

Thursday 7 November 2019, 7.30pm
Cadogan Hall, Sloane Terrace, SW1



Celebrating 60 years

PURCELL
KING
ARTHUR
CONCERT PERFORMANCE

Programme £3



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Programme designed by Stephen Rickett and edited by Eleanor Cowie

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Cadogan Hall



PURCELL
KING
ARTHUR

CONCERT PERFORMANCE

Mark Forkgen *conductor*

Rachel Elliott *soprano*

Rebecca Outram *soprano*

Bethany Partridge *soprano*

William Towers *counter tenor*

James Way *tenor*

Peter Willcock *bass baritone*

Aisling Turner and Joe Pike *narrators*

London Concert Choir

Counterpoint Ensemble

There will be an interval of 20 minutes after ACT III

Henry Purcell (1659–1695)

King Arthur

Semi-opera in five acts

Libretto by John Dryden



The first concert in the choir's 60th Anniversary season is Purcell's dramatic masterpiece about the conflict between King Arthur's Britons and the heathen Saxon invaders.

The plot bears no relation to the legends of Camelot but largely concerns King Arthur's attempts to rescue his fiancée, the blind Cornish Princess Emmeline, from the clutches of his arch-enemy, the Saxon King Oswald of Kent.

In this performance of the music from the opera, soloists and chorus take on the roles of good and evil magicians, mythical and supernatural beings, soldiers, amorous shepherds, drunken peasants and the inhabitants of a frozen land.

Cast

Philadell, <i>An Airy Spirit</i>	Bethany Partridge
Grimbald, <i>An Earthy Spirit</i>	Peter Willcock
Shepherd	James Way
Two Shepherdesses	Rachel Elliott and Rebecca Outram
Cupid	Rachel Elliott
Cold Genius	Peter Willcock
Two Sirens	Rachel Elliott and Bethany Partridge
Aeolus	Peter Willcock
Nereid	Bethany Partridge
Pan	Peter Willcock
Comus	James Way
Venus	Rachel Elliott
Honour	Rebecca Outram

King Arthur, like Purcell's other major scores of the 1690s for the professional stage, *Dioclesian*, *The Fairy Queen*, *The Tempest* and *The Indian Queen*, is in a genre unfamiliar to today's audiences. With spoken and sung text by John Dryden, the former Poet Laureate and the most distinguished poet who ever collaborated with Purcell, King Arthur is neither play nor opera but a hybrid of the two, best termed 'semi-opera', an extension of the long-established masque tradition.

Music, drama and spectacle (scenery, costumes and ballet) were all of equal importance because, as a contemporary playwright put it: "experience hath taught us that our English genius will not relish that perpetual singing... our English Gentlemen, when their Ear is satisfy'd, are desirous to have their mind pleas'd, and Musick and Dancing industriously intermix'd with Comedy or Tragedy."

King Arthur was designed for The Queen's Theatre, Dorset Garden, the largest and most sumptuous in England at the time, especially equipped for spectacular effects. Its prompter records that *King Arthur* was "Excellently Adorn'd with Scenes and Machines...and Dances."

King Arthur and the play's other main protagonists did not sing, and the two singing and speaking parts of Philadell (an Airy Spirit) and Grimbald (an Earthy Spirit) were played by ordinary members of the company. The action and passion of the work, though reflected and expanded in the music, had therefore to be introduced and developed in the drama proper which the music served in set scenes. Fortunately these scenes are usually quite extended, which ensures the work's continuity even in a performance of the music alone.

The collaboration between Purcell and Dryden in *King Arthur* might be described as civil but not entirely cordial. Dryden had adapted his play from an unperformed work written in 1684, but Purcell made a number of further alterations in setting Dryden's text, generally simplifying it to make both the understanding and the musical expression of it easier.

In his concern for the balance of the music, Purcell extended some of Dryden's sung sections and cut others. Nevertheless, both men were masters of their trade and the positive feature of their collaboration is the ability to convey convincingly a situation from different points of view and to respond with equal vividness to widely divergent emotions appearing in quick succession. The result is a work of extraordinary variety of mood and range of expression.

The Music

The introductory instrumental pieces are rounded off by a Trumpet Overture which signals that martial prowess will be one of the work's themes. The extended musical scene in **Act I** is that of the ritual sacrifice before battle by the Saxon army, beginning with solemn invocations to their heathen gods, Woden, Thor and Freya.

The masterstroke of the scene is the tragic nobility of patriotism, keenly felt by Dryden and realised by Purcell as the vaunting contrapuntal 'Brave Souls to be renown'd in Story' gives way to the pathetic homophony of 'Honour prizing' etc. and finally to elegiac counterpoint at 'Die, and reap the fruit of Glory'.

But before too much sympathy can be felt for the Saxons, they launch themselves into anticipating a drunken orgy. This proves inadequate preparation for the battle, whose trumpet calls are heard and fortunes surveyed in the music which follows ('Come if you dare'), this time from the British viewpoint of growing confidence and triumph.

The opening musical scene of **Act II** ('Hither this way') is the nearest approach to pure opera in *King Arthur*, for the music here is inextricably part of the dramatic plot, as King Arthur and his troops, pursuing the retreating Saxons, waver between following Philadell's directions to safety and Grimbald's into a bog. Having made the right choice, the vocal ensembles and choruses become liltingly serene.

The other musical scene in this act is a pastoral merrymaking by Kent countryfolk to entertain Arthur's betrothed, Emmeline. After the idyllic beginning 'How blest are Shepherds' the men offer their panpipes to the women, but the latter refuse, two shepherdesses asserting they will not play the men's tune until marriage contracts are signed, which the men then accept, and all join unanimously once more in chorus.

