

# **The Song Gatherer**

## **Sally Beamish's Cello Concerto No. 2: *The Song Gatherer* Commissioned by Minnesota Orchestra and Osmo Vänskä and the Hallé Orchestra and Mark Elder**

Written for and dedicated to Robert Cohen for his 50<sup>th</sup> birthday

***"A touching gift, a major new work. Composer Sally Beamish gives a great birthday present to her friend, Robert Cohen.***



*Beamish has given him more than we could have hoped: a major work, probing and allusive, woven from fragments of half-remembered song, tinged with the calls of migratory birds. Cohen, undeterred by the heights to which the composer takes his instrument, inhabits her music -- which, strongest when sparest, sometimes feels improvisatory -- and lets it inhabit him. I can't imagine a better birthday present."*

Larry Fuchsberg, the Star Tribune

***"New work for cello gets thrilling debut with Minnesota Orchestra***

*The composer created the work specifically for Cohen, tailoring some of its themes to his life experiences. But the end product is a work of great emotional depth."*

Rob Hubbard - Special to the Pioneer Press

***"This is one of the most personal concertos I've ever come across.***

*Sally is one of the most talented composers of her generation. Her work is extremely colourful, attractive and dynamic, and beautifully written for the orchestra.*

*The concerto is interesting, because it has the same shape as the Elgar concerto. It begins with wistful, elegiac music, followed by very fast, lively motion, then another lyrical movement, based on folksong. The final movement, which is full of energy, fun and high spirits, evaporates into an extremely passionate slow coda – just as Elgar's concerto does."*

Sir Mark Elder CBE

***"What sustains interest is above all Beamish's fine ear for transparent textures, along with her gift for melody without cliché***

*The whole piece is thoroughly musical in its working out, from the very first page, which is an austere Bartókian fugue.. (to )the concerto's ethereal conclusion."*

David Fanning - Daily Telegraph

