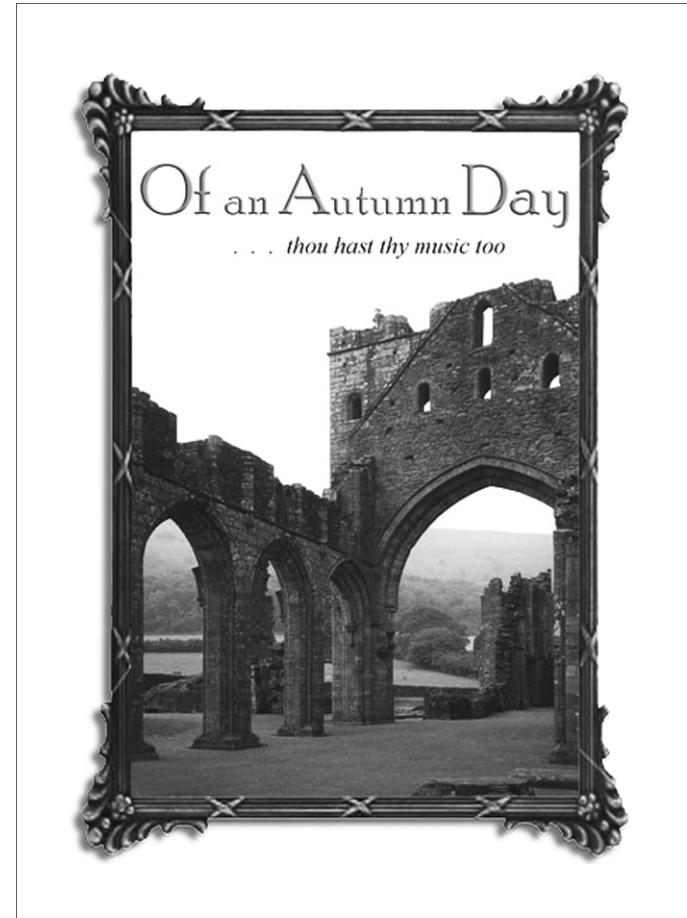
**A note about chairs** ~ following the music *If you would like to move your chair out of the way for the reception (optional), please lean them against the wall on the carpet remnant next to the wood stove and not standing on the slippery floor.*

**Cough drops are provided for your convenience.**



*Cover: the Rawson Duo on the road, 2000, Llanthony Priory, far up the Vale of Ewyas in the Black Mountains of Wales*

## Rawson Duo Concert Series, 2012-13



At the home of Alan and Sandy Rawson, 10318 Rhody Drive, Chimacum WA  
Friday and Sunday, November 9 & 11, 2 pm

## The Rawson Duo

Specializing in Romantic and early twentieth-century works, the **Rawson Duo** has given numerous recitals on college campuses and community performing arts series across the United States and Canada. The Rawsons now reside in Chimacum where they perform throughout the year in the intimate setting of their home located on 7.5 acres, bringing to life rarely heard works celebrated with warm hospitality.

Violinist **Alan Rawson** first pursued his music interests in his junior year in high school as a self-taught folk guitarist, recorder player, and madrigal singer. Classical Violin studies were begun at Cañada Junior College in Redwood City California, since their program did not include Country and Western fiddling. He received his Bachelor of Music and Master of Arts degrees from San Francisco State University and completed his doctorate degree at the University of Colorado in Boulder in violin performance studying with Oswald Lehnert while developing a passionate interest in Rocky Mountain cycling and cross country skiing. He has served on the music faculties of Concordia College in Moorhead, Minnesota and the University of Idaho in Moscow, and has recently retired from Minnesota State University Moorhead where he directed the University Orchestra and taught upper strings. He was concertmaster of the Fargo-Moorhead Symphony for twenty years and appeared as a featured orchestral soloist several times performing works by Tchaikowsky, Mozart, Sibelius, and Bruch, among others.

Alan has a passionate interest in exploring the music of past great composers, now all but lost to obscurity, and he is actively researching, locating and scanning public domain scores, making these freely available to the internet community worldwide.