The music of **Act III**, the Frost Scene, is provided for Emmeline by the Saxon magician Osmond, to show love's power 'in Countries cak'd with Ice'. Spectacular transformations of scene on the stage were mirrored in the music by the novel use in England of tremolo strings to introduce the tremolo vocalisation, first by the Cold Genius and then by the Chorus of Cold People (it is likely that this was suggested to Purcell by the Chorus of Tremblers in Jean-Baptiste Lully's *Isis* of 1677). Cupid and a stylish ritornello supply the required melting influence.

INTERVAL – 20 Minutes

The music in **Act IV** is for the connoisseur. First there is the succulent duet by two naked Sirens who attempt to seduce Arthur, then a passacaglia on the subject of love ('How happy the lover'), potent in its extended concentration of ardent, serious voluptuousness and memorable for its yearning harmonies; this is followed by a duet on the pleasures of love.

Act V opens with a magnificent virtuoso aria, 'Ye Blust'ring Brethren of the Skies', in which Aeolus, God of the winds, calms the raging sea, whereupon in the masque "An Island arises, to a soft Tune; Britannia seated in the Island, with Fishermen at her Feet, etc." The nation's future wealth from fishing and farming is represented in choruses, after which a group of yokels toast 'Harvest Home'. This ruder rustic mood is immediately dispelled by the entrance of Venus, who celebrates the sheer beauty of Britain in this work's most famous song, 'Fairest Isle, all Isles Excelling'.

The closing vocal pieces evoke the semi-opera's two major concerns: love and honour, the latter seen in terms of patriotism, with a respectful bow to William of Orange, the 'Foreign King' adopted in Britain.



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ACT I

BASS

Woden, first to thee
A milk-white steed, in battle won,
We have sacrific'd.

CHORUS

We have sacrific'd.

TENOR

Let our next oblation be
To Thor, thy thund'ring son,
Of such another.

CHORUS

We have sacrific'd.

BASS

A third (of Friesland breed was he)
To Woden's wife, and to Thor's mother;
And now we have aton'd all three.

CHORUS

We have sacrific'd.

COUNTER TENOR & TENOR

The white horse neigh'd aloud.
To Woden thanks we render,
To Woden we have vow'd,
To Woden, our defender.

CHORUS

To Woden thanks we render,
To Woden, our defender.

SOPRANO

The lot is cast, and Tanfan pleas'd;
Of mortal cares you shall be eas'd.

CHORUS

Brave souls, to be renown'd in story.
Honour prizing,
Death despising,
Fame acquiring
By expiring,
Die and reap the fruit of glory.

COUNTER TENOR

I call you all
To Woden's Hall,
Your temples round
With ivy bound
In goblets crown'd,
And plenteous bowls of burnish'd gold,
Where ye shall laugh
And dance and quaff
The juice that makes the Britons bold.

CHORUS

To Woden's Hall all,
Where in plenteous bowls of burnish'd
gold,
We shall laugh
And dance and quaff
The juice that makes the Britons bold.

TENOR

"Come if you dare," our trumpets sound.
"Come if you dare," the foes rebound.
We come, we come, we come, we come,"
Says the double, double, double beat of the
thund'ring drum.

CHORUS:

"Come if you dare," our trumpets
sound, etc.

TENOR

Now they charge on amain.
Now they rally again.
The Gods from above the mad labour
behold,
And pity mankind that will perish for gold.

CHORUS

Now they charge on amain, etc.

TENOR

The fainting Saxons quit their ground,
Their trumpets languish in their sound,
They fly, they fly, they fly, they fly,
"Victoria, Victoria," the bold Britons cry.

CHORUS

The fainting Saxons quit their ground, etc.

TENOR

Now the victory's won,
To the plunder we run,
We return to our lasses like fortunate traders,
Triumphant with spoils of the vanquish'd
invaders.

CHORUS

Now the victory's won, etc.

ACT II

Scene 1

PHILADELL (SOPRANO)

Hither, this way, this way bend,
Trust not the malicious fiend.
Those are false deluding lights
Wafted far and near by sprites.
Trust 'em not, for they'll deceive ye,
And in bogs and marshes leave ye.

CHORUS OF PHILADELL'S SPIRITS

Hither, this way, this way bend.

CHORUS OF GRIMBALD'S SPIRITS

This way, hither, this way bend.

PHILADELL

If you step no longer thinking,
Down you fall, a furlong sinking.
'Tis a fiend who has annoy'd ye:
Name but Heav'n, and he'll avoid ye.
Hither, this way.

PHILADELL'S SPIRITS

Hither, this way, this way bend.

GRIMBALD'S SPIRITS

This way, hither, this way bend.

PHILADELL'S SPIRITS

Trust not the malicious fiend.
Hither, this way, etc.

GRIMBALD (BASS)

Let not a moon-born elf mislead ye
From your prey and from your glory;
To fear, alas, he has betray'd ye;
Follow the flames that wave before ye,
Sometimes sev'n, and sometimes one.
Hurry, hurry, hurry, hurry on.

GRIMBALD

See, see the footsteps plain appearing.
That way Oswald chose for flying.
Firm is the turf and fit for bearing,
Where yonder pearly dewes are lying.
Far he cannot hence be gone.
Hurry, hurry, hurry, hurry on.

PHILADELL'S SPIRITS

Hither, this way, this way bend.

GRIMBALD'S SPIRITS

Hither, this way, this way bend.

PHILADELL'S SPIRITS

Trust not that malicious fiend.
Hither, this way, etc.

