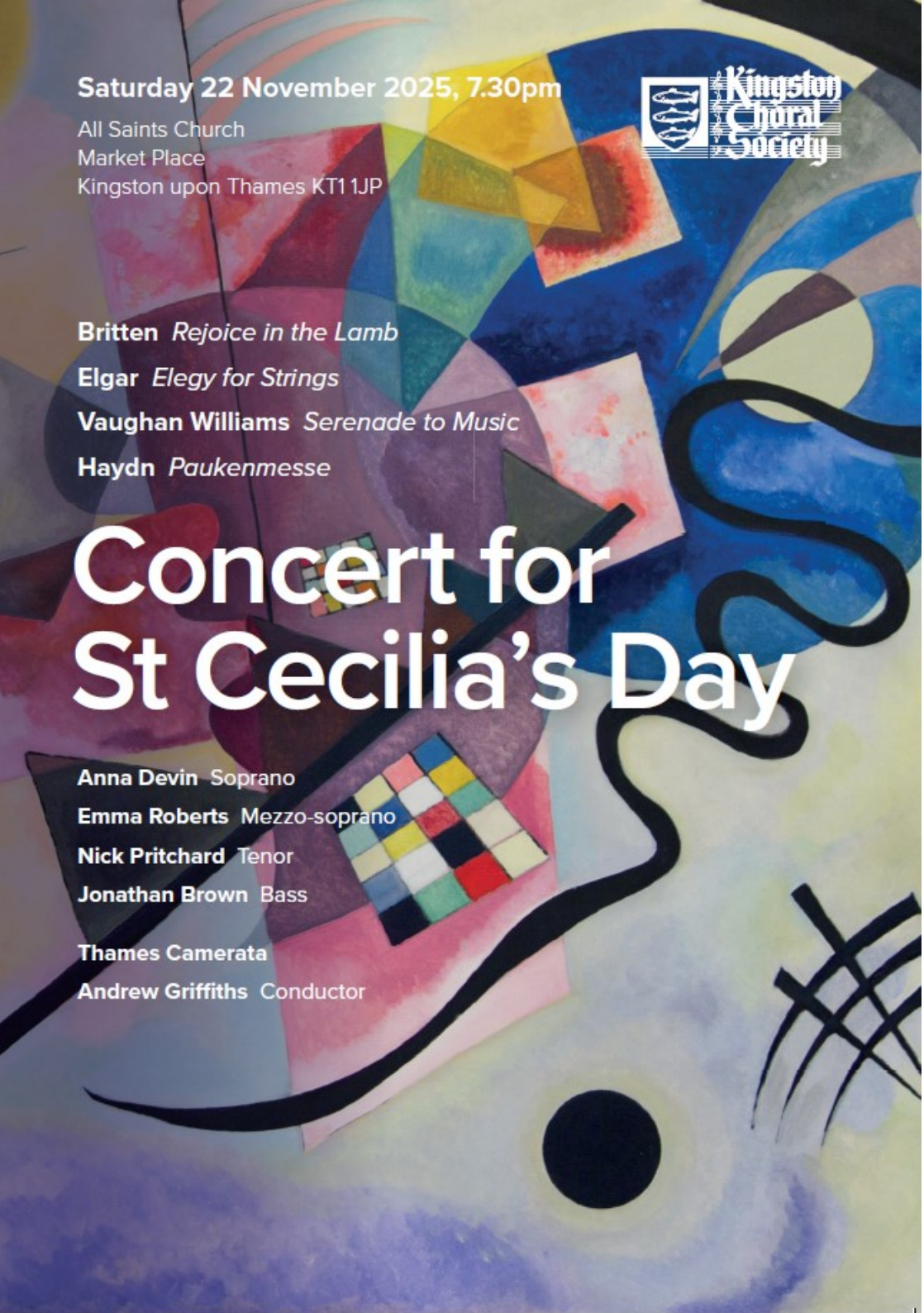




Saturday 22 November 2025, 7.30pm

All Saints Church
Market Place
Kingston upon Thames KT1 1JP



Britten *Rejoice in the Lamb*

Elgar *Elegy for Strings*

Vaughan Williams *Serenade to Music*

Haydn *Paukenmesse*

Concert for St Cecilia's Day

Anna Devin Soprano

Emma Roberts Mezzo-soprano

Nick Pritchard Tenor

Jonathan Brown Bass

Thames Camerata

Andrew Griffiths Conductor



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~ ~ PROGRAMME ~ ~

VAUGHAN WILLIAMS - *SERENADE TO MUSIC*

ELGAR - *ELEGY FOR STRINGS*

BRITTEN - *REJOICE IN THE LAMB*

~ ~ INTERVAL ~ ~

HAYDN - *PAUKENMESSE*

Kyrie Eleison

Gloria in Excelsis

Credo

Sanctus

Benedictus

Agnus Dei



VAUGHAN WILLIAMS (1872-1958)

Ralph Vaughan Williams was born in Down Ampney, a Cotswold village in Gloucestershire, where his father was vicar. His mother was the daughter of Josiah Wedgwood III and Caroline Darwin, hence, the world-famous Charles Darwin was the composer's uncle. Sadly, Ralph was only two years' old when his father died, which required the family's removal to Leith Hill Place in Surrey, his mother's family home.

Vaughan Williams thrived in this extended family environment, retaining a lifelong attachment to the area. His musical development was encouraged and fostered especially by his maternal aunt, Sophy Wedgwood. He received piano lessons, from the age of five and was also exposed to the other arts, as well as literature and nature, aspects that influenced many of his later compositions.

He boarded at a preparatory school near Brighton before going to Charterhouse School at 14. Musically active there, he organized concerts and was developing into a good viola player, albeit his family wished him to concentrate on the organ. At 18, he studied at the Royal College of Music, taught by Hubert Parry (1848-1918) and Charles Villiers Stanford (1852-1924) before interrupting that course to spend three undergraduate years, studying music and history, at Trinity College, Cambridge. By the time he returned to the RCM, aged 27, he had obtained a Doctorate in Music from Cambridge University.

Vaughan Williams had met and married Adeline Fisher, at 24. She came from an intellectual family, one sibling an eminent historian and Virginia Woolf her first cousin. She was a lifelong support to her husband despite developing crippling arthritis, which necessitated the couple's move from a large central-London house to live in Surrey and more suitable accommodation, close to where Vaughan Williams had spent his childhood.

He composed for a wide range of musical genres, in a career that spanned 65 years. An early and productive period resulted from his intense interest in British folk songs, a passion shared by his friend and fellow composer Gustav Holst (1874-1934). As field researchers, they uncovered much folk music in many rural locations, making recordings of their findings. In Vaughan Williams' pursuit of freedom from foreign influences, he used such 'national' sources as fodder for his own compositions, including early works - *Norfolk Rhapsodies* (1906) and *In the Fen Country* (1907).