A native of Fargo, ND, **Sandy Rawson** (pianist, organist, harpsichordist) completed her Bachelor of Music degree in piano performance at the University of Minnesota and continued her studies at the Musik Akademie in Vienna, Austria. During her long tenure in the Fargo Moorhead area, she was a highly active accompanist and large ensemble pianist performing with all the major organizations including opera, symphony, choral, ballet, universities and public schools. She frequently appeared on faculty and guest artist recitals at the three local universities, NDSU, MSUM, and Concordia College. An active church organist from the age of 14, she held the post of organist at the First Congregational Church in Fargo for 25 years. She currently is the organist for Sequim Community Church and piano accompanist for Peninsula Chamber Singers.

Sandy's love of music is equaled by her love for cooking. A professionally trained chef, having lived several years in Europe and Japan, international cuisine has been a lifelong passion. Today's *Of an Autumn Day* reception:

Shortbread Tarts with Lemon Curd  
Chocolate Caramel Slice  
Blackberry Jam Cake  
Dundee Cake with Cheddar Cheese  
Golden Tea Cakes  
Flapjacks  
Mushroom Leek Pasties  
Smoked Salmon Tea Sandwiches

## Of an Autumn Day

. . . *thou hast thy music too*

**Sonata No. 2 (1914)**

**John Blackwood McEwen**  
(1868-1948)

*to Aldo Antonietti*

***Allegro sostenuto***  
***Come una improvisation***  
***Poco Allegro: Allegro molto***

**Two Pieces (ca. 1912 / posth. 1993)**

**Ralph Vaughan Williams**  
(1872-1958)

*to D.M.L.*

***Pastorale (Andante con moto)***  
***Romance (Andantino)***

*~ interval ~*

**Sonata in E Major (1921, rev. 1945)**

**Arnold Bax**  
(1883-1953)

*to Paul Kochanski*

***Molto moderato***  
***Allegro vivace***  
***Tempo moderato***

Musically, Bax swayed between the influences of Irish folksong and those of Germany and, later, of Russia. A number of orchestral works grew out of an abortive attempt to write an opera on the Dierdre legend, and of these the atmospheric *In the Faery Hills* (1909) is the earliest of his orchestral works to have been published, while *Roscatha* (1908-10), a vivid orchestral battle song is clothed in the colour and harmony of Rimsky-Korsakov, though without Bax's identity ever being in doubt.

In 1910 Bax visited Russia, going to Moscow, St Petersburg and the Ukraine, and afterwards some works appeared which seem to show an influence of Russian music, an influence strongly reinforced by the repertoire of the Russian Ballet between 1911 and 1914, and again after the First War. Before, during, and just after the War Bax wrote a host of short piano pieces as well as two piano sonatas (there were two more later) and two violin sonatas (a third appeared later); there were also a large number of songs, and the shorter works in particular began to appear in print, thus finally establishing his reputation with a large audience.

However, his reputation really rests on his orchestral works, and although he wrote many of his best scores during the period 1912 to 1918, it was only after the War that they were heard and the full range of his orchestral palette appreciated. They range in scale from the exuberance of *The Happy Forest* (1914, orch 1921) and the delightfully evocative *Summer Music* (1917, orch 1921, rev 1932) to the elaboration of the Debussian Celtic tone poem *The Garden of Fand* (1913, orch 1916) and the grimmer landscape of *November Woods* (1917) with its autobiographical overtones of Bax's indecision over his love affair with the pianist Harriet Cohen and his loyalty to his wife. Other works from this period include *Nympholept* (1912, orch 1915) and *Spring Fire* (1913), both deserving wide performance.



Harriet Cohen

Bax did leave his wife - in March 1918 - and afterwards his name was associated with that of Harriet Cohen who performed many of his works. For her was written the massive *Symphonic Variations* (1916-18) for piano and orchestra which she first played at Queen's Hall in 1920.

The Great War undoubtedly had an effect on Bax and his art - few could have lived through it without it leaving its mark - but Bax did not serve in the armed forces, and the event that tore his soul was undoubtedly the Easter Rising in Dublin in 1916. His personal acquaintance with many of the protagonists of that "burningly idealist adventure", his revulsion at the British reaction and his divided loyalties as well as his horror at the Irish civil war, was undoubtedly expressed in music written at the time, though by the time he came to write the powerful *First Symphony* (1921-2) with its tragic and elegiac slow movement his emotional reaction to human conflict was being expressed in archetypal rather than specifically personal terms.