PHILADELL

Come, follow me.

SOLOS

Come, follow me,
And me, and me, and me, and me.

CHORUS

Come, follow me.

SOPRANOS

And green-sward all your way shall be.

CHORUS

Come, follow me.

TENOR

No goblin or elf shall dare to offend ye.

CHORUS

No goblin or elf shall dare to offend ye.

Ritornello

SOPRANOS & TENOR

We brethren of air

You heroes will bear

To the kind and the fair that attend ye.

CHORUS

We brethren of air, etc.

Scene 2

SHEPHERD (TENOR)

How blest are shepherds,
how happy their lasses,
While drums and trumpets
are sounding alarms.

Over our lowly sheds all the storm passes
And when we die, 'tis in each other's arms
All the day on our herds and flocks
employing,
All the night on our flutes and in enjoying.

CHORUS

How blest are shepherds, how happy their
lasses, etc.

SHEPHERD

Bright nymphs of Britain with graces
attended,

Let not your days without pleasure expire.

Honour's but empty, and when youth is
ended,

All men will praise you but none will
desire.

Let not youth fly away without contenting;

Age will come time enough for your
repenting.

CHORUS

Bright nymphs of Britain with graces
attended, etc.

Symphony

TWO SHEPHERDESSES (SOPRANOS)

Shepherd, shepherd, leave decoying:

Pipes are sweet on summer's day,

But a little after toying,

Women have the shot to pay.

Here are marriage-vows for signing:

Set their marks that cannot write.

After that, without repining,

Play, and welcome, day and night.

CHORUS

Come, shepherds,

lead up a lively measure

The cares of wedlock are cares of
pleasure:

But whether marriage bring joy or sorrow.

Make sure of this day and hang tomorrow

Hornpipe and Air

ACT III

CUPID (SOPRANO)

What ho! thou Genius of this isle, what ho!
Liest thou asleep beneath those hills of
snow?

Stretch out thy lazy limbs. Awake, awake!
And winter from thy furry mantle shake.

COLD GENIUS (BASS)

What power art thou, who from below
Hast made me rise unwillingly and slow
From beds of everlasting snow?
See'st thou not how stiff and wondrous old,
Far, far unfit to bear the bitter cold,
I can scarcely move or draw my breath?
Let me, let me freeze again to death.

CUPID

Thou doting fool, forbear, forbear!
What dost thou mean by freezing here?
At Love's appearing,
All the sky clearing,
The stormy winds their fury spare.
Winter subduing,
And Spring renewing,
My beams create a more glorious year.
Thou doting fool, forbear, forbear!
What dost thou mean by freezing here?

COLD GENIUS

Great Love, I know thee now:
Eldest of the gods art thou.
Heav'n and earth by thee were made.
Human nature is thy creature,
Ev'rywhere thou art obey'd.

CUPID

No part of my dominion shall he waste:
To spread my sway and sing my praise
E'en here I will a people raise
Of kind embracing lovers, and embrac'd.

Prelude

CHORUS OF COLD PEOPLE

See, see, we assemble
Thy revels to hold:
Tho' quiv'ring with cold
We chatter and tremble.

CUPID

'Tis I, 'tis I, 'tis I that have warm'd ye.
In spite of cold weather
I've brought ye together.
'Tis I, 'tis I, 'tis I that have warm'd ye,

CHORUS

'Tis Love, 'tis Love, 'tis Love
that has warm'd us.
In spite of cold weather
He brought us together.
'Tis Love, 'tis Love, 'tis Love
that has warm'd us.

CUPID & COLD GENIUS

Sound a parley, ye fair, and surrender,
Set yourselves and your lovers at ease.
He's a grateful offender
Who pleasure dare seize:
But the whining pretender
Is sure to displease.
Sound a parley, ye fair, and surrender.
Since the fruit of desire is possessing,
'Tis unmanly to sigh and complain.
When we kneel for redressing,
We move your disdain.
Love was made for a blessing
And not for a pain.

CHORUS

'Tis Love, 'tis Love, 'tis Love
that has warm'd us, etc.

Hornpipe

INTERVAL – 20 Minutes

ACT IV

TWO SIRENS (SOPRANOS)

Two daughters of this aged stream are we,
And both our sea-green locks have
comb'd for ye.

Come bathe with us an hour or two;
Come naked in, for we are so.

What danger from a naked foe?

Come bathe with us, come bathe, and
share

What pleasures in the floods appear.

We'll beat the waters till they bound
And circle round, and circle round.

Passacaglia

TENOR

How happy the lover,
How easy his chain!
How sweet to discover
He sighs not in vain.

CHORUS

How happy the lover, etc.

Ritornello

SYLVAN (BASS) & NYMPH (SOPRANO)

For love ev'ry creature
Is form'd by his nature.
No joys are above
The pleasures of love.

CHORUS

No joys are above.
The pleasures of love.

THREE NYMPHS (SOPRANOS)

In vain are our graces,
In vain are your eyes.
In vain are our graces
If love you despise.

When age furrows faces,
'Tis too late to be wise.

THREE SYLVANS (COUNTER TENOR, TENOR & BASS)

Then use the sweet blessing
While now in possessing.

No joys are above
The pleasures of love.

THREE NYMPHS

No joys are above
The pleasures of love.

CHORUS

No joys are above
The pleasures of love.

SHE (SOPRANO)

You say, 'tis Love creates the pain,
Of which so sadly you complain,
And yet would fain engage my heart
In that uneasy cruel part;
But how, alas! think you that I
Can bear the wounds of which you die?