Shortly after completing these pieces, he visited Maurice Ravel (1875-1937) in Paris, having decided that his own music was '*bumpy and stodgy... [and]... that a little French polish would be of use...*'. His symphonic writing benefitted from the three months' tuition. He completed his *Sea Symphony*, on which he had worked from 1903 - a large-scale work for soprano, baritone, chorus and orchestra, setting texts by Walt Whitman (1819-1892). Vaughan Williams and Ravel corresponded by letter, as friends, for many years thereafter.

In 1914, the country at war, he volunteered for the Royal Army Medical Corps, enrolling as a Private. His age, 42, and physical state meant working as a wagon orderly. In 1916, in France, this involved collecting the wounded, dying and dead. By 1918, however, Vaughan Williams had been made a Lieutenant in the Royal Artillery and was involved in active combat. Such experiences, including the loss of friends and comrades, changed him. His hearing was impaired and his outlook on life, as well as his musical palate, were altered. Afterwards, his works could be coloured by an 'austere bitterness'.

The period between the World Wars saw Vaughan Williams mining a seam of religious thought. His love of the King James' Bible, though he was a professed atheist, took him to Biblical sources - the Apocalypse for the *Sancta Civitas* (1925) and the Song of Songs for '*Flos Campi*', a suite for viola solo, voices and small orchestra. He used the Prayer Book for settings of the *Te Deum* (1928 and 1937).

The prospect of another world war ignited Vaughan Williams' symphonic impulse. The violence inherent in his *Symphony in F minor* (1935), delivered in the same year Mussolini's forces had invaded Abyssinia (modern-day Ethiopia), startled many of his admirers. Of the work, he himself said, '*I do not know whether I like it, but this is what I meant*'. Those disliking his folk-influenced idiom found its grittiness more to their taste.

Vaughan Williams' '*Dona nobis pacem*' (1936), was a prayer for peace and the '*Serenade to Music*' (1937-38), written for 16 renowned soloists and orchestra, is a serene work, seemingly out of sync with a Europe gearing itself for massive armed conflict. Around this time, 1937-1941, Vaughan Williams was not his usually productive self. He had undertaken committee work - chairing the Home Office Committee for the Release of Interned Alien Musicians, helping with the organisation of the daily National Gallery concerts and serving on a committee for refugees from Nazi oppression.

In 1938, he met a 27-year-old poet who had contacted him to discuss her proposal for a ballet. Ursula Wood (1911-2007) was married to a soldier at the time and was almost 40 years younger than RVW. Despite this, her relationship with Vaughan Williams soon became a passionate affair, albeit the composer never left his wife. In 1942, Ursula's husband died suddenly from a heart attack. Newly widowed, she was invited to visit Vaughan Williams and Adeline, sometimes staying for weeks at a time. This arrangement continued until the latter's death in 1951. Vaughan Williams and Ursula married in 1953. There was no issue from either marriage.

Vaughan Williams' total output included operas, ballets, chamber music, secular and religious vocal pieces, and orchestral compositions including nine symphonies, and he received many accolades and awards. Among those offered was a Knighthood, which he refused. In 1935, however, he accepted the *Order of Merit*, which confers no prenominal title. He could remain, what had been his preference, Dr Vaughan Williams. After his death, his widow Ursula ensured his manuscripts were preserved. She wrote his biography and managed his performing rights for The RVW Trust, which had been set up to support young composers and new or neglected music.

SERENADE TO MUSIC

Vaughan Williams wrote this piece for voices and orchestra as a tribute to the esteemed conductor, Sir Henry Wood (1869-1944), famed for conducting the annual 'Promenade' concerts for almost 50 years, up to the year of his death. Under his steer, the repertoire had moved from being a mix of light with classical to solely classical music but including many modern works. Wood helped maintain the continuity of promenade concerts, after their original location, Queen's Hall, had been destroyed by wartime bombing. After his death, the concerts were renamed, 'Henry Wood Promenade Concerts'. The bronze bust of Sir Henry, crowned with a laurel wreath during the famous 'Last Night', had been rescued by firemen from the rubble of the Queen's Hall.

Wood, a champion of Vaughan Williams' works, conducted some significant premieres, for example, the *Norfolk Rhapsody*, 1910 and *A London Symphony*, 1936. On 5 October 1938, he also conducted the premiere of Vaughan Williams' tribute to himself, *Serenade to Music*. This featured an orchestra and 16 handpicked vocal soloists. The lyrics derive from Shakespeare's *Merchant of Venice*, an adapted discussion about music and the music of the spheres, which occurs in Act V, Scene I. He followed The Bard of Stratford's word order but boldly cut words, phrases and whole lines, as well as repeating, at the end, 11 words from the third and fourth lines! Among other versions of this work is one for four soloists, chorus and orchestra.

ELGAR (1857-1934)

Edward Elgar was born in Lower Broadheath, near Worcester. His father, William, an organist and violinist, ran a music shop as well as earning his living as a piano tuner. He sold sheet music and musical instruments. Elgar's mother, née Ann Greening, was the daughter of a farm worker. Elgar was the fourth of their seven children. She had converted to Roman Catholicism shortly before her son's birth and Elgar was baptised and brought up in that faith. From his mother, who also supported his musical development, Elgar acquired a taste for literature and the countryside.

All their children received a musical upbringing. By the age of eight, Elgar was having piano and violin lessons and, by 10, starting to compose music. This included music for a play performed by the Elgar children. Forty years later, he used this, much of it without major changes, for his two suites forming *The Wand of Youth* (1907 and 1908). He learned about musical composition almost exclusively from reading books and scores from Worcester Cathedral's extensive music library and articles in Grove's Dictionary of Music and Musicians, notably those by Hubert Parry (1848-1918).

Elgar had also taught himself a wide variety of musical instruments, freely available in his father's shop, and had even learned some German. He hoped to study music in Leipzig, but family funds did not stretch so far. At 15 Elgar obtained gainful employment as a clerk in a solicitor's office, continuing to make some public performances as violinist and organist. After a few unsatisfying months, determined to make a career in music, he left the solicitor's office. Elgar gave piano and violin lessons, occasionally working in his father's shop. He also accompanied singers, composed or arranged music and started to conduct. Aged 21, he was appointed conductor of the attendants' band at the Worcester City and County Lunatic Asylum, a few miles outside Worcester.

Elgar did get to travel abroad, visiting Paris in 1880 and Leipzig in 1882. While in France, he had become engaged to a student at the Conservatoire. For reasons unknown the engagement was broken. It is suggested that some of Elgar's later, cryptic dedications, of his more romantic compositions, may have been connected to that relationship. In 1882, aged 25, he was employed as a violinist in the William Stockley's Orchestra, based in Birmingham. A year later, one of his compositions for full orchestra was performed by this professional group of players. Elgar's attempts to have his music published, however, were unsuccessful. By 1884, he was extremely despondent about ever achieving his musical ambitions.