Once launched as a symphonist Bax went on to write six more symphonies. The *Second Symphony* (1924-6) continues the mood expressed in the first, though now its underlying emotional thread was personal. "I was going through hell at the time" Bax remarked, and his tormented mood had to do with his deteriorating relationship with Harriet Cohen. Later, the *Third Symphony* (1928-9) arrived not only at an emotional stabilization but also signaled a conscious attempt to expand his musical language, beginning to take note of the presence of Sibelius on the musical scene of the late 1920s. It was to Sibelius that he dedicated his next work, the *Winter Legends* for piano and orchestra (1929-30), which together with the *Fourth Symphony* (1930-1) celebrated in worthwhile music.

At the end of his life Bax traveled widely around Ireland, visiting all the places which he had known intimately in his youth, almost as if he was saying goodbye. He died at the home of Professor Aloys Fleischmann, in Cork on 3 October 1953 just short of his seventieth birthday.

~ reprinted by kind permission of Warner/Chappell, [www.boosey.com](http://www.boosey.com)

"It has been said: The Celt has ever worn himself out in mistaking dreams for reality, but I believe on the contrary that the Celt knows more clearly than the men of most races the difference between the two and deliberately chooses to follow the dream. There is certainly a tireless hunter of dreams in my own make-up."

~ Arnold Bax, **Farewell My Youth**

## a few *Bits of Interest*

### To Autumn ~ John Keats (1795-1821)

SEASON of mists and mellow fruitfulness,  
Close bosom-friend of the maturing sun;  
Conspiring with him how to load and bless  
With fruit the vines that round the thatch-eves run;  
To bend with apples the moss'd cottage-trees,  
And fill all fruit with ripeness to the core;  
To swell the gourd, and plump the hazel shells  
With a sweet kernel; to set budding more,  
And still more, later flowers for the bees,  
Until they think warm days will never cease,  
For Summer has o'er-brimm'd their clammy cells.

Who hath not seen thee oft amid thy store?  
Sometimes whoever seeks abroad may find  
Thee sitting careless on a granary floor,  
Thy hair soft-lifted by the winnowing wind;  
Or on a half-reap'd furrow sound asleep,  
Drows'd with the fume of poppies, while thy hook  
Spares the next swath and all its twined flowers:  
And sometimes like a gleaner thou dost keep  
Steady thy laden head across a brook;  
Or by a cyder-press, with patient look,  
Thou watchest the last oozings hours by hours.

Where are the songs of Spring? Ay, where are they?  
Think not of them, thou hast thy music too,—  
While barred clouds bloom the soft-dying day,  
And touch the stubble plains with rosy hue;  
Then in a wailful choir the small gnats mourn  
Among the river shallows, borne aloft  
Or sinking as the light wind lives or dies;  
And full-grown lambs loud bleat from hilly bourn;  
Hedge-crickets sing; and now with treble soft  
The red-breast whistles from a garden-croft;  
And gathering swallows twitter in the skies.

Yeats speaks of Paddy Flynn, "a little bright-eyed old man, who lived in a leaky and one-roomed cabin in the village of Ballisodare," whose stories fill the pages of *A Celtic Twilight* (1893):

"I have copied this account of Paddy The Flynn, with a few verbal alterations, from *Celtic Twilight*, a notebook which I almost filled with his tales and sayings, shortly after seeing him. I look now at the notebook regretfully, for the blank pages at the end will never be filled up. Paddy Flynn is dead; a friend of mine gave him a large bottle of whiskey, and though a sober man at most times, the sight of so much liquor filled him with a great enthusiasm, and he lived upon it for some days and then died. His body, worn out with old age and hard times, could not bear the drink as in his young days. . . .