HE (BASS)

'Tis not my passion makes my care,
But your indiff'rence gives despair:
The lusty sun begets no spring
Till gentle show'rs assistance bring;
So Love, that scorches and destroys,
Till kindness aids, can cause no joys.

SHE

Love has a thousand ways to please,
But more to rob us of our ease;
For waking nights and careful days,
Some hours of pleasure he repays;
But absence soon, or jealous fears,
O'erflows the joy with floods of tears.

HE

But one soft moment makes amends
For all the torment that attends.

BOTH

Let us love, let us love and to happiness
haste.

Age and wisdom come too fast.
Youth for loving was design'd.

HE

I'll be constant, you be kind.

SHE

You be constant, I'll be kind.

BOTH

Heav'n can give no greater blessing
Than faithful love and kind possessing.

Air

ACT V

Trumpet Tune

AEOLUS (BASS)

Ye blust'ring brethren of the skies,
Whose breath has ruffled all the wat'ry
plain,
Retire, and let Britannia rise
In triumph o'er the main.
Serene and calm, and void of fear,
The Queen of Islands must appear.

Symphony

NEREID (SOPRANO) & PAN (BASS)

Round thy coast, fair nymph of Britain,
For thy guard our waters flow:
Proteus all his herd admitting
On thy green to graze below:
Foreign lands thy fish are tasting;
Learn from thee luxurious fasting.

CHORUS

Round thy coast, fair nymph of Britain, etc.

COUNTER TENOR, TENOR & BASS

For folded flocks, and fruitful plains,
The shepherd's and the farmer's gains,
Fair Britain all the world outvies;
And Pan, as in Arcadia, reigns
Where pleasure mix'd with profit lies.
Tho' Jason's fleece was fam'd of old,
The British wool is growing gold;
No mines can more of wealth supply:
It keeps the peasants from the cold,
And takes for kings the Tyrian dye.

COMUS (TENOR)

Your hay, it is mow'd and your corn is
reap'd,
Your barns will be full and your hovels
heap'd.
Come, boys, come, Come, boys, come,
And merrily roar out our harvest home.

CHORUS OF PEASANTS

Harvest home, Harvest home,
And merrily roar out our harvest home.

COMUS,

We've cheated the parson, we'll cheat him
again,
For why shou'd a blockhead have one in ten?
One in ten, one in ten,
For why shou'd a blockhead have one in ten?

PEASANTS

One in ten, one in ten,
For why shou'd a blockhead have one in ten?

COMUS

For prating so long, like a book-learn'd sot,
Till pudding and dumpling are burnt to pot:
Burnt to pot, burnt to pot,
Till pudding and dumpling are burnt to pot.

PEASANTS

Burnt to pot, burnt to pot,
Till pudding and dumpling are burnt to pot.

COMUS

We'll toss off our ale till we cannot stand;
And heigh for the honour of old England;
Old England, Old England,
And heigh for the honour of old England.

PEASANTS

Old England, Old England,
And heigh for the honour of old England.

VENUS (SOPRANO)

Fairest isle, all isles excelling,
Seat of pleasure and of love;
Venus here will choose her dwelling,
And forsake her Cyprian grove.
Cupid from his fav'rite nation,
Care and envy will remove;
Jealousy that poisons passion,
And despair that dies for love.

Gentle murmurs, sweet complaining,
Sighs that blow the fire of love;
Soft repulses, kind disdainig,
Shall be all the pains you prove.

Ev'ry swain shall pay his duty,
Grateful ev'ry nymph shall prove;
And as these excel in beauty,
Those shall be renown'd for love.

Trumpet Tune

HONOUR (SOPRANO)

Saint George, the patron of our Isle,
A soldier and a saint,
On this auspicious order smile,
Which love and arms will plant.

CHORUS

Our natives not alone appear
To court the martial prize;
But foreign kings adopted here
Their crowns at home despise.
Our Sov'reign high, in awful state,
His honours shall bestow;
And see his sceptred subjects wait
On his commands below.

Mark Forkgen

conductor



Mark Forkgen has been the Music Director of London Concert Choir since 1996. He is also Music Director of Canticum chamber choir, Principal Conductor and Artistic Advisor of Kokoro (the Bournemouth Symphony Orchestra's New Music Group) and Director of Music at Tonbridge School. Mark was Organ Scholar of Queens' College, Cambridge, before winning a scholarship to study conducting at the Guildhall School of Music and Drama.

Since then he has conducted major UK orchestras, including the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra, Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment, Bournemouth Symphony Orchestra, City of London Sinfonia, English Chamber Orchestra, English Northern Philharmonia and Manchester Camerata, appearing at major venues, including Royal Festival Hall, the Royal Albert Hall and the Barbican.

A specialist in the field of choral and contemporary music, Mark has given the first performances of more than 150 works. He has also conducted stage works with the Trestle Theatre Company and Britten Sinfonia, and contemporary opera with the Unicorn Theatre Company and an ensemble from the Philharmonia, at the Linbury Studio, Royal Opera House, Covent Garden.

Mark's wide range of conducting also includes performances with Deep Purple for the Henley Festival and recreating Pink Floyd's *Atom Heart Mother* in the Chelsea Festival. He also enjoys an active life as a pianist, focusing on twentieth-century and contemporary music.

He has been Conductor and Artistic Advisor for highly acclaimed festivals including Sir Peter Maxwell Davies' 70th Birthday, Stravinsky, 'A Festival of Britten', 'Music of the Americas', 'Britain since Britten' and 'East meets West'. Outside the UK he has conducted in Denmark, Spain, France, Belgium, Germany, Holland, Eire, the Czech Republic and Italy (including Handel's *Messiah* in Siena and *Israel in Egypt* at the Viterbo Early Music Festival), Bulgaria (concerts broadcast for National TV and Radio) and Hong Kong.