Being largely self-taught, Elgar felt an outsider in musical circles, which were often populated by academics. He also felt acutely aware of his Roman Catholic upbringing and faith, surrounded by Protestants. Some of the latter, so it seemed to him, viewed him with suspicion. Indeed, his sense of difference and social inferiority never completely left him. This was despite his marriage to Caroline Alice Roberts, daughter of a senior British Army officer - Major-General Sir Henry Gee Roberts KCB (1800-1860).

The couple had met in 1886, when she approached Elgar for lessons in piano accompaniment. Eight years his senior, Alice, as she was known, was already an established novelist and very musical, having studied music harmony and piano abroad. The pair married in 1889, when Elgar was 32 but not with the blessing of many of the bride's family. The prospective son-in-law's humble origin and questionable ability to provide for a wife and family rendered Elgar a poor catch.

Nevertheless, Alice became not only Elgar's wife but an important and faithful supporter of his professional endeavours over the ensuing 30 years. Their only child, 'Carice', was born in 1890. In the following year the family moved to London, where Elgar attempted to earn a living as a freelance composer. This proved unsuccessful and the couple returned to Worcestershire, to Great Malvern, where he managed a living conducting local ensembles and teaching.

During the next decade, however, Elgar's compositions were being performed and published. Among these were: the *Froissart Overture* (1890), *Serenade for Strings* (1892), large choral works (*The Black Knight*, *King Olaf* and *The Light of Life*). These were followed by the *Imperial March* (1897), the cantata, *Caractacus* (1898) and the song cycle, *Sea Pictures* (1899). He was 42 years old when he had his first international success with *Variations on an Original Theme* (1899), better known as *The Enigma Variations*. Its premiere, on 19 June 1899, was conducted by the famous Austro-Hungarian conductor Hans Richter (1843-1916).

Elgar composed several important works in the early years of the 20th century, including: *The Dream of Gerontius* (1900), two *Symphonies* (1908 and 1911), *Violin Concerto* (1910) and the symphonic poem *Falstaff* (1913). His cantata *The Spirit of England* (1917) was heavily influenced by The Great War. He produced his popular *Cello Concerto* (1919) not long afterwards, as well as a string quartet and piano quartet.

Following the death of his beloved Alice, in 1920, Elgar virtually ceased composing, a notable exception being the *Pomp and Circumstance March No. 5* (1930). He and his daughter Carice, always close, became even closer. However, not long after undergoing abdominal surgery, on 23 February 1934 Elgar died peacefully at home. As he had requested, his funeral was a private affair. The quiet burial laid him next to his wife's grave at St Wulstan's Roman Catholic Church in Little Malvern. Not for Edward Elgar, Knight of the Realm since 1904, was there a grand or pompous exit. Clarice established the Elgar Birthplace Museum to commemorate her father and to ensure that his legacy survived.

ELEGY

"Here is the little Elegy you asked for – if it will not do, never mind – tear it up. It is not very original I fear, but it is well meant." So commented Elgar in response to an invitation to write a short piece to commemorate deceased members of the Worshipful Company of Musicians. In June 1909 the junior warden of the company, the Rev Robert Hadden, had died suddenly of a heart attack, in the street near his church in Mayfair. After his funeral Alfred Littleton, who was Elgar's publisher and member of the company, suggested that he might compose a short "musician's dirge" for use at such future occasions. Elgar agreed, completing the work within a week.

Elegy is dedicated to Hadden and was first performed in public at St Paul's Cathedral, 22 November 1914. It has been played there ever since, at the Company's annual evensong service, in memory of members who have died during the preceding year. It is scored for a traditional string orchestra, comprising the following parts: Violin 1; Violin 2; Violas; Cellos; and Double Bass.

This work, composed within a month of the death of Elgar's close friend, August Jaeger (1860-1909), almost certainly reflects Elgar's grief at that personal loss. His friend was only 49 when he died from tuberculosis, after a long period of illness. A German-born British music publisher, August had offered encouragement and advice to Elgar on some of the composer's major works, including *The Dream of Gerontius* and the *Enigma Variations*. Jaeger himself is immortalized in the ninth variation - *Nimrod*. In German, 'Jaeger' means 'hunter' and Nimrod is the name of a Biblical hunter, described in Genesis as, "a mighty hunter before the Lord...".

Elgar's biographer, Michael Kennedy (1926-2014) described *Elegy* as, "wonderful in its unheroic devotional expression of grief – personal, intimate and beautifully proportioned in a long arch of melody". A poignant counterpoint to Elgar's own evaluation of his work.

BRITTEN (1913-1976)

Benjamin Britten was born in Lowestoft, Suffolk, on 22 November 1913, St Cecilia's Day. He was the youngest of four children. His father, Robert, a dentist, was somewhat stern and remote. Agnostic, he refused to attend church on Sundays with the rest of his family. Edith, his mother, was a talented amateur musician and keen to enhance the family's social standing. She used music and her position, as secretary of the Lowestoft Musical Society, to court pillars of the local community via hosting musical soirées. Her own childhood had been blighted by her mother's mental illness, alcoholism and absences due to hospitalisation.

Edith was delighted that 'Beni', as he was known within the family, was outstandingly musical. She provided his first lessons in piano and notation, enabling his earliest compositions, aged 5. He was an able school pupil, excelling at mathematics and also very sporty. At 14, however, he was sent to board at Gresham's School, North Norfolk, which was not a happy experience. At times, he was almost suicidal, missing homelife and resenting the teachers' hostile attitudes and brutal behaviour towards their charges.

Britten's musical development received a boost, after his mother had engineered a meeting with the composer, Frank Bridge, at the Norwich Triennial Festival. Having examined some of Britten's early compositions, Bridge provided composition lessons. Subsequently, the 16-year-old left Gresham's with a scholarship to the Royal College of Music in London. There, from 1930 to 1933, Britten studied composition with John Ireland (1879-1962) and piano with Arthur Benjamin (1893-1960). He won the *Sullivan Prize* for composition, the *Cobbett Competition* for chamber music and twice won the *Ernest Farrar Prize* for composition.

Despite these honours, Britten wrote about being unimpressed by the musical establishment, finding his teachers, *'inclined to suspect technical brilliance of being superficial and insincere.'*



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As a student, however, several of his compositions gained recognition in being published: *Sinfonietta*, Opus 1 (1932), a *Phantasy Quartet*, Opus 2 (1932), and his choral variations, *A Boy was Born*, Opus 3 (1933).

Remaining in London, 1933 to 1939, Britten studiously attended concerts to be better acquainted with the music of Stravinsky, Shostakovich and Mahler. In 1935 he was offered a position to compose a score for a documentary film, *The King's Stamp*, for the General Post Office Film Unit! Two highly productive years followed, during which he worked closely with Wystan Hugh Auden (1907-1973), among other talented minds, completing almost 40 scores for theatre, cinema and radio.