"He was a great teller of tales, and unlike our common romancers, knew how to empty heaven, hell, and purgatory, faeryland and earth, to people his stories. He did not live in a shrunken world, but knew of no less ample circumstance than did Homer himself. Perhaps the Gaelic people shall by his like bring back again the ancient simplicity and amplitude of imagination. What is literature but the expression of moods by the vehicle of symbol and incident? And are there not moods which need heaven, hell, purgatory, and faeryland for their expression, no less than this dilapidated earth? Nay, are there not moods which shall find no expression unless there be men who dare to mix heaven, hell, purgatory, and faeryland together, or even to set the heads of beasts to the bodies of men, or to thrust the souls of men into the heart of rocks? Let us go forth, the tellers of tales, and seize whatever prey the heart long for, and have no fear. Everything exists, everything is true, and the earth is only a little dust under our feet."

**John Blackwood McEwen** was born in 1868 in Hawick in the Border Country, the son of a Presbyterian minister. Three years later his father became minister of Sydney Place Church in Glasgow where McEwen spent his formative years. It was a background that would instill an obsessive work ethic and sense of social responsibility into his psyche — ‘thoroughness’ was one of the key words people associated with him. Fortunately it was the powerful evocative topography of south west Scotland and the stirring history of the old Celtic Galloway which proved the enduring inspiration for so much of his music and forced it out of the well-trodden paths of academicism.



In 1888 McEwen graduated with an Arts degree from Glasgow University and worked for a time as an organist and choirmaster, until 1891 when he left for London, where two years later, with several compositions ‘up his sleeve’, including a symphony, he joined the Royal Academy of Music to study. Although McEwen claimed it was such fellow-students as Charles Macpherson, Herman Lahr and W. H. Bell (later his brother-in-law) who exerted the greatest influence on his style, undoubtedly Frederick Corder’s passionate enthusiasm for Liszt and Wagner quickly infused McEwen’s own aesthetic, as it did a later pupil, Arnold Bax. Performances of a *String Quartet in F major* and a *Scene from helles* (Shelley) in 1896, followed by *Overture to a Comedy*, first brought McEwen’s name before the public. McEwen was fortunate at this time to be appointed as a lecturer in harmony at the Glasgow Athenaeum, but in 1898 he was enticed back to the Royal Academy as Professor of Harmony and Composition, where he remained for almost forty years.

In the first years of the new century McEwen went on to produce his most important scores: *The Ode to the Nativity*: a large-scale setting of the Milton for soli chorus and orchestra (1901-1905), the *Three Border Ballads* (1905-1908), a comic opera *The Royal Rebel* (1909), the *Solway Symphony* (1911), as well as several instrumental works and songs, in particular his settings of Verlaine. Although two of the *Border Ballads* were premiered successfully in Philharmonic Society concerts, by 1913 McEwen had to face the fact that *The Demon Lover*, the *A minor* and *Solway* symphonies and several other large-scale works remained in manuscript unperformed. As late as 1944 McEwen wrote a bitter testament on the manuscript of the 1898 *A minor Symphony* that must strike home to many creative artists, especially composers: “After I had finished this symphony in A minor I found that there was not the slightest chance of getting a performance of a work of this nature by an unknown composer without social influence and money.”

The pressure of these artistic frustrations, academic overwork, and hints of an unhappy marriage (it remained childless) resulted in persistent insomnia which caused a ‘breakdown in health’ in 1913, Released from the Royal Academy he retired to a fishing village in the Bay of Biscay. (It was here that McEwen completed his second violin sonata, noted on the score as Christmas, 1914).

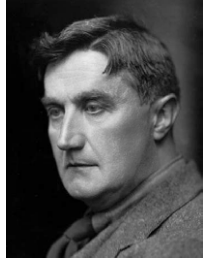
After his return to England, McEwen never attempted another large-scale work for orchestra, and his creative reputation soon went into decline. Had he turned his back on the academic life the outcome may have been different, but a viable alternative strong enough to satisfy his rigorous Scots character never offered itself. Nonetheless McEwen remained at heart a true radical and his egalitarian views found apt expression in a series of unbridled political pamphlets such as *Total Democracy* and *Abolish Money*; “There will be no unemployment, no hopeless poverty, no avoidable malnutrition, much less disease, no rent, rates, and taxes. Social distinctions based on money will disappear. political life will become cleaner and more honest, the stock exchange will vanish . . .”