Highlights this Autumn include a series based on Vienna, performing works by Haydn, Mozart, Beethoven, Schubert, Bruckner, Mahler, Schönberg, Webern and Berg, choral concerts at the Queen's House for the Greenwich Performs arts festival and exploring the influence of Cori Spezzati (separated choirs).

Rachel Elliott

soprano



The English soprano, Rachel Elliott, studied piano at the Purcell School, before going to Selwyn College, Cambridge, to read music. She then spent two years on the postgraduate Early Music course at the Guildhall School of Music and Drama, where her singing teacher was David Pollard.

Rachel Elliott's career has been divided between solo and ensemble singing. She has worked with English groups such as I Fagiolini, Concordia, Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment, The Academy of Ancient Music, New London Consort, and The Bach Players. She has also sung with the French ensembles, Les Arts Florissants and Il Seminario Musicale, and works regularly with the Spanish group Hippocampus.

Her recordings include lute songs by Campion with Nigel North, discs of music by Purcell, Charpentier and Rameau with New Chamber Opera, music for voice and viol consort by Gibbons with Concordia, as well as a disc of Antonio Vivaldi motets for solo soprano. Most recently she has recorded a recital of music by Monteverdi, Girolamo Frescobaldi, and Caccini for the Spanish label Arsis; and several Bach Cantatas with The Bach Players for Hyphen Press Music. She has also recorded for BBC Radio.

Rachel has previously sung with London Concert Choir in performances of Haydn's oratorio *The Seasons* in London and Assisi and most recently in last year's Christmas concert of music by Vivaldi and Bach.

Rebecca Outram

soprano



Rebecca Outram started her musical life as a pianist – it was only on joining the chapel choir of Keble College, Oxford that she discovered her voice and her passion for singing. On leaving Oxford Rebecca went on to study at The Guildhall School of Music and Drama, since when she has built up an impressive career in a variety of musical fields.

An experienced soloist, Rebecca's concert highlights include Monteverdi's 1610 Vespers with The King's Consort/Robert King and Purcell's *The Fairy Queen* with The Gabrieli Consort/Paul McCree, both at the BBC Proms; Vivaldi's *Gloria* and Handel's *Dixit Dominus* with The Sixteen/Harry Christophers; Handel's *L'Allegro* with Ivor Bolton; Bach's *Magnificat* with the English Concert/James O'Donnell; Couperin's *Leçons de Tenebre* and *Belinda* in Purcell's *Dido and Aeneas*, both with The King's Consort; Haydn's *Nelson Mass* and *Harmonie Mass*; Handel's *Esther* with the London Handel Festival/Laurence Cummings; Bach's *B Minor Mass* and *Christmas Oratorio*, and Mozart's *Coronation Mass* and *Dominican Vespers*.

Rebecca has made many recordings as a soloist, including Purcell's *The Fairy Queen* with *Accademia Bizantina/Ottavio Dantone* (CD Arts), *William and Henry Lawes' Songs and Knüpfer Sacred Music* (both on Hyperion), Bach's *Motets* with *The Hilliard Ensemble* (ECM records), *William Child's Psalms* (ASV records), Monteverdi's 1610 Vespers with *The King's Consort/Robert King* for Hyperion, *Dido and Aeneas* with the *Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment* on Chandos and *Durufle's Requiem* with *Keble Chapel Choir*.

Recent highlights include a recording of Handel's *Ode for the Birthday of Queen Anne* for BBC Radio 3, Bach's *Cantata Falsche Welt, dir traue ich nicht* and *Lutheran Mass in F*, performances of Handel's *Messiah* with the *City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra*, Bach's *B Minor Mass* with *Manchester Camerata*, Rossini's *Petite Messe Solennelle*, and Verdi's *Requiem*.

Bethany Partridge

soprano



Bethany is a London-based soprano who balances a busy schedule of professional choral work and teaching. She currently sings with a number of the finest professional choirs, including The Tallis Scholars (Peter Phillips), Polyphony (Stephen Layton), The Gabrieli Consort (Paul McCreesh), Le Concert D'Astrée (Emmanuelle Haim), The Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment Choir, Ludus Baroque and Tenebrae (Nigel Short) with whom she is an Associate Artist. Bethany is a founding member of Baroque ensemble, Amici Voices, which specialises in one-per-part performances of Bach and has recently released a highly acclaimed disc on Hyperion Records.

Bethany began singing as a chorister at Exeter Cathedral. She went on to study music at Trinity College, Cambridge, where she was a choral scholar under Stephen Layton for three years. During her studies Bethany was awarded a senior scholarship for academic excellence. She progressed through the National Youth Choir of Great Britain, becoming a section leader and taking part in their inaugural professional fellowship programme which develops musical leadership and excellence. Bethany now returns to work with the younger choirs as a member of musical staff.

Bethany has recorded extensively with various groups and has appeared live on BBC Radio 3 concert broadcasts. She enjoys performing as a soloist: recent performances include Rossini's *Petite Messe Solennelle*, Mozart's *Exsultate Jubilate*, Monteverdi's *1610 Vespers*, Brahms' *Ein deutsches Requiem*, Mendelssohn's *Elijah* and Mozart's *Mass in C minor*. Solo engagements this year include Bach's *St John Passion*, Haydn's *Nelson Mass*, Bach's *Magnificat* and Handel's *Dixit Dominus*. Bethany also has a keen interest in musical education and enjoys working as a peripatetic singing teacher at Highgate School and running vocal workshops with Tenebrae and Voces Cantabiles Music.