Britten's mother died, suddenly and unexpectedly on 31st January 1937. The bereavement had left Britten devastated but, as he recalled later, somewhat liberated. It was a turning point in that he was more able to inhabit his homosexuality, meeting the tenor soloist, Peter Pears, who was to become a lifelong partner and lover. A few months before war was declared in 1939, he and Pears set sail for the USA, in the wake of his close friends and erstwhile colleagues, Auden and Christopher Isherwood (1904-1986).

Britten's wartime 'flight' brought him much opprobrium within certain sectors of society, including the BBC who ceased broadcasting his music. Surprisingly, however, his return in March 1942 was followed by a swift social and musical rehabilitation. In part this was due to the success of Britten's first opera, *Peter Grimes* (1945), but his professional partnership with Pears, as his accompanist, was also a factor. He was now a central figure in the music establishment - composer, performer and conductor.

Britten is now principally remembered as the composer of operatic works, but he also leaves a mountain of vocal music, including song cycles and folk songs, instrumental music for orchestras, chamber ensembles and solo artists. Too many to mention. Probably, his best-known works are: *Peter Grimes* (1945); the *War Requiem* (1962); and the orchestral show-piece, *The Young Person's Guide to the Orchestra* (1945).

Britten was in poor health towards the end of his life, having serious heart problems. Despite this, he continued to compose almost to the end. Ironically, in his last year, he had accepted a life peerage, the only musician to have been so honoured. He died aged 63 and was buried in the churchyard of Aldeburgh Church, *Baron Britten of Aldeburgh in the County of Suffolk*.

REJOICE IN THE LAMB

A year after Britten's return to the UK, he was invited by the Reverend Walter Hussey (1909-1985), vicar of St Matthew's Church, Northampton, and collector of modern art, to compose a work to celebrate his church's jubilee year. He suggested a 'four-part anthem' to be sung by his church choir. Britten produced a cantata, *Rejoice in the Lamb*, a work for soloists and choir with organ or orchestral accompaniment. He chose a little-known poem, *Jubilate Agno*, by Christopher Smart (1722-1771) as text. The orchestral accompaniment was arranged by Imogen Holst (1907-1984), who was Britten's very able amanuensis.

Smart's *Jubilate Agno* relates to a complex theological issue, concerning the connection between words and the divine revelation. In Genesis, 1:3, God *speaks* light into existence, the initial act of creation, '*Let there be light...*'. What follows is also commanded by God, hence, each piece of matter exists only because of this profound and inextricable divine connection. No earthly item, however small, can be perceived or understood unless with due recognition of this essential unity.

Smart (editor, playwright, poet and translator), from his student days at Pembroke College, Cambridge, was often in debt. Subsequently, as the debts mounted, his mental health deteriorated, and he spent many years in and out of locked asylums or debtors' prisons. *Jubilate Agno* is believed to have been written between 1759 and 1763, when Smart was confined for insanity in St Luke's Hospital, Bethnal Green. The poem itself was not published until 1939, WH Auden having introduced Britten to it and helped him identify the 48 lines of the poem to set to music.

Rejoice in the Lamb was first performed in September 1943, at St Matthew's church. One month later, it was broadcast by the BBC's Home Service under Britten's baton. It divides into 10 sections. In the first, the Chorus introduces the theme, according to Hussey: '*the worship of God by all created beings and things, each in its own way.*' The second section exhorts a selection of Old Testament figures and creatures to rejoice in God's creation.

The third section, a quietly-ecstatic '*Hallelujah*' (God be praised), ushers in the fourth, featuring Smart's beloved *Cat Jeoffry* ('God's peace', from Old High German) sung by the soprano soloist. Nature is praising God by being simply what the Creator intended it to be. The *Mouse* occupies such an exemplary role in the fifth, as represented by the alto soloist, succeeded in the sixth section by the tenor voice and *Flowers*, as the 'poetry of Christ'.

The chorus notes the poet's own *Hardships* in the seventh section, as but another occasion to praise God, since deliverance from them is assured. The eighth, with bass soloist and chorus, announces four letters *H, K, L* and *M*, reminding of the awesome connection between words and the divine. The penultimate section names musical instruments as *Musick's* own means of praising God. Finally, '*Hallelujah*' repeats quietly, before fading away.

Reviews of the work highlight Britten's masterful word-setting, musical brilliance and imaginative portrayal of Smart's eccentric text. The piece also demonstrates Britten's genius for incorporating diverse musical styles while maintaining a deep sense of joy and passion. It is popular with choirs and audiences. The former can be challenged by the work's changing moods, rhythms and tempi. The latter tend to find its overall effect to be thought-provoking or strangely moving.

HAYDN (1732-1809)

Franz Joseph Haydn was born in Rohrau, Austria, the son of Mathias, a wagon-maker, and Anna Maria Koller, cook in the castle of Count von Harrach (1669-1742). His parents hoped he might become a clergyman. Before he was six, he was sent to Hainburg an der Donau, to live with a relative for his early education and to study the catechism. Being obviously musical, he also had instruction in wind and string instruments. At eight, he joined the choir of St. Stephen's Cathedral, in Vienna, as a soprano soloist, becoming a star pupil until his voice had broken, when he was dismissed. Up to 17 he had been separated from his family and subject to significant impoverishment. Looking back, he claimed that he had received '*more floggings than food*'.

For some years after leaving St Stephen's, Haydn lived just above the breadline. He claimed he was, '*a wizard on no instrument...[but]... not a bad clavier player or singer.*' He played at social functions, taught and arranged music. His composing activities were confined to the end of a long day. He studied the music of CPE Bach (1714-1788) and had lessons in composition from Nicolo Porpora (1686-1768), a famous composer of the day. Nonetheless, Haydn's reputation as a composer grew and, in 1758, he was appointed music director and composer for the Bohemian aristocrat Count Karl Joseph of Morzin (1717-1783).

Two years later, Haydn married Maria Anna Theresia Keller, the daughter of a hairdresser. Three years older than him, she did not like music and was a poor housekeeper. Haydn, allegedly, referred to her as '*that infernal beast*'. He rationalised his later extramarital affairs to be because she was, '*unable to bear children... [which made him] ... less indifferent toward the attraction of other women*'.

In 1761, Haydn left Count Morzin's employment to enter the service of Prince Paul Anton Esterhazy (1711-1762), as Vice-Kapellmeister. His employer was head of the greatest and richest family in Hungary and was a lover of art and music. His castle at Eisenstadt had 200 rooms for guests and contained theatres as well as parks. However, the Prince died only a short while later, in 1762, being succeeded by his brother Nicholas (1714-1790). Fortunately for Haydn, he was also passionate about music.