An ardent champion of new music and selfless in helping other composers, McEwen became one of the founders and the first Honorary Secretary of the Society of British Composers (1905). He published an influential series of musical text books, and on Mackenzie’s retirement in 1924 succeeded him as Principal of the Royal Academy, a position he held for the next twelve years. Honors followed: Honorary Membership of the University of Helsingfors, Presidency of the ISM, a knighthood, and in 1933 he received an honorary L.L.D. from his Alma Mater, Glasgow, at the same ceremony as Albert Einstein.

*adapted program booklet notes by Bernard Benoliel from Chandos 9241 recording:*

**McEwen, Three Border Ballads performed by the London Symphony with Alisdair Mitchel.**

From the beginning of his career, in the first years of the twentieth century, **Ralph Vaughan Williams** (1872-1958) was seen as a composer rooted in the past. His first significant large-scale work, the *Fantasia on a Theme of Thomas Tallis* composed in 1910, is indebted to the music of his sixteenth-century predecessor and to the great English tradition. His entire upbringing was steeped in tradition—he was related both to the pottery Wedgwoods and Charles Darwin. (“The Bible says that God made the world in six days,” his mother told him. “Great Uncle Charles thinks it took longer: but we need not worry about it, for it is equally wonderful either way.”) He became a serious student of English folk song and edited the *English Hymnal*.



Even the experience of studying with Ravel in 1908, which clearly enhanced his understanding of color and sonority, only served to sharpen his own individual style and to ground him more firmly in the sensibilities of his musical heritage. Years later, Ravel would call him “the only one of my pupils who does not write my music.” In fact, Vaughan Williams was one of the first composers of the new century who managed to forge a strong personal style almost exclusively from the materials of the past. “My advice to young composers,” he wrote, “is learn your own language first, find out your own traditions, discover what you want to do.”

*~from Chicago Symphony program notes by Phillip Huscher ~ CSO.org)*

His two brief and lyrical pieces for violin and piano, *Pastorale* and *Romance*, were first published in 1923 (present edition, 1994) but it is probable that they were written before 1914. Several works in this style, such as *The Lark Ascending* and *Hugh the Drover*, composed in the years just before the First World War, were held over by Vaughan Williams until he was demobilised from the Army. The *Two Pieces* are dedicated to “D.M.L.” These are the initials of Dorothy Longman (née Fletcher), wife of the publisher Robert Longman and an accomplished violinist. She was introduced to her future husband in about 1912 by Vaughan Williams when she played in outdoor performances of plays based on folk songs at the composer’s family home, Leith Hill Place. These pieces may be memories of those occasions. They have not been available for many years.

*~ from music edition*



Bax in 1922

**Arnold Edward Trevor Bax** was born in Streatham, South London, on 8 November 1883, though during the most impressionable years of his youth the family lived at Ivy Bank, a mansion which stood in extensive grounds at the top of Haverstock Hill in Hampstead. His parents were of independent means, and Bax never had to earn a living - a fact that strongly influenced his musical development. Arnold had two brothers and a sister. One of the brothers died in childhood, but the other, Clifford was a well known playwright and writer.

When he was nearly 17 years old he entered the Royal Academy of Music in London, where he remained for five years. While there, he discovered the poetry of W. B. Yeats, and as a result visited Ireland. “I spent most of my time in the west, always seeking out the most remote places” Bax later remembered, adding “I do not think I saw the men and women passing me on the roads as real figures of flesh and blood; I looked through them back to their archetypes, and even Dublin itself seemed peopled by gods and heroic shapes from the dim past”. His love of Ireland stayed with him for the rest of his life, and for many years Irish programmes and images were reflected in his music, while he also wrote poetry, short stories and plays using the pseudonym of “Dermot O’Byrne”.

When he was still at the Academy Bax’s student works included an orchestral tone poem *Cathleen-ni-Hoolihan* (1903-5), A Concert Piece for viola and piano (1904, written for Lionel Tertis), and many songs of which *A Celtic Song Cycle* (1904), five songs to words by Fiona Macleod were published. At this time Bax’s best work appeared in his songs, and one written in 1906, *The White Peace* (words also by Fiona Macleod), became one of his best-known works, and was recorded by John McCormack.