William Towers

counter tenor



William Towers read English at Cambridge University and was a postgraduate scholar at the Royal Academy of Music.

His opera engagements have included major roles at the Royal Opera House Covent Garden, Glyndebourne Festival Opera, Aldeburgh Festival, Grange Park Opera, Teatro La Fenice Venice, Teatro Petruzzelli Bari, Teatro Municipale Valli Reggio Emilia, Staatsoper Hanover, Oper Frankfurt, Theater Bonn, Goettingen Festival, Bregenz Festival, Teatro Real Madrid, La Monnaie Brussels, Luxembourg Opera, Prague State Opera, Gothenburg Opera, the Drottningholm Theatre, Casa da Musica Porto, Monte-Carlo, Canadian Opera Company, and the Bolshoi Moscow.

His oratorio and recital schedule has featured appearances in many major venues and festivals in the UK and abroad, including the BBC Proms, with distinguished conductors such as Sir Roger Norrington, Paul McCreesh, Richard Hickox, Nicholas McGegan, Laurence Cummings, Emmanuelle Haïm, Lars Vogt, Barry Wordsworth, Jonathan Cohen, and John Butt. Orchestras he has worked with include the City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra, BBC National Orchestra of Wales, Royal Northern Sinfonia, Bournemouth Symphony, Scottish Chamber Orchestra, City of London Sinfonia, Gabrieli Consort and Players, Monteverdi Choir and Orchestra, The Sixteen, Le Concert d'Astrée, Netherlands Bach Society and the Philharmonia Baroque. He appeared extensively as a soloist in Sir John Eliot Gardiner's Bach Cantata Pilgrimage and his performances in the complete Bach series have been issued on CD.

Recent and future highlights include, Mago Cristiano in Rinaldo for Glyndebourne on Tour, Apollo in Death in Venice for Staatstheater Stuttgart, the title role in Radamisto for English Touring Opera, Unolfo in Rodelinda at the Bolshoi, and concert appearances with the BBC National Orchestra of Wales, Royal Northern Sinfonia, the Orquestra Simfònica Illes Balears, and with Roger Vignoles at Fundación Juan March, Madrid. William's first solo disc of Handel's operatic works with the Armonico Consort and Baroque Players will be released in 2020.

James Way

tenor



Born in Sussex, James Way won Second Prize in the 62nd Kathleen Ferrier Awards at Wigmore Hall. He is a former Britten-Pears Young Artist, a laureate of the Les Arts Florissants 'Jardin des Voix', winner of the inaugural Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment Rising Stars prize, and holds an Independent Opera Voice Fellowship.

Opera credits include his debuts with Staatsoper Berlin in Purcell's King Arthur under René Jacobs; and with the Philharmonia Orchestra and Jakub Hruša as the Holy Fool in Boris Godunov; the Ballad Singer in Owen Wingrave for the Aldeburgh and Edinburgh International Festivals, Davy in Panufnik's Silver Birch for Garsington Opera; the Young King Benjamin in Lessons in Love and Violence at St Petersburg's Mariinsky Theatre, and Sellem in a worldwide tour of The Rake's Progress conducted by Barbara Hannigan. In 2020 he sings Handel Il Trionfo del Tempo e del Disinganno (Tempo) for Opéra national de Montpellier.

On the concert platform James has performed with orchestras including City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra, the Philharmonia, Munich Philharmonic, RTÉ National Symphony Orchestra, Bournemouth Symphony Orchestra and the BBC Symphony Orchestra, as well as with leading specialist Baroque ensembles including Akademie für Alte Musik Berlin, Freiburger Barockorchester, OAE, Dunedin Consort, and Les Arts Florissants.

This season highlights include Mozart's Requiem with L'Orchestre de chambre de Paris, Stravinsky's Pulcinella with both the Swedish Radio Symphony Orchestra and the CBSO; Messiah tours with William Christie and Les Arts Florissants, with Trevor Pinnock and the FBO, and in his US concert debut with Milwaukee Symphony Orchestra; Bach's Magnificat with The English Concert; Handel's Solomon with Christian Curnyn and the OAE; Purcell's King Arthur and The Fairy Queen with the Gabrieli Consort; Bach's St Matthew Passion with the Lahti Symphony Orchestra under Andreas Sperring, and a tour of Handel's La Resurrezione with AKAMUS, conducted by Bernard Labadie.

Peter Willcock

bass baritone



Peter Willcock works regularly in the ensembles at the Royal Opera House and English National Opera, where he is currently playing Bacchus in Offenbach's *Orpheus in the Underworld*.

Recent engagements include Peter in *Hansel and Gretel*, Dr. Stebbing in a the first-ever recording of Stephen Dodgson's *Margaret Catchpole* and as a guest artist on Passamezzo's upcoming album 'They that in Ships unto the Sea down go: Music for the *Mayflower*'.

In Opera he has worked as a soloist for the Royal Opera House, Scottish Opera, Grange Park, Garsington, Pimlico, Pavilion and West Green Opera. Operatic roles include Papageno in *The Magic Flute*, Escamillo and Zuniga in *Carmen*, Dulcamara in *L'Elisir D'Amore*, Crespel, Schlemil and Hermann In *The Tales of Hoffman*, Sid and Billy Jackrabbit in *La Fanciulla del West*, and Third Triplet in *Clemency* (Macmillan).