A splendid new palace called Esterháza was built, the greatest in Europe other than Versailles. Among its many luxuries were a marionette theatre and a 400-seat theatre for opera. After the death of the incumbent Kapellmeister, Haydn took over that prestigious position. Duties included composing for the weekly church services, the twice-weekly concerts, the opera performances and the family's frequent celebrations for the constant stream of visiting dignitaries.

As Haydn himself said, the isolation of the Esterhazy court meant that he was, '*forced to become original*'. In developing his own talents, indirectly, he influenced the development of musical forms in Europe - the string quartet, four-movement symphony and piano sonata.

Haydn's hard work had compensations - a good salary, a maid, a coachman, a carriage and horses, rooms in one of the showplaces of Europe and the command of a fine body of handpicked musicians. Haydn himself often led performances from the keyboard. This period ended with the death of Prince Nicholas in 1790. The musical establishment in Esterháza was disbanded and Haydn retired to Vienna, on full salary. He was invited to London in 1791 to compose and perform six symphonies, an opera and 20 other works. This visit proved so successful that he was invited back in 1794.

Returning to Vienna in his early 60s, he produced six masses, between 1796 and 1802, including *Missa in Angustiis* (also known as the Nelson Mass) and *Missa in Tempore Belli* (Mass in Time of War). Inspired by Handel's oratorios heard in London, he composed two of his own - *The Creation* (1798) and *The Seasons* (1801). Following the death of his wife in 1800, however, Haydn did not enjoy good health, being increasingly afflicted by serious bouts of rheumatism that restricted his mobility. His last days were darkened by the sounds of French guns bombarding Vienna, Napoleon having entered the city on the day before Haydn died, 31 May 1809.

PAUKENMESSE

Missa in Tempore Belli is also known as the *Paukenmesse* owing to the prominent part for timpani ('pauken'), especially in the *Agnus Dei* section of the work. In some places the music is unsettled, more so than in most of Haydn's output. The obvious presence of the repeated militaristic drum rhythms does impart a dramatic sense of foreboding, which has led some critics to view the whole work as an anti-war statement. French Revolutionary soldiers were at the time threatening Austria, creating a climate of fear and unrest. In 1796, the Austrian government had issued a decree that "*no Austrian should speak of peace until the enemy is driven back to its customary borders*."

Much of this Mass, however, reveals a joyous and vital side of Haydn composing music fit to celebrate the special day of a Princess. The vocal parts are performed by four soloists (soprano, alto, tenor and bass) with a four-part choir for similar voices. The soloists often sing together, the choir and orchestra being present in all movements.

The opening *Kyrie*, in seeking mercy from the Lord and Christ, starts slowly, evoking a sombre atmosphere, before the soprano soloist takes the reins to up the tempo. The choir and other soloists join in at this livelier pace. The *Gloria*, marked 'Vivace', starts and ends fast but, at its centre is a slow section, 'Adagio'. Beginning with, "*Qui tollis peccata mundi*" ('*You, who take away the sins of the world.*'), there is a lyrical duet between the orchestra's solo cellist and the bass soloist.

The *Credo*'s structure reflects the text, the different voice parts entering sequentially, starting with the basses. Its *Crucifixus* section heralds a more reflective mood, introducing the four soloists who sing with the choir providing answering phrases. The *Sanctus* opens slowly and crescendos to a peak, just before the words, "*Pleni sunt coeli et terra gloria tua*" ('*Heaven and earth are full of your glory*') are announced at a faster and more spirited tempo. The movement ends with *Osanna in excelsis* ('*Glory to God in the highest*'), exuberant, but not excessively so.

The *Benedictus* is mostly set in short nervous phrases for the solo quartet, the choir being silent until almost the end. They echo the soloists' last "*Osanna*". The *Agnus Dei*, is characterised by ominous drumbeats and wind fanfares. Finally, the brass instruments herald a change in mood, which drives the piece to its celebratory conclusion - a declamatory "*Dona nobis pacem*", ('*Give us peace*'). The sentiment does not seem out of place for 2025.

Programme notes courtesy of Kingsley Norton

VAUGHAN WILLIAMS - SERENADE TO MUSIC

How sweet the moonlight sleeps upon this bank!	The reason is, your spirits are attentive:
Here will we sit, and let the sounds of music	...The man that hath no music in himself,
Creep in our ears: soft stillness and the night	Nor is not mov'd with concord of sweet sounds,
Become the touches of sweet harmony.	Is fit for treasons, stratagems and spoils;
...Look, how the floor of heaven	The motions of his spirit are dull as night,
Is thick inlaid with patines of bright gold:	And his affections dark as Erebus;
There's not the smallest orb that thou behold'st	Let no such man be trusted.
But in his motion like an angel sings,	Music! hark! ...It is your music of the house.
Still quiring to the young-ey'd cherubins;	Methinks it sounds much sweeter than by day.
Such harmony is in immortal souls;	Silence bestows that virtue on it...
But, whilst this muddy vesture of decay	How many things by season season'd are
Doth grossly close it in, we cannot hear it.	To their right praise and true perfection!
Come, ho! and wake Diana with a hymn:	Peace, ho! the moon sleeps with Endymion,
With sweetest touches pierce your mistress' ear,	And would not be awak'd!
And draw her home with music.	...Soft stillness and the night
I am never merry when I hear sweet music.	Become the touches of sweet harmony.

**William Shakespeare -
The Merchant of Venice**

BRITTEN - REJOICE IN THE LAMB

1. Rejoice in God, O ye Tongues

Rejoice in God, O ye Tongues;
Give the glory to the Lord,
And the Lamb.
Nations, and languages,
And every Creature
In which is the breath of Life.
Let man and beast appear before him,
And magnify his name together.

Let Nimrod, the mighty hunter,
Bind a leopard to the altar
And consecrate his spear to the Lord.

Let Ishmail dedicate a tyger,
And give praise for the liberty
In which the Lord has let him at large.

Let Balaam appear with an ass,
And bless the Lord his people
And his creatures for a reward eternal.

Let Daniel come forth with a lion,
And praise God with all his might
Through faith in Christ Jesus.

Let Ithamar minister with a chamois,
And bless the name of Him
That cloatheth the naked.

Let Jakim with the satyr
Bless God in the dance,
Dance, dance, dance.

Let David bless with the bear
The beginning of victory to the Lord,
To the Lord the perfection of excellence.

Hallelujah, hallelujah,
Hallelujah from the heart of God,
And from the hand of the artist inimitable,
And from the echo of the heavenly harp
In sweetness magnifical and mighty.
Hallelujah, hallelujah, hallelujah.

2. For I will consider my cat Jeoffry

For I will consider my cat Jeoffry.
For he is the servant of the living God.
Duly and daily serving him.

For at the first glance
Of the glory of God in the East
He worships in his way.
For this is done by wreathing his body
Seven times round with elegant quickness.
For he knows that God is his saviour.
For God has bless'd him
In the variety of his movements.
For there is nothing sweeter
Than his peace when at rest.