He has also played numerous animals and strange characters in many other operas including Owl in *The Owl and the Pussycat* (ROH), Elephant in *Naciketa* by Nigel Osborne for Opera Circus, Polar Bear in *Jack Frost's Christmas Adventure* at St John's Smith Square and Rover in *The Doctor's Tale* (ROH).

His oratorio and concert repertoire ranges from Monteverdi and Purcell to Britten and Bowie. Recent engagements include Beethoven's *Ninth Symphony*, Mendelssohn's *Elijah*, Rossini's *Petite Messe Solennelle*, and Fauré's *Requiem*. His last appearance with London Concert Choir was in *A Night at the Opera*.

Peter also works in opera education, as a private teacher and as a workshop leader for the Royal Opera House, ROH Thurrock, *Streetwise Opera* and various choirs and schools.

Aisling Turner

narrator



Aisling is an actor and dancer. She grew up in Brighton where she began her training at CTSD Studios. She moved to London at the age of 18 to train full-time in Musical Theatre and graduated from London Studio Centre in 2016. She joined London Concert Choir in 2014 while still training and has been enjoying singing soprano with them ever since.

Her screen credits include: Lady Lansdowne in *Victoria* (ITV), *Emma* (Working Title Films), *Walk the Dog* (pilot), *Essential Kindness in a World Less Tolerant* – Swedish Glace. Her stage credits include: *Singin' in the Rain* (The Adelphi Theatre), *Party Like Gatsby* (European Tour), *Cirque Berserk* (Cultura Nova festival), *Spring Awakening* (Artsdepot), *Thoroughly Modern Millie* (The Adelphi Theatre).

Aisling also teaches ballet, jazz and tap and is a Barrecore instructor.

Joe Pike

narrator



Joe Pike is a Political Correspondent for ITV News based in Westminster. He currently works on programmes for Yorkshire and Lincolnshire and previously reported on the politics of the North East, the North West and from the Scottish Parliament in Edinburgh. He is the author of *Project Fear*, the acclaimed inside story of Scotland's 2014 independence referendum and the 2015 general election.

Joe was married to the political campaigner Gordon Aikman (1985-2017), and is currently writing a book about their life together. He has sung with London Concert Choir since 2017 and is @joepike on Twitter.

Counterpoint

The Counterpoint ensemble was formed in 2000 specifically to work with vocal ensembles. Its membership is drawn from the leading period instrument specialists living and working in London, players who have performed and recorded with many of the leading British early music ensembles, such as the English Baroque Soloists, the Parley of Instruments, Florilegium, The Academy of Ancient Music and The English Concert. The ensemble uses original instruments or excellent copies made using the latest theories and techniques of historic instrument manufacture. Its members have a great deal of expertise and are therefore comfortable in a wide range of idioms from Monteverdi through to Beethoven.

Highlights of previous seasons include opening the prestigious Viterbo Early Music Festival in Italy, performing Handel's *Israel in Egypt* with Canticum and Mark Forkgen; Handel's *Messiah*, Bach's *St John Passion*, *St Matthew Passion*, Mass in B Minor and *Magnificat*. They have performed Monteverdi's *Vespers of 1610* at St Martin-in-the-Fields as well as Haydn's *The Creation* at the Chichester Festival with Canticum. Concerts with London Concert Choir include Purcell's *Dido and Aeneas*, Gluck's opera *Orfeo*, Bach's *St Matthew Passion* and *Christmas Oratorio*, Monteverdi's *Vespers* and Haydn's *Nelson Mass*.

Members of Counterpoint

Violin 1

Leader: Alice Evans
Claudia Norz
Jean Paterson
Joanna Lawrence
Pauline Smith
Ben Sansom

Violin 2

Roy Mowatt
William Thorpe
Felicity Broom-Skeleton
Gabiella Jones
Abel Balzas

Viola

Kate Fawcett
Joanna Miller
Geoff Irwin
Ruth Nelson

Bass Violin

Christopher Sucklin
Richard Tunnicliffe
Poppy Walshaw

Oboe/Recorder

Molly Marsh
Katie Cowling

Bassoon

Wouter Verschuren

Trumpet

Richard Thomas
Tamsin Cowell

Theorbo

David Miller

Keyboard

David Wright



London Concert Choir

London Concert Choir, one of London's leading amateur choirs, is celebrating its 60th anniversary this season. Notable for its conviction and expressiveness in an unusually varied repertoire, LCC regularly appears with Music Director Mark Forkgen at London's premier concert venues, while destinations for tours abroad have included France, Germany, Italy, Poland and, most recently, Spain.

The choir's 50th anniversary in 2010 was marked by two performances of Britten's *War Requiem*. Among other major works in recent seasons have been Mozart's Requiem with the London Mozart Players, Rachmaninov's choral symphony *The Bells* with the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra, and Elgar's *Dream of Gerontius*, Mendelssohn's *Elijah*, Brahms' *German Requiem* and Vaughan Williams' *Sea Symphony*, all with Southbank Sinfonia. The *German Requiem* was given a repeat performance with piano accompaniment to a capacity audience in Granada.

Performances with the Counterpoint ensemble include Handel's *Messiah*, Bach's *St Matthew Passion* and *Christmas Oratorio*, Monteverdi's *Vespers of 1610* and Schubert's rarely-heard Mass in E flat. Operas in concert performance have ranged from Gluck's *Orfeo* to the London premiere of *The Chalk Legend* by Stephen McNeff. LCC has also performed Ellington's *Sacred Concert*, Will Todd's *Mass in Blue* and a concert to mark Leonard Bernstein's centenary.