For I am possessed of a cat,
Surpassing in beauty,
From whom I take occasion
To bless Almighty God.

3. For the Mouse is a creature

For the Mouse is a creature
Of great personal valour.
For this is a true case -
Cat takes female mouse,
Male mouse will not depart,
but stands threat'ning and daring.
If you will let her go,
I will engage you,
As prodigious a creature as you are.

For the Mouse is a creature
Of great personal valour.
For the Mouse is of
An hospitable disposition.

4. For the flowers are great blessings

For the flowers are great blessings.
For the flowers have their angels,
Even the words of God's creation.
For the flower glorifies God
And the root parries the adversary.
For there is a language of flowers.
For the flowers are peculiarly
The poetry of Christ.

5. For I am under the same accusation (Chorus)

For I am under the same accusation
With my Saviour,
For they said,
He is besides himself.
For the officers of the peace
Are at variance with me,
And the watchman smites me
With his staff.
For the silly fellow, silly fellow,
Is against me,
And belongeth neither to me
Nor to my family.
For I am in twelve hardships,
But he that was born of a virgin
Shall deliver me out of all,
Shall deliver me out of all.

6. For H is a spirit

For H is a spirit
And therefore he is God.
For K is king
And therefore he is God.
For L is love
And therefore he is God.
For M is musick
And therefore he is God.
And therefore he is God.

7. For the instruments are by their rhimes

For the instruments are by their rhimes,
For the shawm rhimes are lawn fawn
and the like.
For the shawm rhimes are moon boon
and the like.
For the harp rhimes are sing ring and the like.
For the harp rhimes are ring string and the like.
For the cymbal rhimes are bell well and the like.
For the cymbal rhimes are toll soul and the like.
For the flute rhimes are tooth youth and the like.
For the flute rhimes are suit mute and the like.

For the bassoon rhimes are pass class
and the like.
For the dulcimer rhimes are grace place
beat heat and the like.
For the clarinet rhimes are clean seen
and the like.
For the trumpet rhimes are sound bound soar
more and the like.

For the trumpet of God is a blessed intelligence
And so are all the instruments in Heav'n.
For God the Father Almighty plays upon the
harp
Of stupendous magnitude and melody.
For at that time malignity ceases
And the devils themselves are at peace.
For this time is perceptible to man
By a remarkable stillness and serenity of soul.

8. Hallelujah for the heart of God

Hallelujah from the heart of God,
And from the hand of the artist inimitable,
And from the echo of the heavenly harp
In sweetness magnifical and mighty.
Hallelujah, hallelujah, hallelujah.

HAYDN – PAUKENMESSE

KYRIE ELEISON

Kyrie eleison.

Christe eleison.

Kyrie eleison.

Lord, have mercy upon us.

Christ, have mercy upon us.

Lord, have mercy upon us.

GLORIA IN EXCELSIS

Gloria in excelsis Deo,

et in terra pax hominibus

bonae voluntatis.

Laudamus te, benedicimus te,

adoramus te, glorificamus te.

Gratias agimus tibi

propter magnam gloriam tuam.

Domine Deus, Rex coelestis,

Deus Pater omnipotens,

Domine Fili unigenite Jesu Christe,

Domine Deus, Agnus Dei,

Filius Patris,

Qui tollis peccata mundi,

miserere nobis,

qui tollis peccata mundi,

suscipe deprecationem nostram.

Qui sedes ad dexteram Patris,

miserere nobis;

Quoniam tu solus sanctus;

tu solus Dominus;

tu solus altissimus, Jesu Christe.

Cum Sancto Spiritu,

in gloria Dei Patris.

Amen.

Glory be to God in the highest,

and on earth peace

good will towards men.

We praise Thee, we bless Thee,

we worship Thee, we glorify Thee.

We give Thee thanks

for Thy great glory.

Lord God, heavenly King,

God the Father almighty,

Lord Jesus Christ, the only-begotten Son.

Lord God, Lamb of God,

Son of the Father,

Who takest away the sins of the world,

have mercy upon us.

Who takest away the sins of the world,

hear our prayer.

Who sittest at the right hand of the Father,

have mercy upon us.

For thou alone art holy,

thou alone art the Lord,

thou alone art most high, Jesus Christ,

with the Holy Ghost,

in the glory of God the Father.

Amen.

CREDO

Credo in unum Deum,

Patrem omnipotentem,

Factorem coeli et terrae,

visibilem omnium, et invisibilem.

Et in unum Dominum Jesum Christum,

Filius Dei unigenitum.

Et ex Patre natum

ante omnia saecula.

Deum de Deo; lumen de lumine;

Deum verum de Deo vero.

Genitum, non factum,

consubstantialem Patri:

per quem omnia facta sunt.

I believe in one God,

the Father Almighty,

creator of heaven and earth,

and of all things visible and invisible,

and in one Lord Jesus Christ,

the only-begotten Son of God,

born of the Father

before all ages.

God of God, Light of Light,

true God of true God.

Begotten, not made,

being of one substance with the Father,

by Whom all things were made.

*Qui propter nos homines,
et propter nostram salutem,
descendit de coelis.
Et incarnatus est
de Spiritu Sancto
ex Maria Virgine: et homo factus est.
Crucifixus etiam pro nobis,
sub Pontio Pilato,
passus et sepultus est.
Et resurrexit tertia die,
secundum Scripturas.
Et ascendit in coelum,
sedet ad dexteram Patris.
Et iterum venturus est
cum gloria judicare vivos et mortuos;
cujus regni non erit finis.
Et in Spiritum Sanctum Dominum,
et vivificantem.
Qui locutus est per Prophetas.
Et unam sanctam Catholicam
et Apostolicam Ecclesiam.
Confiteor unum baptisma
in remissionem peccatorum.
Et exspecto resurrectionem mortuorum.
Et vitam venturi saeculi.
Amen.*

SANCTUS

*Sanctus, Sanctus, Sanctus,
Dominus Deus Sabaoth.
Pleni sunt coeli et terra gloria tua.
Osanna in excelsis.*

BENEDICTUS

*Benedictus qui venit
in nomine Domini.
Osanna in excelsis.*

AGNUS DEI

*Agnus Dei,
qui tollis peccata mundi,
miserere nobis.
Agnus Dei,
qui tollis peccata mundi,
dona nobis pacem.*

Who for us men,
and for our salvation
came down from heaven.
And was incarnate
by the Holy Ghost
of the Virgin Mary, and was made man.
And was crucified for us
under Pontius Pilate;
he suffered death and was buried.
And on the third day he rose again
according to the Scriptures,
and ascended into heaven,
and sitteth on the right hand of the Father,
and he shall come again
with glory to judge the living and the dead;
whose kingdom shall have no end.
And [I believe] in the Holy Ghost,
the Lord and Giver of life,
who has spoken through the prophets.
And [I believe] in one holy Catholic
and Apostolic Church;
I acknowledge one Baptism
for the remission of sins.
And I look for the resurrection of the dead.
And the life of the world to come.
Amen.