The choir often gives concerts for charity and continues to commission new works, including *A Light not yet Ready to Go Out* by Alison Willis, in aid of Breast Cancer Now, and *Per Ardua ad Astra*, a major work by the baritone and composer Roderick Williams to commemorate the centenary of the RAF. We are delighted that Roderick Williams is the choir's new President.

Roderick Williams OBE
President

Mark Forkgen
Music Director

Laurence Williams
*Assistant Conductor and
Accompanist*

James Finlay
Chairman

Martin Goodwin
Concert Manager

Chris Finch
Treasurer

Stephen Rickett
Design and Communications

Jennifer Greenway
Membership

Eleanor Cowie
Publicity

Simon Livesey
Company Secretary

www.londonconcertchoir.org

London Concert Choir Members

Soprano

Victoria Ainsworth
Dagmar Binsted
Eleanor Blackman
Mickey Bowden
Christine Brown
Alison Carpenter
Eleanor Cowie
Emma Davidson
Christine Dencer
Gillian Denham
Susan Deville
Emma Dixon
Emily Dresner
Sarah French
Jennifer Greenway
Caitlin Griffith
Dalia Gurari
Philippa Harris
Rebecca Harrison
Rebecca Haynes
Emma Heath
Ruth Hobbs
Emily Hunka
Eva Ignatuschtschenko
Christine Ingram
Danielle Johnstone
Jane Joyce
Vickie Kelly
Anna Kosicka
Joanna Kramer
Susanna Lutman
Annie Meston
Adrienne Morgan
Delyth Morgan
Amy Mothershaw
Stephanie Moussadis
Johanna Pemberton
Margaret Perkins
Jutta Raftery
Riina Ritanen

Ines Schlenker
Frances Shaw
Maddy Shaw Roberts
Caroline Sheppard
Imogen Small
Tara Springate
Lydia Sumner
Aisling Turner
Francesca Wareing
Janet Wells
Belinda Whittingham
Julie Wilson

Alto

Camilla Banks
Fionnuala Barrett
Kate Britten
Carys Cooper
Deborah Curle
Rosie de Saram
Philippa Donald
Kathleen Dormer
Rebecca Foulkes
Anna Garnier
Sarah Gasquoine
Mary Glanville
Muriel Hall
Penny Hatfield
Tina Holderried
Denise Howell
Chrina Jarvis
Chris Joseph
Sharon Kipfer
Sarah Knight
Sabine Koellmann
Carol Lane
Lorna Lewis
Liz Lowther
Norma MacMillan
Bridget Maidment
Corinna Matlis

Catherine McCarter
Neetu Menon
Anna Metcalf
Sophy Miles
Naomi Nettleship
Cathy Packe
Judith Paterson
Barbara Paterson
Rachel Pearson
Gillian Perry
Dubravka Polic
Jessica Rosethorn
Pamela Slatter
Rachel Vroom
Gabriel West
June Williams

Tenor

David Broad
William Durant
Fabyan Evans
Miguel Fernandez
Ross Gordon
Sam Hansford
Graham Hick
Richard Holmes
Carolyn Knight
Ian Leslie
Frances Liew
Andrew Lyburn
Ben Martin
Stephen Rickett
Christopher Seaden
Charles Sicut
Tim Steer
Barry Sterndale-Bennett
Tim Thirlway
Ruth Yeo

Bass

Colin Allies
John Ancock
Miles Armstrong
Peter Banks
Richard Burbury
Andrew Cullen
David Elkan
Chris Finch
James Finlay
Charles Fisher
Richard Gillard
Martin Goodwin
Nigel Grieve
Julian Hall
Nigel Hartnell
Keith Holmes
Richard Hughes
Richard Johnson
Ian Judson
Robert Kealey
Stefan Klaazen
Simon Livesey
Alan Machacek
Paul Milican
Joseph Pike
Morgan Roberts
Jonathan Rogers
Tom Roles
Anthony Sharp
John Somerville
Ryszard Stepaniuk
Wilson To
Tony Trowles
Philip Vickers
Dai Whittingham
Peter Yeadon



London Concert Choir

Supporting the Choir

London Concert Choir greatly appreciates the financial contribution of its regular supporters in helping the choir to maintain its position as one of London's leading amateur choirs. However, we cannot promote our concerts at major venues with professional performers of the required calibre unless we receive income from sources other than ticket sales.

The choir runs a Supporters' Scheme and also offers opportunities to sponsor soloists or orchestral players and to advertise in our concert programmes.

To find out more, please email treasurer@londonconcertchoir.org

Joining the Choir

London Concert Choir welcomes new members, who are invited to attend a few rehearsals before an informal audition. If you are interested in joining the choir, please fill in your details online at www.londonconcertchoir.org

Mailing List

If you would like to receive advance information about our concerts, you can join the choir's free mailing list by clicking on the link on the home page of the website.

www.londonconcertchoir.org

The information you provide is subject to data protection regulations (GDPR) and as such will be used exclusively by London Concert Choir.

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Nicholas Spence
Rachel Vroom



President: **Roderick Williams OBE**

Music Director: **Mark Forkgen**

FUTURE CONCERTS

Monday 16 December 2019, 7.30pm
Holy Trinity Sloane Square, SW1

Carols for Choir and Audience

Wednesday 18 March 2020, 7.45pm
Holy Trinity Sloane Square, SW1

Rachmaninov: *Vespers*

Tuesday 23 June 2020, 7.30pm
Barbican Hall, Silk Street, EC2

Gershwin: *Porgy and Bess*

Concert version by Andrew Litton
with Southbank Sinfonia

Gershwin: *Overture to Girl Crazy*
Copland: *Five Old American Songs*