Holy, Holy, Holy,
Lord God of Hosts.
Heaven and earth are full of thy glory.
Hosanna in the highest.

Blessed is he who comes
in the name of the Lord.
Hosanna in the highest.

Lamb of God,
who takest away the sins of the world,
have mercy on us.
Lamb of God,
who takest away the sins of the world,
grant us peace.

ANDREW GRIFFITHS – Musical Director



A musician of rare versatility, Andrew Griffiths combines his role as Head Coach at the National Opera Studio with a busy freelance career in the worlds of opera and choral music.

A graduate of the Royal Opera's Jette Parker Young Artist Programme, he has conducted productions for The Royal Opera, The Royal Ballet, Welsh National Opera, Opera North, Opera Theatre Company, Opera Collective Ireland, Early Opera Company, Mid Wales Opera, Bampton Classical Opera and Iford Festival Opera. He has appeared in concert with the Royal Northern Sinfonia, Orchestra of the Swan, Southbank Sinfonia and Orpheus Sinfonia, and he is regularly engaged to broadcast and record with the BBC Singers.

Andrew has worked at Glyndebourne, ENO, Scottish Opera, Chicago Opera Theatre, and with the BBC Symphony and Scottish Symphony Orchestras, and regularly joins the music staff at The Royal Opera, working alongside such conductors as Pappano, Bychkov, Gardiner and Mackerras. He is often engaged for projects outside the standard operatic canon, and is particularly experienced in Baroque repertoire and the music of the last 50 years. He is much in demand as a vocal coach, and works regularly with the Young Artists at The Royal Opera, as well as overseeing the training of the Young Artists at the National Opera Studio.

In constant demand as a choral conductor, Andrew appears regularly with the BBC Singers, for whom his engagements have included the world première of John Pickard's *Mass in Troubled Times*, recordings of Brahms, Hassler, Barber, Ives and Giles Swayne, and broadcasts of Howells, MacMillan and Martinů, as well as a Barbican debut directing music from the Flemish Renaissance. He is Musical Director of Kingston Choral Society and chamber choir Londinium, whose recordings have received wide critical acclaim. He regularly conducts for the Music Summer School at Gresham's, and has appeared as a guest conductor with the BBC Symphony Chorus, the choirs at Dartington, New London Chamber Choir, and Hong Kong's Tallis Vocalis.

A pianist, viola player and singer by training, Andrew began his musical education as a Quirister and Scholar at Winchester College, and read music at Gonville and Caius College, Cambridge, where he held a Choral Exhibition. He studied conducting under Martyn Brabbins in Glasgow, and trained as a répétiteur at the National Opera Studio and at Scottish Opera. He is a former principal viola of the National Youth Orchestra of Great Britain, and a founder member of vocal consort Stile Antico.

Engagements during the current season include conducting contemporary opera scenes at the National Opera Studio directed by Keith Warner, a return to Bampton Classical Opera for Salieri's *La locandiera*, Handel's *Israel in Egypt* at Gresham's, assistant conductor for *Il trovatore* at The Royal Opera, and chorus-master for Boulez's *Cummings ist der Dichter* with the BBC Singers.

ANNA DEVIN - Soprano



Irish soprano Anna Devin has gained recognition across the world for her work in the Baroque and Classical repertoire.

Upcoming engagements include the role of Nicomede in Scarlatti's *Mitridate Eupatore* with *Vespres d'Arnadi* in Barcelona and Madrid, Handel's *Messiah* with Royal Scottish National Orchestra, Schumann's *Das Paradis und die Peri* with National Symphony Orchestra of Ireland, and the role of Angelica in *Orlando* with Longborough Festival Opera under Chris Moulds.

Her successes on the opera stage include Gretel in *Hänsel und Gretel*, Nanetta in *Falstaff*, and Lauretta in *Gianni Schicchi* for the Royal Opera House; Rosina in *Il barbiere di Siviglia* for English National Opera; Cleopatra in *Giulio Cesare* for Blackwater Valley Opera Festival, Early Opera Company, and Kilkenny Arts Festival; La Bergère Louis XV and La Chauve-Souris in *L'enfant et les sortilèges* for La Scala; soprano soloist in Deborah Warner's production of *Messiah* for Opéra National de Lyon; Michal in *Saul* for the Théâtre du Châtelet and Glyndebourne Festival; and the title role in *La Calisto* in David Alden's iconic production in Madrid.

Recent concert highlights include Haydn's *Paukenmesse* with London Philharmonic Orchestra; Handel's *Messiah* with Royal Liverpool Philharmonic Orchestra; Pergolesi's *Stabat Mater* on tour with Irish Chamber Orchestra; Bach's *Mass in B minor* on tour with Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment; and the title role in Handel's *Rodelinda* with Moscow Philharmonic.

EMMA ROBERTS - Mezzo-soprano



Emma attended National Opera Studio 2022-23, is an artist with Samling, Britten Pears and Orsay-Royaumont. A graduate from RCM Opera School 2022, Emma won both 2nd prize and song prize at the Kathleen Ferrier Awards, 1st Prize in the Joan Chissell Schumann Competition and 3rd prize in the International Schumann Competition Zwickau 2024.

Emma has performed recitals at the Wigmore Hall, New Paths Festival, Musée d'Orsay and Abbaye de Royaumont, the London and Oxford Song Festivals, Red House Snape Maltings and Aalborg Festival.

Previous roles include Polina cover in Tchaikovsky's *Queen of Spades* for Garsington Festival 2025, Lorca cover in Golijov's *Ainadamar* WNO, Minskwoman *Flight*, *Hänsel Hänsel und Gretel*, Eduige *Rodelinda*, Third Lady *Die Zauberflöte*, Orfeo *Orfeo ed Euridice*, Lola *Cavalleria Rusticana*, title role in Mascagni's *Zanetto*.

NICK PRITCHARD - Tenor



Tenor Nick Pritchard is fast gaining recognition for his performances of the music of Bach and, in particular, his interpretation of the Evangelist in the Passions. Described as a 'Masterly Evangelist' in *The Guardian*, he has sung the role in Bach's *St John Passion* and *St Matthew Passion* around the world, and his recording of the *St John Passion* for Deutsche Grammophon with Sir John Eliot Gardiner was nominated for a Grammy Award for Best Choral Performance (2023). This season sees him performing Bach with Les Arts Florissants (Paul Agnew), the Tonkünstler Orchestra (Stefan Gottfried), Monteverdi Choir and Orchestra (Peter Whelan), Arcangelo (Jonathan Cohen), the Academy of Ancient Music (Laurence Cummings) and at the Thomaskirche Leipzig as part of the Bachfest Leipzig (Andreas Reize).

He celebrates the release of his debut recital album in 2025 for the Signum label, titled *Little Wanderer*, with his long-term collaborative partner Ian Tindale. The album includes songs by Benjamin Britten, Imogen Holst and the first recording of Daniel Kidane's *Songs of Illumination*, commissioned for him by the Leeds Song Festival. Other highlights include *Messiah* with the Royal Scottish National Orchestra and Royal Liverpool Philharmonic Orchestra, and Haydn's *The Creation* under Václav Luks with the Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment and a residency with the Temple Music Foundation, performing three concerts including *Die schöne Müllerin* with Julius Drake, a lute song recital with Elizabeth Kenny and Handel's *Acis and Galatea* with the Early Opera Company under Christian Curnyn.

JONATHAN BROWN - Baritone



Jonathan Brown was born in Toronto and studied at the RCM (Toronto) and the University of Western Ontario. After moving to England, he continued his studies at the University of Cambridge as well as the Britten-Pears School in Aldeburgh with Sir Thomas Allen and Anthony Rolfe Johnson.

Operatic roles include Marcello (*La Bohème*, Royal Albert Hall), Count Almaviva, Yamadori (*Madama Butterfly*), Giove (*La Calisto*), Orestes (*Giasone*), Garibaldo (*Rodelinda*), Ariodate (*Xerxes*), Silvio (*I Pagliacci*), Malatesta (*Don Pasquale*), Masetto (*Don Giovanni*), Shepherd (*Venus and Adonis*) and Aeneas (*Dido and Aeneas*). He performed the role of Trojan (*Idomeneo*) for Sir Simon Rattle with the Berlin Philharmonic in the Salzburg Easter Festival. He recently created the role of Leon in Tom Smail's new opera *Blue Electric* in London.

Jonathan made his debut with Sir John Eliot Gardiner in Holland as the baritone soloist in a concert of Bach cantatas, and thereafter was a regular soloist with performances in Zurich, Brussels and Paris. He performs regularly as a soloist with the OAE, most recently on tour with the *St John Passion*, *Princess Ida* at the Royal Festival Hall and a programme based on the Rime of the Ancient Mariner at the Southbank. He has performed most of the major oratorios in the UK and abroad, recently Elgar's *The Kingdom* with the Norwich Philharmonic, *The Creation* with the Oxford Philharmonic and Mozart *Requiem* with Brighton Festival Chorus.

He features as a soloist in Purcell's *Ode to St Cecilia* and *Dido and Aeneas* for Harmonia Mundi. He has recorded the baritone solos in the Fauré *Requiem* with the London Festival Orchestra for BMG, and appears in the role of the Forester in Sullivan's *The Golden Legend* for Hyperion. Recent recordings have included world premieres of Wesley's cantata *Confitebor Tibi, Domine* (Priory), Eccles' *Semele* and Weldon's *Judgement of Paris*, both with Cambridge Handel Opera and the Academy of Ancient Music.

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Oboe

Fraser MacAuley

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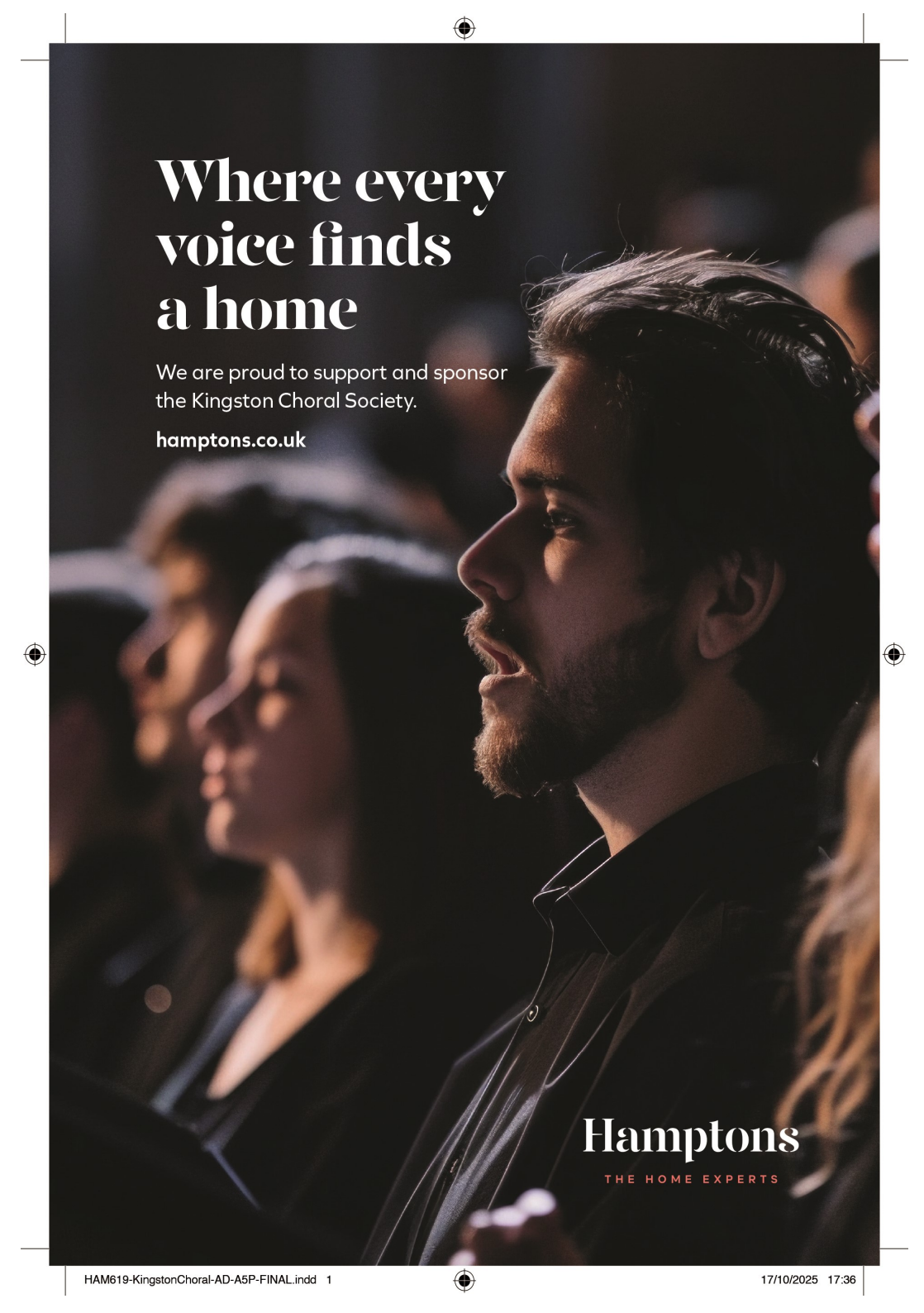
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